The Ward of King Canute

A Romance of the Danish Conquest.

By OTTILIE A. LILJENCRANTZ, author of The Thrall of Lief the Lucky.

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CHAPTER XV.

What the Red Cloak Hid.

In the vault overhead blue had deepened into purple, and all the silver star-lamps had been hung out, their flames trembling unceasingly in the playing winds. By the soft light, the Jotun, who was striding across the Danish camp, saw a graceful boyish form leave the circle around the King's fire and join a group of mounted men waiting on the river bank, some fifty yards away.

"Ho there, Fridtjof!" he roared wrathfully.

The figure turned, and he had a fleeting glimpse of a hand waved in mocking farewell. Then the boy sprang into the saddle of a horse that one of the warriors was holding, and the whole band moved forward at a swinging pace.

"If you had waited a little, you would be less light on your feet," the Jotun growled as he strode on, striking his heels savagely upon the frosty ground.

"Where is the King?" he demanded, as soon as he had reached the ring of nobles sipping mead around the royal fire. Eric of Norway nodded toward the wattled hut beneath the silken banner.

"In there; and I will give you this chain off my neck if you can guess what he is doing."

"It is likely that he is busy with messengers," Rothgar said with an accent of vexation. "I had hoped to reach him before he finished drinking, but there was a brawl among my men which—"

"He is playing chess," Eric said dryly.

"Chess!"

The Norwegian nodded as he swallowed. "Heard you ever anything to equal that? He has the appearance of a boy who has been released from a lesson. Whether he is mad, or bewitched, or feigning like Amleth, it is not easy to tell."

Before the sudden fury of the onslaught, Edmund gave back a pace.

"I do not think it is any of these," Rothgar said slowly. "I think it is because he likes it so well that he has got peace in which to amuse himself. Sooner would he hunt than fight, any day; and I have often seen him express pleasure in this manner."

The Norwegian plunged again into the general discussion; and the son of Lodbrok stood listening discontentedly, while he kept a sharp watch of the low-browed entrance.

Presently his patience was rewarded. Within the hut there arose all at once a duet of voices, half angrily accusing, half laughingly protesting. Then the chessboard came flying through the doorway, followed by a handful of chessmen and the person of the big good-natured Jarl, still uttering his laughing protests. And finally Canute himself stood under the lintel, storming through his laughter.

"Blockhead, that you cannot keep your thoughts on what you are doing! One might expect as good a game from the tamoler's dog. You deserve—"

"To lose the honor of playing with the King," the Jotun broke in, making a long step forward. "Be so good as to allow me to take his place, lord. I have some words for your ear which are worth a hearing."

"Rothgar!" the King exclaimed with great cordiality, and stepped from the doorway to meet him. "Willingly do I make the change, for I have been wishing to speak with you this last hour. I have thought of a fine plan for to-morrow's sport." Laying his arm boy-fashion across his foster-brother's shoulders, he swung him around toward the river. "But we will not go in there to do our talking. We will walk along the shore. To-night I feel as though I could walk to the rainbow bridge."

As they strolled beside the moonlit water, the son of Lodbrok listened in secret amazement to the string of plans that unfolded itself—hunts and horse races, swimming matches and fishing trips.

"But where will you get the fishing tackle, lord? And the hawks and the hounds for all this?" he ventured presently.

They were some little distance up the bank now, where trees screened them from the camp-fires. Suddenly the young King made a leaping grab at a bough overhead and hung by it, looking down at his companion with the face of a mischievous boy.

"How joyfully you will take my answer! I have sent to Northampton for them. And I have bidden Elfgiva accompany them, with all her following of maids and lap-dogs and beardless boys."

As his foster-brother stood gazing at him in speechless dismay, he laughed maliciously. "Where are your manners, partner, that you do not praise my foresight?"

"King," Rothgar said gravely, "is the truce going to last long enough to make it worth while to fetch those trinkets here?"

His laughter vanishing, the King came to earth in both senses of the phrase. "Now I do not know what you mean by that," he said. "You were with me on the island. You heard what was said. You heard that we made peace together to last the whole of our lives. Did you not hear that?"

Rothgar kicked a stone out of his way with impatient emphasis. "Oh, yes, I heard it. I heard also how you said that you would rather have the Englishman's friendship than his kingdom."

The eyebrows had drawn down into a frown rose ironically. "There is room in your breast for more sense, Rothgar, my brother, if you think, because I am forced into one lie, that I never speak the truth," he said. "We will not talk of it further. What are the words you have waiting for my ears?"

The Jotun's sudden frown quite eclipsed his eyes. "Now it becomes clear in my mind what you have sent your black-haired falcon down the wind after—to carry your order to Northampton?"

"Certainly it is," Canute assented. "But why is your voice so bitter when you speak of him?"

"Because I have just found out that he is a fox," Rothgar bellowed. "Because it has been borne in upon me that he has played me a foul trick, by which I lost property that was already under my hands."

"It is not possible!" Canute ejaculated. "He looks to be as truthful as Balder."

Rothgar uttered his favorite grunt. "Never did I hear that Loke had crooked eyes or a tusk, and black hair grows on both of them. I tell you, I know it for certain. I have just been to find the English serf who became my man after Brentford; and he has told me what he says he tried to tell the night before we left Ivarsdale, but no one would listen to him without pounding him—that the servant-maid, who informed him concerning the provision house, spoke also of a Danish page her lord had, whom he treated with such great love that it was commonly said he was bewitched. And before that, when the brat was telling you how the Englishman had saved him from Norman's sword, it occurred to me that he talked more as a woman talks of her lover than as a man speaks of his foe."

"May the gallows take my body!" the King breathed. And he sat down upon a grassy hummock as suddenly as though a rock had been thrown at him that knocked the legs from under him.

Meanwhile the son of Lodbrok strode to and fro, declaiming wrathfully. "There is not an honest bone in the imp's body," he wound up. "It is certainly my belief that he was in league with the Englishman; and his freedom was the reward he got for drawing me off."

"Certainly you are a very shrewd man," Canute murmured. But something in his voice did not stand firm; his foster-brother darted him a keen glance. His suspicions were well founded. Canute's face was crimson with laughter; he was biting his lips frantically to hold back his mirth. The temper of the son of Lodbrok left him in one inarticulate snarl. Turning on his heel, he would have stalked away if the king had not made him the most peremptory of gestures.

"No, wait! Wait, good brother! I will show you whether I offend you intentionally or not! It is—it is—the—the jest——" Again he became unintelligible.

Rothgar stopped, but it was to glower over his folded arms. "Because his womanish face has caught your fancy, you will neither blame him yourself nor allow others to make a fuss——"

"That is where you are wrong," the King interrupted, with as much gravity as he could command. "When Fridtjof Fridtjofsson comes again into your presence, I give you leave to take whatever revenge you like, and I promise that I will not lift finger to hinder you from it."

"And not hold it against me?" Rothgar demanded incredulously.

"And not hold it against you," Canute agreed. "Will you wager a finger-ring against my knife that your mind will not change when my word stands again before you?"

The Jotun smiled grimly. "The wager shall be as you have made it; and may I lack strength if I do not deal with him——" He paused, blinking like a startled owl, as his royal foster-brother leaped to his feet and fronted him with shouts of laughter.

"You dolt, you!" Canute cried. "Do you not see it yet? Frode's child is a woman!"

Rothgar's jaw dropped and his bulging eyes seemed in danger of following. "What!" he gasped; and then his voice rose to a roar. "And the Englishman is her lover?"

"You are wiser than I expected," the King laughed.

Stamping with rage, the Jotun hammered his huge fist upon a tree-trunk until bark flew in every direction. "King, I will give you every ring off my hand if you will give me leave to strangle her!"

"You remind me that I will take one of your rings now," Canute said, reaching out and opening the mallet-like fist that he might make his choice. Then, as he fitted on his prize and held it critically to the light, he added with more sympathy: "I will arrange for you a more profitable revenge than that. I will make a condition with Edmund that the Etheling's odal shall not be included in the land which is peace-holy, and that to ravage it shall not be looked upon as breaking the truce. Then can you betake yourself thither and sit down with your following, and have no one but yourself to blame if you fall a second time. Only"—he thrust his knuckles suddenly between the other's ribs—"only, before we get serious over it, do at least give one laugh. Though she be Ran herself, the maiden has played an excellent joke upon you."

"I do not see how you make out that it is all upon me," Rothgar said sulkily. "You did not have the appearance of choking much on her stories."

The King seemed all at once to recover his dignity. "I will not deny that," he said gravely; "and have I not said that I expect to be angry about it presently? That she should dare to offer her King that lying story about her sister's death——" His face flushed as though he were remembering his emotion on receiving that same story; and his foster-brother's observation did not tend to mollify him.

"And not only to offer it," the son of Lodbrok chuckled, "but to cram it down his throat and make him swallow it."

Canute's heels also began to ring with ominous sharpness upon the frosty ground. "She must be Ran herself! Oh, you need not be afraid that I shall not get overbearing enough after I am started! Now, as I am a king, I will punish her in a way that she will like less than strangling! I tell you, her luck is great that she is not here to-night."

(To be continued.)

A WOMAN OF RESOURCE.

Actress Had Her Way in Spite of Managerial Rules.

A story is going the rounds about how a prominent actress satisfied her post-season thirst while playing in a special production after her winter's engagement was over. The young artist is very well known to theater-goers, and for this reason her name will be omitted.

A special production in which she appeared made it necessary for her to wear high topped cavalry boots as a part of her costume. During the week which the show ran the weather happened to be quite warm. The management of the theater supplied the actors with ice water, but prohibited any of the members of the cast from taking stronger refreshments into the place.

This actress is quite resourceful, and soon hit upon a scheme that was most ingenious. She was stopping at a hotel within a square of the theater, and this enabled her to work out her plan successfully.

One night she went to the theater as usual, but after making up gave a great imitation of being horrified when she discoveerd that the cavalry boots had been left at the hotel. Summoning one of the attaches of the theater, she sent him after the boots, with instructions to bring them to her just as he found them. Her instructions were carried out, and after bestowing a greatful smile on the messenger he was allowed to depart, after depositing the boots in her dressing rooms.

As soon as the door was closed behind him the actress extracted from the depths of either boot, where she had placed them before leaving the hotel, a large, cool bottle of beer.

WEEDS USED IN MEDICINE.

Pests of the Farm May Be Turned to Some Account.

The extent to which weeds are used in medicine is indicated in a recent bulletin (No. 188) of the United States Department of Agriculture. Most of those used are gathered in Europe, but many of them are only too common in this country, and while it is not likely that the farmer may succeed in getting rid of them it is possible that he may turn some of them to account. The prices paid on the other hand, are not so large as to induce a man to go into the business as a vocation; it is distinctly as by-products that the weeds may return something to him who raises them.

Among root drugs the bulletin names these: Burdock, dandelion, the various docks, couchgrass and pokeweed. Wormseed and black and white mustards yield their seeds for medical uses, and these weeds are named as supplying leaves, flowers or seeds: Foxglove, mullein, lobelia, tansy, gum plant, scaly grindelia, boneset, catnip, hoarhound, yarrow, bleabane, blessed thistle, jimson weed and poison hemlock.

The bulletin gives suggestions as to the packing and handling the weeds and the prices recently paid for them in the drug market. As some of the plants are known to be poisonous, the farmer who gathers them for profit should not use them without the advice of a physician.

On "Classes" and Their Money.

"That man who just went out," remarked the observant man, "is a butcher."

"He is," replied the storekeeper. "You know him, probably?"

"Never set eyes on him before."

"Then how did you know that he was a butcher?" asked the store keeper.

"Simply by the way he carries his money. I noticed that when he paid for his purchases he took a crumpled wad of bank notes out of his trousers pocket. Butchers always carry their money that way. So do bakers and grocers, but I knew he was neither of them, and therefore concluded that he was a butcher."

The assembled citizens who sat round looked admiringly at the observant stranger and asked for more information on the way different people carried their money.

"Bankers carry their money in nice new notes laid out at full length in a morocco pocketbook," he went on. "Brokers always fold their notes twice. Young merchants carry their money in their vest pocket, while sports carry theirs in their trousers pocket. Farmers and drovers carry their cash in their inside pockets."

"And where," asked one of the men, "where does an average man like me, who does not belong to any of the classes named, carry his money?"

"In his wife's pocket," replied the observant man.

Gives Japs High Praise.

A well-known English military writer, Dr. Miller Maguire, recently called the Japanese "scientific fanatics" and declared that "man for man and ship for ship" they "can beat any opponent in the world because of their superior knowledge."

Care for Invalids From Slums.

Thirty-seven of the sick and crippled children from New York's slums are being cared for by the deaconesses in the Invalid Children's Home at Verbank, N. Y.

Pass Under the Rod

An Old Favorite

I saw the young bride, in her beauty and pride,
Bedecked in her snowy array,
And the bright flush of joy mantled high on her cheek,
And the future looked blooming and gay,
And with woman's devotion she laid her fond heart
At the shrine of idolatrous love,
And she anchored her hopes to this perishing earth
By the chain which her tenderness wove.
But I saw when those heart-strings were bleeding and torn,
And the chain had been severed in two,
She had changed her white robes for the sables of grief,
And her bloom for the paleness of woe!
But the Healer was there, pouring balm on her heart,
And wiping the tears from her eyes;
He strengthened the chain he had broken in twain,
And fastened it firm to the skies!
There had whispered a voice—'twas the voice of her God—
"I love thee, I love thee—pass under the rod!"

I saw the young mother in tenderness bend
O'er the couch of her slumbering boy;
And she kissed the soft lips, as they murmured her name,
While the dreamer lay smiling in joy.
O! sweet as the rosebud encircled with dew,
When its fragrance is flung on the air,
So fresh and so bright to that mother he seemed
As he lay in his innocence there.
But I saw, when she gazed on the same lovely form,
Pale as marble, and silent and cold;
But paler and colder her beautiful boy;
But the Healer was there who had stricken her heart,
And taken her treasure away;
To allure her to heaven he has placed it on high,
And the mourner will sweetly obey.
There had whispered a voice—'twas the voice of her God—
"I love thee, I love thee—pass under the rod!"

I saw a father and mother who leaned
On the arms of a dear gifted son,
And the star in the future grew bright to their gaze
As they saw the proud place he had won;
And the fast-coming evening of life promised fair,
And its pathway grew smooth to their feet;
And the starlight of love glimmered bright at the end,
And the whispers of fancy were sweet.
And I saw them again bending low o'er the grave
Where their hearts' dearest hope had been laid,
And the star had gone down in the darkness of night,
And the joy from their bosom had fled.
But the Healer was there, and his arms were around,
And he led them with tenderest care;
And he showed them a star in the bright upper world—
'Twas their star shining brilliantly there!
They had each heard a voice—'twas the voice of their God—
"I love thee, I love thee—pass under the rod!"

Hat on a Frolic

The young man seemed to be of a particularly mild disposition and the straw hat he wore was not out of the ordinary, but the combination was the cause of a series of mishaps on a Seventh avenue car the other day. And it was a closed car at that. The young man and the hat took a seat well forward and were soon in deep thought—at least the young man was. The hat was evidently cooking up mischief.

The chance came at last. It was blowing a gale in the street and hats were flying in all directions. The sight probably fired the ambition of the hat on the young man's head.

At Twenty-third street the car stopped. A stout woman climbed on the front platform and the motorman obligingly opened the door for her. With the woman came the tail end of a particularly fierce gust of wind which hit the car plumb center. The hat arose from the young man's head, seemed to pause for a moment in mid-air as though selecting a victim, and then started on its aerial flight. It nipped off the eyeglasses of a choleric looking old man, caromed across the car and smacked a German woman in the face. Then, gathering fresh impetus from an open window, it sailed up to the roof of the car, tried to ring up a couple of fares on the register, and fell into the lap of a woman carrying a baby. From thence it dropped lightly to the floor, evidently satisfied with its work.

The owner of the hat jumped after it at the first stage of the desertion, but was obliged to tack about the stout woman whose entrance to the car had caused the trouble. When he got by he failed to see the choleric old man, who was blindly groping for his glasses on the floor of the car and saying harsh things sotto voce. Therefore, the young man was hardly to blame when his knee came into violent contact with the choleric party's ear, knocking off his hat. The young man, who was crimson with embarrassment, turned to apologize, and, plunging forward in his confusion, stepped squarely upon the crown of his mischievous hat, which was reposing at the feet of the woman with the baby.

The young man was still several blocks from his destination, and the rain had begun to fall; but somehow he felt that his presence in the car was rather embarrassing to the other passengers, so he got off. The choleric man found his hat and glasses, but not his temper. The German woman quoted Wagnerian selections while she prospected about her face for possible scratches, and the woman with the baby said something that sounded like "chump."—New York Press.

Digging in Ancient Ruins

Interesting and valuable archaeological discoveries have been made on the site of the ancient Greek city Olbia. The site is situated on the southern bank of the Boug, about midway between Otchakoff and Nicolaieff, and not far distant from the estuary of the Dneiper. This ancient city was a great center for Greek trade with the interior. It is generally maintained among archaeological authorities that a trade route extended from Olbia across country to the northern sea, and when a find of ancient Greek coins was made it was contended to be substantial proof of the fact. Recently, however, it was proved that these coins were spurious.

Olbia was destroyed by the Getoa about 70 to 60 B. C., but it revived and when it was visited by Dion Chrysostum about 100 A. D. it was again a flourishing city. The excavations that are now in progress upon the site of this city are being carried out by M. Formakovski under the auspices of the Russian Archaelogical society. M. Formakovski has succeeded in unearthing extensive portions of the walls and foundations of the original city, which date back from the seventh century, B. C. The masonry is identical with that of the ruins of ancient cities excavated in various parts of Greece. Before this depth was reached two different strata of walls and basements bearing descriptions of the fourth and first centuries B. C. were encountered.

The stone blocks composing the ruins of houses, temples, etc., in these upper strata are of remarkably exact area, square proportions and excellently dressed. The more solid constructive work is, however, found in the remains of the original city. At this depth there was unearthed a perfectly preserved wine cellar. Some fifty huge jars or vases had evidently contained red wine, now turned to a light powdery substance. A large collection of valuable antiques in gold, marble and ancient pottery has also been found in these newly uncovered ruins. These have been dispatched to the Hermitage at St. Petersburg. M. Mormakovski, however, is carefully examining every antique unearthed, to establish its genuine character, as it was on this site that the spurious tiara of Saitapharnes, now in the Louvre, was alleged to have been discovered.

When Time Hung Heavy

J. B. Southard, old-day miner in the Western El Dorado, lawyer at the state bar, preacher for a season, judge on the bench, but now gone over "Lethe's wharf" into the sea that sweeps away to an unknown shore, once found time hanging on his hands.

He accidentally met one afternoon a long-lost friend and ex-partner from the mines of an upper county. The judge had not seen Bill since they had shoveled dirt into a flume together back in the dim '50's. They dropped all else and hugged each other in Oriental fervency. Then the hours flew with a whiz. Not in the ordinary rush, but so rapidly that the minutes and seconds fell off the body of time and were lost on the way. First at the Occidental bar, where the judge was at home; thence to Frank Garcia's, and afterward to the Pacific club—now out of date. Then to the other resorts frequented by the bohemians of the town and the day. Without halting they went over the route again, hurrying, hurrying on through the night. No account has been kept of the libations that were poured out in that bacchanalian feast. Bill had frequently turned himself loose and made the golden dust fly after the clean-up, but this was faster than the best time of a mining town carouse.

Along toward morning Bill began to break, and finally lost his feet. The judge carried him on around the stretch till his condition called imperiously for a downy bed and the restorer—sleep.

When the hack had rolled off for the hotel with Bill the deserted and lonely man stood looking sadly down the street. The sun was flushing the sky over the green Alameda hills and the young day was finding its way through the city streets. But time had left no record of the passing night. To him an hour was as a second and a century as a day.

"What shall I do," he soliloquized; "what the thunder shall I do the rest of the night?"—San Francisco Call.

When Stamps Were New

"When postage stamps first came into use," said a veteran postal clerk, "the public didn't know how to handle them. You remember how, when tea and coffee first appeared among us, the people fried the tea leaves and the coffee berries, and served them with salt and pepper? Well, the people treated their stamps as absurdly in 1854.

"Some folks would put the stamps inside their letters, out of sight. Here is the official notice that we issued to stop that practice."

The clerk took from the drawer an ged bulletin that said:

"The stamps upon all letters and packages must be affixed on the OUTSIDE thereof, and above the address thereon."

He put back this bulletin and drew forth another one.

"People would pin the stamps on their letters, instead of gumming them," he said, "and when they did gum them, they would not do it right. Hence this second bulletin," and he read:

"'Persons posting letters should affix the requisite number of stamps previous to depositing them in the letter receivers, as when posted in a damp state the stamps are liable to rub off and thereby cause the letters to be treated as unpaid. Do not pin on the stamps.'

"Still," said the clerk, "the public didn't understand. Think of it—it didn't understand the simple matter of sticking a postage stamp on a letter. So we got out a third bulletin."

The third bulletin, in big, impatient letters, said:

"The simplest and most effective method of causing stamps to adhere firmly is, first, to moisten well the outside of the stamps and afterward the gummed side slightly, taking care not to remove the gum."

The clerk said that a philatelist had offered him $12 a piece for these three queer bulletins.

FARM ORCHARD AND GARDEN

[Mr. Wragg invites contributions of any new ideas that readers of this department may wish to present, and would be pleased to answer correspondents desiring information on subjects discussed. Address M. J. Wragg, Waukee, Iowa.]

VERY TIRED LAND.

All over the Middle West, even in the very best of it, we find some very tired land—land that badly needs rest and doctoring. Tenant farming is responsible for much of it, but not at all.

Prof. Hopkins of Illinois in some of his communications to the press tells of a field in southern Illinois that has been continuously in corn for twenty-seven years and this year produced twenty-seven bushels per acre, and renting for fifty cents per acre; of a field directly opposite to it which has been rotated with corn and oats, and leguminous crops, and this year produced seventy-five bushels of corn; and opposite to this is another field to which was added some bone meal, which produced eighty-seven bushels. "So we have," to quote his own language, "from twenty-seven to eighty-seven bushels of corn grown this year, the some quality of corn, planted at the same time and cared for just the same—an actual difference of sixty bushels from twenty-seven to eighty-seven grown in the same type of soil."

Nearly every time we meet farmers of Illinois we are told that their land is inexhaustible, that corn has been grown upon it for thirty or thirty-five years, and this year's crop is as good as any before. We have always been skeptical of the real accuracy of these statements, believing that there were conditions, such as favorable seasons or a superior condition of the land, which would account for the facts as stated.

While the farm mentioned is in southern Illinois, where the soil in general is inferior to the central, yet we have had no trouble in finding much worn-out land even in the very best parts of the state, and we will not feel quite happy until we are able to induce corn-growers in that state to abandon their evil ways and rotate their crops. It is to give them an object lesson from their own state and from one of their most highly esteemed professors, whose opinions, in the lines on which he gives his opinion, go as far as any man's of whom we know, that we quote the statement given above.

There is no possibility of progress in farming until this one-crop system year after year on the same land is broken up. It must be broken up or it will eventually break up the men who own the land, as well as the men who farm it. Notice in the above statement the wonderful increase in production when leguminous crops, such as cowpeas, clover or alfalfa, have a place in the rotation. To understand the reason is easy. This continuous cropping in corn, or in any other one crop, or any number of non-leguminous crops, will sooner or later burn out the humus by exposing it to the air. This will prevent the farmer from getting his soil in the proper physical condition as well as use up a very large amount of the nitrogen which it contains.

Clover and other leguminous crops supply nitrogen from the atmosphere and supply humus to the soil, and thus enable the farmer to get his soil in such a physical condition that the roots of the plants can utilize the fertility which it contains. Farmers sow these crops not merely to furnish nitrogen to the soil, but to furnish humus and to get them in proper physical condition and you need not worry about anything else until the crops show that it is short of some of the mineral elements.

Some of the soils in southern Illinois are deficient in potash; others in phosphoric acid. Where it is clearly ascertained that the soil is deficient in these, they should be added in the cheapest possible way.

There is nothing, beyond good seed, necessary to raise crops proportionate to the season except to get the soil in the proper physical condition. That is the main reason why we grow clover and other grasses, the main reason why we rotate, the main reason why we urge farmers not to plant any crop until they get the soil in such a condition that the plant can avail itself of the fertility therein contained.

Mutton as human food is gaining rapidly in popularity. Good authorities predict that the time is rapidly approaching when as many sheep and lambs will be slaughtered in this country as there are hogs and cattle slaughtered now. History shows that in old countries mutton is the poor man's diet because it can be raised at less cost than any other, and also that it is the best and most wholesome. Wool brings a good price, mutton is in demand and the farm needs fertilizing. Then why not every farmer grow sheep, and those who feel so inclined operate a sheep ranch? It is a paying business.

LUCK.

Did you ever happen across Max O'Rell's definition of "luck?" It may serve as an answer to some of those who refer to freaks of fortune:

"Luck means rising at 6 o'clock in the morning, living on a dollar a day if you earn two, minding your own business and not meddling with other people's. Luck means appointments you have never failed to keep, the trains you have never failed to catch. Luck means trusting in God and your own resources."

Max O'Rell never said a wiser thing and no better definition of "luck" can be given. It should be printed in capitals and hung up in every office, counting room, workshop and family living room.

It looks as if there would be much less demand for labor in the construction of railways this year than last, and this lessened demand by the roads will to a certain extent affect farm labor.

"Genius is partly inspiration, but mostly perspiration."—Edison.

DRAFT MARES.

It is noticeable that both grade and pure-bred draft mares are very little appreciated if one can judge from the price at which they sell in the open market. They seldom sell for any more than the value of each colt that they raise; and this did not seem to be right, considering that they can raise a good colt every year for many years, if properly bred. Good brood mares are often sold off the farm to work in cities; but this is a very unbusinesslike thing to do and should be avoided if possible. Now that draft horses are so scarce and are bringing such increasingly high prices, good draft mares are by far the most valuable animals on the farm, as they can do all the farm work and at the same time raise high-priced colts every year. A first-class grade draft mare can raise a colt worth $200 to $300; and a pure bred mare, bred to a good stallion, can raise one worth from $500 to $1,500. Whether grade or pure bred, the mare should be bred to the very best stallion obtainable, regardless of service fee. The increased value of the colt will always much more than pay for the higher priced fee. A big colt matures earlier and costs no more to raise and will sell for a much better price than a common one. The good mare colts should be kept for breeding, if possible, and set to breeding as soon as they mature. They are worth twice as much for breeding as for any other purpose and should be kept breeding to the best sires as long as draft horses command anything like their present prices.

It is a day of specialties. Those who succeed in professional life or in any commercial department, must have some specialty for which there is a demand. In early times the neighborhood physician was obliged to practice in all kinds of cases and also posed as a surgeon and dentist. Times have changed and the physician now makes a specialty and follows closely to it. The same way with attorneys. We have some lawyers who are especially adapted to meet the requirements of railroads, corporations, to practice in criminal courts, and for the various other lines of work which need assistance from the legal profession. The farmers are keeping step in this march of progress. They have learned that in order to be successful they must have one special pursuit and they naturally follow that in which they are most interested, whether it be raising hogs or stock, growing wheat, corn or fruit.

SWINE NOTES.

Don't keep 'em in a narrow, nasty little pen.

A high-bred sire ought to enrich a town $1,000 if used right.

At ruling prices the breeding up of choice droves should be given a great impetus.

Keep the sow for a breeder until she becomes awkward and too heavy, if she produces good litters.

Next to grass nothing grows pigs so fast with skim milk as cornmeal, says the New York experiment station.

Ring the pigs that are in the orchard. Then protect the tree trunks if they manifest a disposition to peel them.

If the pigs root out dig a trench one foot deep beside the fence and tack poultry nets to the posts. Their sensitive noses will avoid it.

A good trough for little pigs can be made of a long, narrow and shallow box of any kind. The first feed of wet bran will make it milk-tight.

In figuring up the profits of your farm operations for a year you should always take into account the house rent and good living the family has been provided with. If you do not know how much to credit the farm with on this account, go to town and ask some man with a like home and family to support, how much it costs him. Doing thus, there is quite likely to be a surprise in store for you.

VINE BLIGHTS.

A reader in Batavia, Ohio, asks how to prevent blights on muskmelon, watermelon and cucumber vines. The answer usually given is, "Spray with Bordeaux mixture." It is easy enough to give this advice—it is far more difficult to make use of it in such a way as to save the plants when they are bound to blight. That the Bordeaux mixture affords some protection there can be no doubt; but in order to be effective it should be applied quite freely and quite frequently. When we allow bungs and beetles to riddle the plants, we cannot expect to keep our plants free from diseases that stand ready to attack them. I invariably add some arsenical poison (preferably arsenic of lead, or disparene) to the Bordeaux mixture, and thus make sure that insect enemies will not do much damage. Some of these blights are insistent diseases, and often take the plants just as soon as we are guilty of the least negligence.

Farmyard manure is a universal fertilizer, suiting all crops, climates and soils. In the case of leguminous crops where great difficulty has been experienced in arranging satisfactory artificial mixtures, farmyard manure has always given excellent results.

SOAPSUDS FOR SCALES.

Common soapsuds will go far towards keeping plants, vines and bushes free of scales and insects in general. On washday the soapsuds may be utilized to "douse" the leaves. With a common sprayer one can wet the under sides of the leaves thoroughly with the suds. Where it is possible to reach the leaves the treatment may be easily done. Make a soap lather and apply it to all vines and bushes within reach by dipping them into the vessel. Or take one handful of lather and with the other hand draw the infested leaves through it, so that the under sides are wet.

We hate a man who checkreins his horse uncomfortably. Such a man is cruel, selfish, and unworthy of respect.

HORTICULTURAL NOTES.

To get rid of moss and lincheas adhering to the bark of trees, give an application of whitewash.

As soon as the trees in an orchard come into bearing all other crops except grass should be discontinued.

Clover is the best plan for the orchard. It keeps the ground loose and moist and at the same time enriches and shades it.

The growing of fruit trees is the growing of a valuable crop and the trees deserve and should have rich soil, care and any needed fertilization.

The only certain cure for "yellows" in the peach orchard is to cut out the infected trees. In some peach-growing states this is required by law.

Every farm should have a good orchard of choice fruits of different kinds and varieties, at least ample to supply the needs of the family.

Manure and plow the patch intended for early spring vegetables.

Gather and destroy all the wormy fruit. It will pay.

Be up to date and very careful in packing fruit for market.

Dig the spuds. If they are ripe they will keep better in the cellar than in the hill.

If not yet done, clear out the old raspberry wood.

Banking the celery will soon be in order.

Go over the young orchard and remove the water sprouts and young limbs that chafe.

Never ceasing care in marketing is required. It is a great thing to grow a crop. But it requires a higher order of skill to sell it well.

Cultivation is manure—at least it behaves like it.

For fruitfulness in an orchard tree trim in June; if June was skipped, do it now. Shorten all the branches a little.

If Ben Davis orchards will persist in big crops, and consumers will persist in buying Ben Davis apples, isn't it a good business proposition for orchardists to grow what they can expect with reasonable certainty and what the people will take? That is the way the majority of commercial growers look at it.

This has been a hard season in many parts of the country for newly transplanted trees, etc., owing to prolonged drought. It is not too late to mulch such trees and plants with a few forkfuls of partly rotted manure.

The underlying principle for the successful management of an apple orchard lies in keeping the soil loose and porous, so that air and roots can be filled with humus to hold moisture and maintain bacterial action.

When trees are raised from seeds there is no certainty that the same identical variety will be produced.

Much of the beauty of any business is in the profitableness of it; and yet many farmers pursue their avocation year after year with only the most meager profits. In the growing of hogs or other live stock, good pasturage and plenty of it is the cheapest of all feeds, and as good as any that can be devised for animal growth. Pasturage increases the profits by curtailing the cost of production.

THINNING APPLES.

The thinning of apples has not as yet come into general practice, but instances were cited by some of those present which went to prove that such thinnings could be profitably made. Hon. Theo. Wade told of their experience in thinning during the season just past. Their orchard of sixteen acres was set in 1880, and during the past season gave them a net profit of $125 per acre. He said that as the season advanced and the limbs began to bend with their loads, it looked like a herculean task to undertake to thin such a mass of fruit. They succeeded in thinning four rows about half way up the tree, at an expense of $70, and when the time for picking came the results were surprising. The fruit on the thinned portion was nearly all first-class, while on the unthinned portion of the trees and the remainder of the orchard, there were quantities of culls, not wormy, but imperfect, undersized fruit. He estimated that $70 expended in thinning brought him in $1,000 in cash, and that the neglect to thin the remainder of the orchard must have lost to him a great deal more than that amount. Low heading of an apple orchard is conceded to be the best.

During oats harvest, if the weather promises to be unfavorable for drying out the crop, which is oftimes the case, we set from six to eight sheaves in single file. When they have dried out somewhat, a day or two later we put them into shocks of ten sheaves and cap securely with two sheaves, always laying the last one on well broken and back to the prevailing winds. This makes a little extra work, but the oat crop that is well shocked and cured out is worth much more for feed and seed than the musty, bleached quality so often found at our elevators.

HINTS ON CORN FODDER.

The corn plant is considered a giant grass; so far as its feeding value goes, it has been shown that the stalks and husks contain 60 per cent of all the digestible matter in the entire plant. This proves that there is more nutriment in the stalks and husks from an acre of ground than in the ears. Besides being considered a waste product, corn stalks have heretofore usually proved a great nuisance on the farm. If stock animals are turned loose in the fields after husking is done they waste at least four times as much as they eat, and often contract corn stalk disease, and leave the stalks lying in the field to interfere with spring plowing.

The dollar's worth of sugar is the bait which traps more people in the purchase of bills of groceries than any other one thing. They will blindly and foolishly invest in teas, coffees, spices, soaps, condiments and shoe-blacking, things about the value of which they know little or nothing, if they can see a chance to get an extra pound or two of sugar for a dollar.