

MOONLIGHT AND MIDNIGHT.

The flowers know the story Of what the moonlight sees, At midnight, at midnight, Beneath the forest trees.



CHAPTER XXIV.

Never unless sure of its ground and the weakness of the adversary does the modern Indian band attack at night. Folsom and his people well knew that.

smashing pane after pane. Some of the dogs came howling and whining back for shelter, though the mastiffs held their ground, fiercely barking and bounding about, despite the whistles and calls from the besieged, who sought to save them to the last, but not once as yet had the ranch replied with a shot.

Bounding up the steps, the veteran was almost back at his post upon the porch when there came a sound that seemed to give the lie to his last words and that froze the hope that had risen in his breast—the sudden rumble and thunder of at least 200 hoofs, the sputter and bang of rifles close at hand, and then a rush of feet, as, with faces agonized with fear, three of the men came darting within.

"Let go, you coward!" yelled the old man in fury, as he kicked himself loose, and then went bounding out upon the porch. God, what a sight! Sweeping up the gentle slope, brandishing rifles and lances and war clubs, racing for their hapless prey, came 50 Ogallallas, Burning Star among the leaders. Bullets could not stop them now. The two men who had stood to their posts knelt grim and desperate, and Lannion's last shot took effect. Within 50 yards of the walls Burning Star's rushing pony went down on his nose, and in the fury of his pace, turned sudden and complete somersault, crushing his red rider under him, and stretching him senseless on the turf.



He felled the old trader with one stunning blow many reined up short within ten paces of the unarmed man; two sprang from their ponies and threw themselves between him and their brethren, shouting to be heard. And then in the midst of furious discussion, some Indians crying out for the blood of all at the ranch in revenge for Chaska, some demanding instant surrender of every woman there in expiation for Lizette, some urging that old John be given respectful hearing, but held prisoner, there came lashing into their midst a young brave, crying aloud and pointing down the now well-lighted valley where, darting about a mile away, a few Indians were evidently striving to head off the coming of some hostile force.

Meantime, under cover of the fierce argument, Jake and Lannion had managed to crawl back within the building. Folsom himself, in such calm as he could command, stood silent while his captors wrangled. The warriors who pleaded for him were Standing Elk, a subchief of note, whose long attachment to Folsom was based on kindnesses shown him when a young man, the other was Young-Shows-the-Road, son of a chief who had guided more than one party of whites through the lands of the Sioux before the bitterness of war arose between the races.

borne him within, but to what good? Escape from the ranch itself was impossible! Such action would only intensify the Indian hate and make more horrible the Indian vengeance. For 20 minutes the clamor continued, then seemed to die gradually away, and, with fury in their faces, back at full gallop came a dozen of the braves. One glance was enough. They had penned in their foe among the rocks, but not without the loss of several at least of their band, for the foremost rode with brandished war club straight at Folsom, and despite the leap of his two champions to save, felled the old trader with one stunning blow, then gave the savage order to burn the ranch.

By this time the sun was just peering into the valley. The smoke and flame from the corral were dying or drifting away. Eagerly half a dozen young braves rushed for fagots and kindling with which to do his bidding, and a cry of despair went up from within the walls. Recklessly now Lannion and his comrade opened fire from the loopholes and shot down two of the dancing furies without, sending every other Indian to the nearest cover. But the arrows that came whistling speedily were firebrands. The besiegers gained in force with every moment. Poor old Folsom, slowly regaining senses as he lay bound and helpless down by the stream, whither his captors had borne him, heard the jeers and shouts of triumph with which the Indians within the corral were rapidly making their fire darts, when suddenly there rose on the morning air a sound that stilled all others, a sound to which the Indians listened in superstitious awe, a sound that stopped the hands that sought to burn out the besieged and paralyze just long enough all inspiration of attack. Some of the Indians, indeed, dropped their arms, others sprang to the ponies as though to take to flight. It was the voice of Lizette, chanting the death song of the Sioux.

An hour later, once more in force, the band was gathered for its rush upon the ranch. Jake, gallant fellow, lay bleeding at his post. Hope of every kind was well-nigh dead. The silence without was only portent of the storm so soon to burst. Pappoose, grasping her brother's rifle, crouched facing the narrow entrance to the cellar. Jessie clung to the baby, for Mrs. Hal, only dimly conscious, was moaning by her husband's side, while Lizette in silence was kneeling, watching them with strange glitter in her eyes. Suddenly she started, and with hand to ear listened intently. Then she sprang to an air port and crouched there, quivering. Then again the ground began to tremble under the distant thunder of pony feet, louder and louder every second. Again came the rush of the Indian braves, but with it no exultant yell, only cries of warning, and as this sound swept over and beyond their walls, there followed another, the distant, deep-throated trooper cheer, the crack of carbine, the rising thunder of the cavalry gallop, and then the voice of Ned Lannion rang jubilantly over the dull clamor.

"Up! Up, everybody! Thank God, it's Dean and the boys!" Long years after, in the camps and stockades and the growing towns of the far west that almost marvelous vesuvius was the theme of many an hour's talk. The number of men who took part in it, the number of hardy fellows who personally guided the troops or else stood shoulder to shoulder with Ned Lannion at the last triumphant moment, increased so rapidly with the growing moons that in time the only wonder was that any thing was left of the Sioux. Official records, however, limited the number of officers and men engaged to a select few, consisting entirely of Lieut. Loring, United States engineers; Lieut. Loomis, —th infantry; a few men from scattered troops, "pickups" at Frayne and Emory, with Lieut. Marshall Dean and 50 rank and file of company "C."

Loring, it will be remembered, had taken a small detachment from Emory and gone into the hills in search of Burleigh. Loomis, fretting at the fort, was later electrified by a most grudgingly given order to march to the Laramie and render such aid as might be required by the engineer officer of the department. Dean, with only 15 men all told, had dashed from Frayne straight for the ranch, and, marching all night, had come in sight of the valley just as it was lighted afar to the westward by the glare of the burning buildings. "We thought it was all over," said he, as he lay there weak and languid, a few days later, for the wound reopened in the rush of the fight, "but we rode on to the Laramie, and there, God be thanked! fell in with Loomis here and 'C' troop, heading for the fire. No words can tell you our joy when we found the ranch still standing and some 40 Sioux getting ready for the final dash. That running fight, past the old home and down the valley where we stirred up Loring's besiegers and sent them whirling, too—why, I'd give a fortune, if I had it, to live it over again!"

But Loring, after all, had the most thrilling story to tell—of how he wormed a clew to Burleigh's hiding place out of a captured outlaw and beat up the party in a nook of the hills, nabbed the major assemp, but was warned that all the Birdsall "outfit" would rally to the rescue, and so sent a courier to Emory for "C" troop, and, making a wide detour to avoid the gang, ran slap into the Sioux in the act of firing Folsom's ranch. Then he had to take to the rocks in the fight that followed, and had a desperate siege of a few hours, even Burleigh having to handle a gun and fight for his life. "I spotted him for a coward that day we stumbled on Red Cloud's band up by

the Big Horn. You remember it, Dean. I thought him a villain when I learned how he was trying to undermine you. Time proved him a thief and a scoundrel, but, peace to his ashes, he died like a gentleman, after all, with two Indian bullets through him, and just as the rescue came. He had time to make a full confession, and it was all pretty much as I suspected. The note Dean picked up at Reno, that so stampered him, told how a blackmailing scoundrel was on his way to Emory to expose him unless headed off by further huge payments. It was the fellow who called himself Newhall.

"The fellow who gave the tip to Birdsall's people?" said old Folsom at this juncture, raising a bandaged head from his daughter's lap. "Who was he, really?"

"Burleigh knew all the time, and I suspected the moment I heard Miss Folsom's description, and was certain the instant I laid eyes on him. He was a rascally captain cashiered at Yuma the year before, and I was judge advocate of the court."

"And Mrs. Fletcher?" asked Pappoose, extending one hand to Jess, while the other smoothed the gray curls of her father's forehead.

"Mrs. Fletcher was his deserted wife, one of those women who have known better days."

"The ranch is still there, or was 20 years ago, but even then the Sioux were said to raise more hair in the neighborhood than Folsom did cattle. The old trader had been gathered to his fathers, and Mrs. Hal to hers, for she broke down utterly after the events of '68. Neither Pappoose nor Jessie cared to revisit the spot for some time, yet, oddly enough, both have done so more than once. The first time its chronicler ever saw it was in company with a stalwart young captain of horse and his dark-eyed, beautiful wife nine years after the siege. Hal met us, a shy, silent fellow, despite his inches. "Among other things," said he, "Lieut. and Mrs. Loomis are coming next week. I wish you might all be here to meet them."

"I know," said Mrs. Dean, "we are to meet at Cheyenne. But, Hal, where's your wife?"

He looked slyer still. "She don't like to meet folks unless—" "There's no unless about it," said the lady, with all her old decision, as she sprang from the ambulance, and presently reappeared, leading by the hand reluctant, yet not all unhappy, Lizette. Some people said Hal Folsom had no business to marry an Indian girl before his wife was dead three years, but all who knew Lizette said he did perfectly right; at least Pappoose did, and that settled it. As for Loring— But that's—enough for one story.

THE LAST LAUGH.

It Was the Best and Was Enjoyed by the Man Who Owned the Lawn.

"There's another case of the man who laughs last," remarked a practical joker the other day, pointing to a turnip patch in front of a private residence, says the Washington Star. "I don't understand where the laugh comes in," admitted the listener. "Of course, you don't, but I do, and the laugh is on me. I thought I was playing a joke on my friend, who occupies the house, but he has the turnips and I have to buy mine. Some time ago he wanted grass and clover seed to plant in front of his house, and like many other people he thought the agricultural department supply would make a better showing than any he could buy in a store. I volunteered to get the seed, but I included I would put up a job on him."

"And couldn't he tell the difference between seed for turnips and seed for grass?" interrupted the hearer. "He thought there was something about the seed that was not exactly right, but, not being a farmer, he was not certain. I told him the seed had been brought from the Philippines, and he expected to see something in the grass line different from any he had ever seen before. Soon after the seed had sprouted and the little leaves began to show themselves my friend's suspicions were aroused, and he made inquiries about the neighborhood. None of his neighbors could tell what was growing on his parking and I persisted in telling him what a beautiful grass plot he would have some day. The time finally came when the turnips could be seen, and my friend enjoyed the joke."

"And, of course, you also enjoyed it?" the joker was asked. "Not much," he answered, "for I am now buying some of the turnips at least twice a week when I might just as well have had them in my own yard."

A Beard on the Subject.

Harry Furniss, the artist, tells an amusing story at his own expense. Furniss had been commissioned to illustrate a tale for a "serious" periodical. His drawing represented a lovers' meeting, and the young man of the picture was of the Family Herald and Something to Read type, with long, thin legs, eyes like saucers and a little "duck" of a mustache.

This would not do at all for the editor of the serious periodical, who wrote to Mr. Furniss in these terms: "Dear Sir: Will you kindly give Charles a beard, and show an aunt, uncle or other chapman in the distance? The subject and treatment are, at present, hardly suitable to our young readers."—Fourth Estate.

Mourning on Half Time.

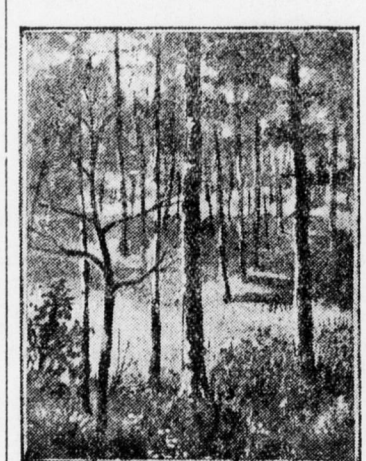
"Don't you mourn any longer for your late husband?" "Only forenoons, but it will take me two years. You see, it's this way: It would not make any difference to my deceased husband whether I mourn for him the whole day long for one year or a half day for two years—and it suits me better."—Fliegendes Blaetter.



FARM FORESTRY NOTES.

Plan Pursued by a Massachusetts Landowner is of a Simple and Practical Nature.

Only a limited amount of practical work in thinning, trimming and care of farm woodland has been attempted in the east. Many of the plans described appear rather complicated to the average farmer and the forests are generally allowed to take care of themselves. The plan pursued by Nathaniel Norton, of Plymouth county, Mass., is especially interesting as a study, even in the west, because of its simple and practical nature. Ten years ago he bought 50 acres of mixed white pine and spruce oak. This tract he has managed by removing all the oak that interfered with or shaded the growing pines until the woodland has been transformed from a miscellaneous forest tract to valuable pine



SECTION OF IDEAL WOODLAND.

land. The illustration shows a portion of the present tract after thinning and pruning.

In many parts of this woodland the timber's bulk has doubled in seven years. The plan was to take out those oak that interfered with or shaded too much the young pines, leaving enough of them standing to encourage the sprouting of pine seeds which came up in all parts of the ground without planting. The sprouts from oak stumps were pruned off in winter when the stumps were frozen. Mr. Morton does not wait for limbs to die before pruning, but begins to trim off the lower branches when the trees are five feet high, repeating the treatment when the trees increase in height. This plan keeps the branches from growing into the timber. It is found that quick healing is promoted by cutting the limb extremely close, so that the inner trunk bark on all sides is penetrated, making a scar about twice the diameter of the limb cut off. Limbs up to three inches in diameter cut off in this way heal much faster than those merely cut off close to the outside bark. It is not stated that this principle will apply to trees other than pine.

The experience of Mr. Morton indicates that about 33 years are required to bring pines from seed to a size suitable for lumber. Others allow 45 years. The soil used by Mr. Morton is very light, with a sandy subsoil. Trees 10 to 25 years old appear to have made an average yearly gain in growth of wood of fully 100 per cent. The illustration shows a part of Mr. Morton's tract, on which are pines about 50 years old. The foreign growth has been removed and the trees trimmed since owned by Mr. Morton. The owner estimates that the wood on the lot paid for the expenses of removing the foreign growth. Bushes were kept mowed at a cost of about \$50 for the entire period.—Orange Judd Farmer.

Raising Cattle on Farms.

It is not true that the cattle business to be profitable must be conducted on the broad ranges of the western plains, says Texas Farm and Ranch. That is one profitable system of cattle raising, but there is another which yields fully as great profits for the capital invested. Raising cattle on the farm has in all countries and all ages been found profitable, and more so now than ever. By raising cattle on the farm the farmer has a good market for all the feed he can raise, saves labor and expense of transportation and avoids much loss from waste and hoccus-poccus of commerce. And one of the main features of stock farming is that it can be made to continually improve the fertility and value of the farm.

Ideal Rations for Ducklings.

In a trial at the New York station, at Geneva, ducklings fed on an exclusive grain ration died so fast that the ration had to be changed, while those fed on a ration containing animal meal averaged 4.2 pounds in weight at nine weeks old. The latter ration was composed as follows: Cornmeal, 14 parts by weight; animal meal, 11 parts; ground oats, two parts; wheat bran, two parts; pea meal, two parts; wheat middlings, one part; old process linseed meal, one part; malt sprouts, one part; brewer's grains, one part, and gluten meal, one part. One pound of salt was used with 360 pounds of the mixture.

A successful nest for the early siter is in a barrel laid on its side and facing the wall, with just room enough for the hen to enter.

HINTS ON MANAGEMENT.

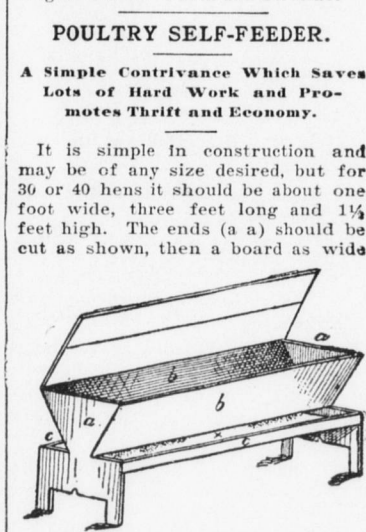
Poultry Keeping is a Business That Calls for the Constant Exercise of Good Judgment.

Poultry should pay a good profit, but if neglected will run one into debt. The smaller the flock, the greater the individual yield. Fifty hens are the largest number that should be allowed to run in one flock. Too many are usually kept together, and room on the roost is frequently restricted. The roosts should be low and level, and not one above another, like the rounds of a ladder, as fowls will all seek the highest roost, and many will be crowded off and probably injured by falling. Hens that are accustomed to low roosts are less inclined to scale fences, and may be confined in pens with less trouble. The ground under the roost should be covered with loose gravel mixed with loam, unless a board floor is used. It is better to have two yards than one, as one may be cultivated while the other is occupied. In this way roots and forage may be grown for the fowls on land fertilized by their droppings. An open shed is very important, as affording protection from cold in winter and heat in summer. Hens to be profitable should be carefully fed, and if they are well cared for they will give a profit. If hens are fed on varied food they must lay eggs. Clover hay finely cut is excellent for winter feeding in place of the green stuff they usually get in summer. Close breeding will cause the eggs to be infertile. Young fowls may pay better than old ones, but something depends upon circumstances, so far as age is concerned. Brahmas should seldom be more than two years old if one is seeking the greatest profit. Never keep more than 100 chicks growing in the same yard, and not so many of different ages. For sitting hens half barrels without heads set in the ground half their depth are excellent. Make nests of hay on the earth; in cold weather such nests exclude cold air beneath the eggs. In warm weather the nest should be in a cool place. Sitters should be kept by themselves to prevent any annoyance from other hens. A coop placed over the nest large enough to allow of a dust bath works well. Have food convenient, so the sitting hen can eat and go back to her nest before the eggs get cold. It pays to give care to sitting hens, as they will then, as a rule, bring off larger broods.—Farm and Fireside.

POULTRY SELF-FEEDER.

A Simple Contrivance Which Saves Lots of Hard Work and Promotes Thrift and Economy.

It is simple in construction and may be of any size desired, but for 30 or 40 hens it should be about one foot wide, three feet long and 1 1/2 feet high. The ends (a a) should be cut as shown, then a board as wide



SELF-FEEDER FOR POULTRY.

as the ends and as long as the feeder should be nailed horizontally between the ends as they stand upright and four inches below the shoulders. Cut the sides (b b) and nail in position; next make a V-shaped trough as long as the feeder and invert between the lower edges of b b to keep the food from running out too much at once. Nail on strips (c c), which should be four inches wide, and put on a cover with hinges.—P. L. McVey, in Orange Judd Farmer.

What Result to the Soil?

I would not seem to undervalue stable manure, but it is a mistake to suppose that land must grow poor when we cease to feed everything upon the farm. It is not necessary to sacrifice all income for the sake of keeping up the soil. Now that we know more about the composition of the soil, we know that productiveness depends in great degree upon the presence of organic matter in it, and not solely upon stable manure or commercial fertilizers. The ideal condition would be one in which a goodly number of live stock could be kept with profit on nearly every farm, but the cattle feeders of most fertile eastern valleys must give up a farm scheme that makes fat cattle and wheat the only cash products. The list of cash crops will be made longer and clover, peas and sods must be freely used to supplement the manure.—Farm and Fireside.

Selecting Eggs for Hatching.

Select the hens that are to produce the early pullets now. Get the breeding birds together early in the season. Feed them well, both in the morning and evening, and give them a little meat each day. Give a good feed of the best grain before the roosting time. This system of diet in the winter will keep the birds healthy and robust. The eggs will be perfect and the chickens will be healthy. The eggs must be gathered daily and placed in a fairly warm place until a sufficiency is procured for a complete sitting. After the spring is advanced, if you have then had success and your yard avoid setting more eggs advisable, where eggs nearly all the year early pullets by early as it can be done.