Oliver October 3 By **George Barr McCutcheon**

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SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I.—Oliver October Baxter, Jr., was born on a vile October day. His parents were prominent in the commercial, social and spiritual life of the town of Rumley. His father was proprietor of the hardware store. The night that Oliver October was born a gypsy queen reads his father's fortune and tells him what a wonderful future his son has before him, but after the reading, the gypsy becomes angry and leaves the house in a rage after telling Mr. Baxter that his son will never reach the age of thirty, that he will be hanged for a crime of which he is not guilty. not guilty.

CHAPTER II.—Ten years elapse and Oliver's father is the owner of a busi-ness block in the town. Mrs. Baxter died when Oliver was nearing seven. Josephine Sage, wife of the minister, causes a sensation when she leaves Rumley to go on the stage. She be-comes a "star" and later goes to Lon-don, where she scores a hit. Her daughter Jane and young Oliver be-come greatly attached to one another. After finishing college, young Oliver accepts a position in Chicago with an engineering company. He goes to China on an important mission for his firm. Upon his return he enlists in the Canadian army. Canadian army.

CHAPTER III.—The war over, Oliver returns to Chicago and is told by his employers that his services are no longer required. He returns home. He hears Jane is in love with Doctor Lansing. Jane and Oliver meet again. Oliver is reprimanded by his father for not getting another position. Oli-ver threatens to leave home.

"You don't really mean it, Oliver?" cried Mr. Sage. "That is good newssplendid news."

"I hate that old Gooch man," cried Jane.

"Jane, my dear, you really are becoming quite a vixen," remonstrated her father.

An automobile came to a sudden stop in front of the house, and an agile young man leaped out, leaving his engine running. He came up the walk with long strides.

"Say, Oliver, you old skate, I've been looking all over town for you," shouted Sammy Parr. "This isn't your night to call on Jane-don't you know that? Good evening, Jane. Evening, Mr. Sage. Say, the Bannesters told me all about you, you blamed old skate-I mean Ollie, not you, Mr. Sage. Gee whiz, Ollie you certainly did throw the like those he had experienced in bybooks into Uncle Horace this

blows against his ribs that had the ef- | the United States tomorrow and is fect of making him dizzy, as with verticoming here to live!' It was true that Josephine Sage was go. He continued to stare, possessed

both hands on his shoulders.

was the first time in years. I wonder

if I remind him of her in lots of

think she was the most wonderful per-

mother when I was six or seven, Jane."

He hesitated and then went on clumsi-

She gave him a quick, startled look.

His face was turned away, and so he

Oliver's thoughts leaped backward a

Don't you, daddy?"

of exploding."

spoke softly.

ways.'

of ways."

gruff and unnatural.

20 acres of good land to-"

them mudholes a little farther out."

to the edge of the mire. I used to look

upon that boy as a smart young feller."

"Maybe he's a whole lot smarter

"I can't help thinkin' we'll turn up

of gives me the creeps."

come valuable land.

low roadster.

went to pieces."

dead?"

stakes are, just the same.'

stakes.

nificantly.

a minute."

corging home. The beatific minister of a strange wonder, as she turned to her tall, gray-haired parent and laid thrust the cablegram into Oliver's hand as that young man came bounding up "I wish I could say 'gee whiz' as the veranda steps ten minutes later. Sammy says it," she cried. "I feel all "She's coming on the Baltic. I have

over just like one great big 'gee whiz.' decided to go to New York to meet her. Jane will accompany me. I wish The man of God took his daughter's you would find out for me, Oliver, when the Baltic is due to arrive at firm, round chin between his thumb New York. Please help me out, lad. and forefinger and shook it lovingly. Perhaps I should have telegraphed my-"One 'gee whiz" in the famly is self-or had Jane do it-but we-I enough," said he. "I am glad you feel like one, however. You take me back mean I-er-"

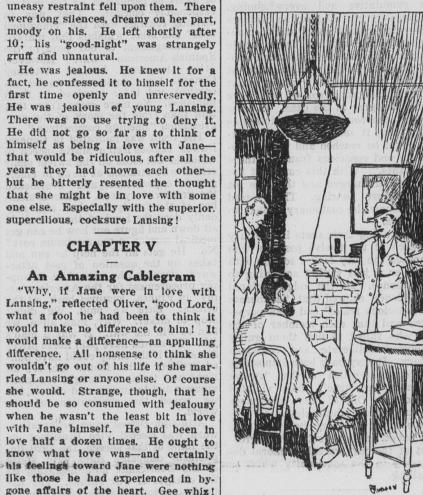
25 years, my dear. Your mother used "Say," interrupted Oliver, with sparkling eyes. "I'll bet you're 20 to say 'gee whiz' when she felt like it. It is, after all, a rather harmless way years younger than you were yesterday, Uncle Herbert!"

Presently he left them and Jane "I-I believe I am," said Mr. Sage, squaring his thin shoulders and drawing a deep breath. "Did you notice, Oliver, that he

spoke of mother a little while ago? It

Mr. Horace Gooch of Hopkinsville heretofore a miserly aspirant for legislative honors but persistently denied the distinction for which he was loath score of years and more. "I used to to pay, had "come across" so handsomely-and so desperately-that the bosses had foolishly permitted him to son in all the world," he said. "I was be nominated for the state senate. The very desperately in love with your people did not want him; but that made little or no difference to the ly, almost fatuously: "I am beginning party leaders; the people had to take him whether they liked him or not. to think that you are like her in a lot Mr. Gooch's astonishing contribution to the campaign fund was not to be "passed up" merely because the people didn't approve of him. did not see the tender, wistful little

The report that young Oliver Baxter smile that flickered on her lips, nor was he aware of the long, deep breath of Rumley was being urged to make the race against his uncle caused no she took. From that moment a queer,



stopped his ancient automobile in front of the Baxter block in Rumley and inquired of a man in the doorway:

"Is young Oliver Baxter here?" The loiterer turned his head lazily, squinted searchingly into the store, and

then replied that he was. "Tell him his uncle is out here."

The citizen disappeared. He was back in a jiffy, grinning broadly.

"Well?" demanded Mr. Gooch, as the messenger remained silent. "What did he say?"

The citizen chuckled. "It ain't fit to print." said he.

Mr. Gooch shut off his engine and settled back in the seat, the personification of grim and dogged patience. Fifteen minutes passed. Passersby, sensing something unusual, found an excuse for loitering in front of nearby

show windows. Mr. Link came out of his office, and after taking one look at the hard-faced old man in the automobile, hurried to the rear of his establishment. A few seconds later he returned, accompanied by Joseph Sikes. They took up a position in the doorway.

At last Oliver October appeared. "Hello, Uncle Horace," was his greeting. "Sorry to have kept you waiting. And I'm in a bit of a hurry, too. Some friends coming down on No. 17, Mr. and Mrs. Sage-you remember them, no doubt. Anything in particular you wanted to see me about?" "Yes, there is," said Mr. Gooch harsh-

ly. "I came over here to demand an apology from you, young man-a public apology printed over your signature in the newspapers. I wrote you a very plain and dignified letter in which I told you what I thought of the underhanded way you acted in regard to those dear old ladies, Mrs. Bannester and her sister. You know as well as I do that it was my intention to restore their property to them, absolutely tax free and without a single claim against it. You simply sneaked in and got ahead of me. And what did you say in reply to my simple, straightforward letter? You said you wouldn't trust me as far as you could throw a locomotive with one hand, or something like that. If I don't have a written and published acknowledgment from you that you deliberately misrepresented me, that you played me an underhand trick simply for political purposes, I'll-I'll-

"I'll make it so blamed hot for you you'll wish you'd never been born," grated Mr. Gooch. "It rests with you, young man, whether a certain investigation takes place or not." "What do you mean by investiga-

tion?" demanded Oliver, his eyes narrowing. "Just what are you driving at?"

His uncle leaned forward and spoke slowly, distinctly. "Is there any evidence that your father ever left this place at all?"

Oliver looked his uncle straight in the eye for many seconds, a curious pallor stealing over his face.

"There is no evidence to the contrary." "There's no evidence at all." said

ooch. "either one way or th ler. There has never been anything like a thorough search for him-in the neighborhood of his own home. I don't believe Oliver Baxter ever ran away from home. I believe he's out there in that swamp of yours. Now you know what I mean by an investigation, young man -and if it is ever undertaken I want to say to you it won't be under your direction, and it won't be a half-hearted job. And the swamp won't be the only place to be searched. There are other places he might be besides that

STOP, LOOK AND LISTEN.

Motorists disregarding danger existing at railroad grade crossings have at least 11 seconds to think and act after hearing the first whistle of an approaching train before the train reaches the crossing, railroad officials say. Two long and two short blasts

constitutes the warning signal. Engineers sound the first shrill blast of the whistle on their engine when the train is 1,000 feet from the crossing and a train traveling 60 miles an hour reaches the crossing approximately 12 seconds after the first warning, but the warning precedes the arrival of the train at the crossing by

slightly less than 11 seconds. In the case of a railroad crossing at right angles to the rails, a motorist near the crossing has 11 seconds to either stop or determine if he has enough time to cross. Railroad officials say the former plan should be adopted by all drivers for the matter of safety. The officials point out, however, that

a slower passenger train or a freight reaches the crossing a few seconds later than the train traveling 60 miles an hour.

Sound travels 1,000 feet a second under average atmospheric conditions and a whistle from an engine 1,000 feet away from the crossing is heard in one second. A train traveling 60 miles an hour will reach the crossing in approximately one fifth of a minute giving the motorist 11 seconds to think out his course of procedure for safety.

Thousands of persons are killed annually at grade crossings because the drivers of automobiles fail to heed the warnings at the crossings and of the whistle of the approaching train, officials say. The time in which they have to think and act is usually at least 11 seconds, only a few trains running faster than 60 miles an hour, and in most cases the time is from 14 to 18 seconds for passenger trains and aproximately 24 seconds for slow passenger or freight trains traveling 30 miles an hour.

An interesting problem associated with the foregoing data is that if a locomotive whistles when 5,000 feet away from the crossing while traveling 5,000 feet a minute and stops whistling when it reaches the crossing and it takes five seconds for the sound to reash the crossing only 55 seconds of whistling is heard, although the whistle blows for a minute.

Also, if the locomotive is traveling away from the crossing at the rate of 5,000 feet a minute and starts whistling at the crossing and whistles for a minute, 65 seconds of whistle are heard, including the five seconds of whistle that comes back after the engineer shuts off the steam.-Ex.

462,624 Dogs Licensed in Pennsylvania This Year.

The latest report from the Bureau of Animal Industry, State Department of Agriculture, indicates that 462,624 dogs have been licensed individually in the products a satisfactory market in Pennsylvania during the first nine order to have value for farming purmonths of 1925. This number is 9,551 poses. more than were licensed during the same period in 1924 and 84,273 more in farm land in Pennsylvania in favor than during the same period in 1923. of land in a distant State, attention is Forty counties show an increase in called to the fact that land in this the number of dogs licensed this year State costs relatively less in view of its over the same period last year. Coun- unexcelled local markets and its abilties in which more than 10,000 indi- ity to produce good crops than the vidual licenses have been issued to October 1 include Allegheny, Berks, Cambria, Chester, Delaware, Erie, Fayette, gomery, and York.

FARM NOTES.

-Care should be taken to store gladiolas, canna, and dahlia bulbs in a cool dry place out of the reach of mice and protected from freezing.

-The poultry house flodded with sunlight is much more healthful and sanitary than a dark one. It also tends to make the flock contented. Eggs come from contented birds.

-Christmas trees that are to be shipped must be cut early if they are to arrive at the market on time. If they are very late in arriving, they might just as well be a whole year late.

-Pennsylvania State College crop specialists recommend applying left-over fertilizer on pasture land instead of keeping it over in a damp place where it will become hard and lumpy before spring.

-If you already have a window flower stand in which begonias or other such tender plants are growing, parsley may be planted along the outer edge of the box. This can be used for flavoring all winter.

-Now is the time to select those specimens you are planning to exhibit. at the State Farm Products Show at Harrisburg, January 18 to 22. local or county show is a good place to test the strength of your exhibit.

-Is your seed corn safe from the danger of freezing? The wet weather this fall has prevented proper curing so that a freeze may result in serious trouble to the seed corn supply. A little extra pains may save a corn crop.

-Give attention to the water supply for the sows during the winter. They should be allowed a plentiful supply of water that is not too cold. Ice cold water will throw the hog's system out of condition and will often cause abortion.

-Do you know that McIntosh, Grimes, and Smokehouse are good eat-ing apples now? With an occasional delicious Rhode Island Greening, or Hubbardston thrown in, you soon find that instead of eating apples merely for the health's sake you get real pleasure from indulging in a ripe, juicy eating apple.

-Have the farm tools and machines not in use been housed for the winter? Greasing the working parts will prevent rusting and insure more satisfaction when the machine is started next year. If a list of needed repairs is made when the machinery is put. away, the parts may be ordered and put on before the spring work starts.

-Pennsylvanians, both farmers and city folks, are advised by the State Department of Agriculture to be cautious about buying farm land in distant States. Land like grass looks greenest at a distance to some people and they are easily talked into an invest-ment by speculators often before the land is seen. Even when seen, the purchaser may be so engulfed in the enthusiasm of the real estate agent that the fact is forgotten that land must have transportation facilities and

Before disregarding an investment

that she might be in love with some one else. Especially with the superior. supercilious, cocksure Lansing! **CHAPTER V** An Amazing Cablegram "Why, if Jane were in love with Lansing," reflected Oliver, "good Lord, what a fool he had been to think it would make no difference to him! It would make a difference-an appalling

didn't you? You certainly-" "Shut up!" growled Oliver, scowling

fiercely at the excited Sammy. "What on earth are you talking

about, Sammy?" cried Jane. "Out with it, Sammy, out with it," counseled Mr. Sage, coming down the

steps. "Well, what do you think, Mr. Sage -what do you think? Why, this chump here is the guy that lent Mrs. Bannes-

ter the money to redeem her house." "Oh, Oliver !" cried Jane. "Did you really do it? I could squeeze you to death for it. And you never told me-

you never breathed a word-" "It was only about a thousand dollars," mumbled Oliver.

"Sure it was," agreed Sam cheerfully. "But right there and then the destiny of the great American nation was shaped along new lines. The words were no sooner out of the mouth

of old Mrs. Bannester when the boom was born! Yes, sir, at that very moment-"

"Oh, for the Lord's sake, Sammy, slow down! What the dickens are you driving at, anyhow? Boom? What boom?"

"Your boom, you idiot! The boom's been started for you as candidate for state senator against old man Gooch."

"Why, you darned chump," roared Oliver, "I'm not going to run for state senator or anything else. You must be crazy. I'll head it off tomorrow. I'll telephone-'

"Won't do you a darned bit of good," cried Sammy exultingly. "They'll nominate you, anyhow. Why, you're the only man in this county that would stand a ghost of a show, Ollie. And the best of all-popular nephew running against Shylock uncle! Gee whiz! I'm going down to see Al Wilson at the Despatch office. Put him wise and warn him not to let a word of it leak out in the paper till he gets the word. Night, Mr. Sage-so long, Jane."

"Wait a minute !" called out Oliver, springing to his feet as Sammy darted down the walk.

"Nix!" shouted Sammy over his shoulder.

The three of them watched him in silence as he leaped into his car and began his swift, reckless turn in the narrow street.

"What are you going to do about it?" inquired the minister, the first to speak.

Jane did not give Oliver a chance to reply.

"Do about it?" she cried. "Why, he's going to run against old Gooch and beat the life out of him !"

Oliver looked up at her. She stood at the top of the steps, the light from the open door falling athwart her radiant face, half in shadow, half in the warm, soft glow. Suddenly his heart began to pound-heavy, smothering

gone affairs of the heart. Gee whiz ! What had suddenly got into him?

"Nobody Knows What the People The next morning he was down at Want," Replied the Chairman Senthe swamp bright and early, inspecting tentiously.

the work of the ditchers and tile layers. The task of reclaiming the land ineasiness among the bosses. It was had been under way for several months not until after the young man was and was slowly nearing completion. nominated and actually in the field "I wish you'd change your mind that misgivings beset them. Young about not going out any farther. Oli-Baxter was popular in the southern ver," said old John Phillips, who was section of the county, he was a war superintending the work. "We could hero and he was an upstanding figure go out a quarter of a mile farther within a community where the voters were out a bit of risk, and you'd add about as likely as not to "jump the traces." The bosses sent for Mr. Gooch and "We'll have enough, John," intersuggested that it wouldn't be a bad rupted the young man. "We'll stick to idea for him to withdraw from the race the original survey. Don't go a rod be--on account of his age, or his health, yond the stakes I set up out yonder. It or his nephew.

may be safe but it isn't worth while." "Do you mean to tell me," began Horace, genuinely amazed, "that you "Well, you're the boss," grumbled old John, and added somewhat peevishthink this young whipper-snapper of a ly: "But I can't help saying I think nephew of mine is liable to defeat you're -aking a mistake. There's me?"

some mighty good land there, 'spite of "Nobody knows what the people want," replied the chairman sententiously. "Now, this young Baxter. He's "I'm not denying that," said Oliver patiently. "But we'll stop where the a fine feller. He has a clear record. There isn't a thing we can say against him. On the other hand, he can say a A few minutes later old John confided to one of the ditchers that young lot of nasty things about you, Mr. Baxter was considerable of a darned Gooch. I'm not saying you'll be licked fool. Either that, or else he had some next November, but you stand a thundering good reason of his own for blamed good chance of it, let me tell you, if this young Baxter goes after not wanting to go out beyond the you without gloves."

"This here job has cost up'ards of "I've just been thinking," said Mr. \$3,000 already, and for a couple of Gooch, leaning forward in his chair, hundred more he could clean up clear "suppose I go down to Rumley and have a talk with Oliver."

"What about?" demanded the other, sharply.

than you think," said the ditcher sig-"I may be able to reason with him." "No chance," said the other, shaking "Oh, I don't for a minute think it's his head. "He's got it in for you, I that," said old John hastily. "Not for hear."

Mr. Gooch got up and began pacing the floor.

that old man's body some day. It sort "See here, Smith," he began, halting in front of the "boss." "I may as well The two big ditches, fed by lateral come out flat-footed and tell you I've lines of tile, held a straight course never been satisfied with all these across the upper end of the swamp stories and speculations concerning the and drained into Blacksnake creek, a disappearance of my brother-in-law a sluggish little stream half a mile west year ago. It's mighty queer that a man like Oliver Baxter could disappear of Rumley. Roughly estimated, three hundred acres were being transformed off of the face of the earth and never into what in time was bound to bebe heard of again. Most people believe he's alive-hiding somewhere-but I Oliver was walking slowly back to don't believe it for a minute. He's the house, his head bent, his hands in dead. He died that night a year ago his pockets, when he observed an autowhen he had his last row with his son. And, what's more to the point, I am mobile approaching over the deeply here to say I don't believe his son has rutted, seldom traveled road. He recognized the car at once. Lansing's yeltold all he knows about the-er-the matter."

"Hello, there !" called out Lansing. "Say, what are you trying to get at, "Hop in, Oliver. I've been sent to Mr. Gooch. That comes pretty near to being a charge, doesn't it?" fetch you over to Mr. Sage's. He had

a cablegram this morning and sort of "You can call it what you please. All I've got to say is that I'm not satisfied, and I'm going to the bottom of "A cablegram? His wife-is she this business if it's possible to do so." "I should say not. She's salling for Two days later, Horace Gooch

swamp." "I think I get your meaning. Uncle Horace," said Oliver, now cool and self-possessed. If I agree to withdraw from the race and perjure myself in the matter of the Bannester tax scandal, you will drop the investigation and forget all about it-even though I may have killed my own father?"

"I am not here to argue with you." snapped Mr. Gooch, his gaze sweeping

the ever-increasing group of spectators. "Your candidacy has nothing to do with my determination to sift this business to the bottom," he went on, suddenly realizing that he was now committed to definite action. "I shall appeal to the proper authorities and nothing you do or say, young man, can head off the investigation. That's final !"

CHAPTER VI

A Star's Homecoming

The return of Mrs. Sage after an absence of 23 years was an "event" far surpassing in interest anything that had transpired in Rumley since the strange disappearance of old Oliver Baxter.

Hundreds of people, eager to see the famous "Josephine Judge," crowded the station platform long before the train from Chicago was due to arrive; they filled the depot windows; they were packed like sardines atop the spare baggage and express trucks; they ranged in overflow disorder along the sidewalks on both sides of the

The train pulled in. The crowd tiptoed and gaped, craned its thousand necks, and then surged to the right. Above the hissing of steam and the grinding of wheels rose the voice of

"Keep back, everybody! Don't crowd up so close. Right this way, Mr. Sage -How are you? Open up there, will you? Let 'em through. Got my new car over here, Mr. Sage-lots of room. Hello, Jane! Great honor to have the pleasure of taking Mrs. Sage home in my car. Right over this way. Grab those suitcases, boy. Open up, please !"

(To be Continued.)

-Get your job work done here.

done by dogs have been received by the Department of Agriculture up to November 1 and a total of \$60,532.30 has been paid to owners of live stock and poultry, after careful investiga-tion of the claims.

Damage claims as a result of sheep being killed or injured by dogs show a reduction this year over previous years, due principally to the vigorous enforcement of the dog law in the sheep raising sections of the State. There has been an increase, however, in the poultry damage claims due probably to the fact that the public in the s becoming better informed on the dog law and its provisions for pay-ing damage claims resulting from dogs killing chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese and other poultry.

Exemption.

Citizens of the United States will receive the same privileges given Curuling.

The treasury department has exempted tourists and other travelers from payment of the one-quarter of one per cent. tax on money above \$50 Secretary of the Treasury Cartaya authorized steamship companies to issue identification cards to passengers, which, on their leaving the country, absolves them from either making a statement as to the amount of money they are carrying or payment of the tax.

collar and his best coat, and was walking majestically up and down the street.

"Are you working today, uncle?" asked one of his acquaintances. "No suh. I'se celebratin' my gold-en weddin' suh."

"You today?" "Yes, suh." "You were married fifty years ago

"Well, why isn't your wife helping you to celebrate it?"

"My present wife, suh," replied Uncle Eph'um, with dignity, "ain't got nothin' to do with it. She's de fo'th."

Giving of Toys.

The origin of the custum of giving toys to the children at Christmas has never been authentically traced. It is known that children of the early Egyptians received toys as gifts at stated periods, during which their elders indulged in festivals of good will more than 2,000 years before the coming of Christ.—George Newell Moran.

straw is most common. Corn stover which has been shredded can be used to a good advantage.

land in many sections in which farmers have recently been asked to invest. Chester, Delaware, Mont-Lancaster, Luzerne, Mont-Westmoreland, Washington distance of the majority of its farms than Pennsylvania. This obviates their money. No State has more large A total of 1,652 claims for damages long costly freight hauls and gives every assurance of a satisfactory market cutlet.

However, if a person is determined to invest in land outside the State, he is urged to make a personal inspection. of the land before buying. It often happens that unsuspecting people buy swamp or desert land, or perhaps property too remote from transportation facilities to be of any value.

-Now is the time to mulch strawberries in Centre county. The mulching of strawberries cannot be overemphasized for either the home garden bed or the commercial plantation. Benefits from the added protection are; prevention against soil heaving,... early frosts and excessive loss of moisture; berries of higher quality; and greater ease in harvesting. The ef-fectiveness of a mulch is dependent U. S. Tourists to Cuba to Get Tax upon the material used, the depth of mulch, and the time of application.

Some believe that the mulch should be applied when the ground is firm enough to support a wagon and its ban citizens by the immigration au-thorities, under a recent department load without cutting in. However, many delay too long before spreading the mulch. The fruit buds of strawberries develop during the latter part of August or early September and continue until extreme cold weather prevents vegetative development. Contaken out of the country by travelers. sequently if the mulch is applied at the time when the greatest vegetative growth ceases many of the later buds to form would not be killed by severe freezing but permitted to mature as a result of the added protection.

The amount of mulching material to use will depend on the locality and perhaps on the age of the plantation or the vegetative condition of the -Uncle Eph'm had put on a clean plants. The amount of material generally decreases with an increase of latitude due to the increased protection from a heavier fall of snow. The amount used will vary from 2 to 4 tons per acre which will provide a mulch of 2 to 3 inches.

A number of materials are used for mulching. The determining factors in the choice of the material are cost and availability. Wheat and oat straw are undoubtedly used more than any others although they do not serve the purpose as well as marsh grass or pine needles which contain no weed seeds and do not mat down so as to smother the plants. Barnvard manure is frequently used, but the weed seed content is a disadvantage while often blue mold appears to take a greater toll of fruit. Leaves are used in some sections but the outstanding drawback to their use is the tendency to mat and thus cause suffocation of the plants. Throughout the eastern berry sections the use of either oat or wheat

street adjacent.

Sammy Parr far down the platform.