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MYNHEER JOE.

BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE.

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CHAPTER XIV.

[Continued.]

"That is a small matter. I find them equal. One has a stain upon it, you see."

"Oui, monsieur," bending forward to look at it more closely, and then turning to the baron, who smiles coldly, as he carelessly remarks:

"The blood of young Lord Carmorgan. We met in Turkey. He was buried in Stamboul, I believe. A careless second failed to wipe the blade, and it is such a good one that I hate to part with them."

These words have not the slightest effect upon the American, who holds the two swords, one in either hand, weighing them thus.

"Choose the one that is stained; that has stood the test, and may be lucky," whispers Sandy.

"Say rather avenged, my friend, since it is marked by the blood of a brave man. I'll take the same blade Lord Carmorgan handled. Since a Briton failed to teach the Russian bear a lesson with it, we'll see what Brother Jonathan can do. Hold it for me, Mr. Grimes."

No one makes any remark, though secretly the baron is fuming, while both Mr. Grimes and Sandy chuckle at the words of the traveler. It is patent that Mynheer Joe has gauged the make-up of his antagonist to a dot, and will be able to take care of him.

Both principals in the contemplated affair proceed to business. Coats and vests are removed, Joe arranges his little jest as in the gymnasium, placing the footballs over his shoes, tightening a belt around his waist, and fastening up both sleeves.

The baron observes his movements with a curiosity that shows itself upon his face. He discovers that his American antagonist knows more than he gives him credit for, and perhaps for the first time the startling thought flashes through his brain that this man may be a revelation to him.

His general eye takes in the wonderful width of Mynheer Joe and the superb forearm. These points give promise of astonishing supple sword play in the possession of a master.

The baron feels concern, something that never bothered him before when about to cross a rapier with one of this kind, for the duel has been a pastime to the Russian feeling that he was safe within from the start.

Both are now ready.

Then seconds place them, and as there is really no advantage in the ground, this requires little effort.

"One moment before we begin!" It is Mr. Grimes who speaks and all eyes are at once turned upon him. "Let us understand the conditions of this affair. Will the gentlemen's honor be satisfied with first blood, or is it to be a duel to the death?"

The baron opens his mouth to declare for the latter, remembering the disgrace put upon him when the wine was dashed into his face. Just then his eyes rest upon the countenance of the American. What is it in Mynheer Joe's face that causes a chill to pass through the frame of the duelist? He hardly knows himself, save that for perhaps the first time in his life he has had an indefinable feeling of fear.

"The first disabling wound will satisfy me," says the baron, coldly, secretly meaning that when he himself gives this it shall be the coup de grace through his opponent's heart.

Mynheer Joe inclines his head.

"When the Russian says suits me, I am ready for any conditions," he remarks.

"It is understood, gentlemen, a disabling wound brings the little affair to a termination, and we, the seconds, are to be the judges. Are you ready for business?" calls Mr. Grimes.

Both swordsmen assume favorite positions and make affirmative responses. Mr. Grimes nods his head to the Frenchmen.

"Begin!" calls that worthy, sharply.

Hardly has the word left his lips than the sword-blades kiss with a ringing sound, and the extraordinary duel among the hills of Mokkatam has begun. It is the baron who assaults; he is eager to discover the mettle of his antagonist, and throws some fire into his attack. Though not forgetting to keep his guard intact, and retain some reserve.

The spectators group around, and prepare to witness one of the most astonishing affairs that ever took place upon the bank of the historical Nile.

It does not take an experienced swordsman long to learn that he has met a foeman worthy of his steel, and ere they have been at it ten seconds the Russian allows a look of surprise to be seen upon his face.

This is succeeded by an expression of terrible ferocity. He has discovered the caliber of his antagonist, and is more than ever determined to kill him there and then. Fascinatedly, the object of this solicitude has something to say about this matter himself, and he speaks with no mincing words.

For perhaps a minute or so the swords are held motionless and like [illegible] baron [illegible] keen-tipped rapier. He [illegible] is the Turk [illegible] realizes that the day is lost to his cause.

The baron is game. He battles desperately to save himself. Mr. Grimes notes the sallow hue that has crept over the man's face, and he knows the duel is already decided. For the first time perhaps in his life, the Russian feels the cold clutch of fear at his heart. Once a man allows this feeling to come over him in a duel, his chances are gone. At the same time over-confidence is just about as fatal to success. The only safe course is a line between cautious and wide-awake, ready to do his best and brave the best.

It becomes apparent that the baron weakens. His defense is no longer the marvelous one he put up while Mynheer Joe continued the right-hand movement. These flashes from the mouth side dazzle him. He has never been drilled to meet the attack of a left-handed swordsman, and finds his brain unable to successfully cope with the new problems thus suddenly presented for solution.

The baron is lost.

He might still save himself by retreating back and sullenly refusing to continue the engagement with a man who has such a wonderful advantage over him, in that his left arm is as dexterous as his right.

Perhaps such a thought flashes into the mind of the Russian; he is human, and life is sweet to him; but he does not take advantage of the idea. Pride rises against it. He comes from a race that would meet death rather than appear a coward.

So he battles on, doing his best to meet the attacks of his foe. He no longer hopes to assault in turn; his arm is too tired for that. He suffers excruciating pain every time he makes a move. More than once can Mynheer Joe, if he chooses, drive his blade through the body of his foe. He lets the chances slip by; perhaps the time may come when he will regret this mercy, but he does not like to have the blood of a white man on his hands.

At last the opportunity he looks for comes; there is a quick movement, a sudden cry, and the sword of the American protrudes through the right arm of the baron at the shoulder.

Lord Carmorgan has been avenged with the weapon he handled in vain!

CHAPTER XV.

THE BARON IS SATISFIED.

With another quick movement the American withdraws his sword, and steps back a pace to avoid any punishment, but the baron is in no condition to deal such. He sinks back, and only that the French captain springs forward and catches the baron in his arms he must fall in a heap.

There is no sign of fainting, only exhaustion. He stands there, sustained in part by his second, looking at the man in all the world who has proved his master, and the gleam of those eyes can be termed nothing less than diabolical.

Mynheer Joe leans on his sword and coolly surveys his antagonist. Then he calls for a match and applies it to the cigar which he has held between his teeth all this while. It is evident that he has no fear of the future.

The pavilion remains unbroken for perhaps a full minute.

"Time!" says Mr. Grimes clearly.

Mynheer Joe, still smoking calmly, elevates his sword. The plucky baron makes a move to follow suit, when his second, the French captain, throws himself between.

"Mon Dieu! You would not finish this affair with murder, comrades? It was agreed that a disabling wound would end it. See, my principal has no longer any arm. What served him so well is now almost as useless as a dead member. You will call it quits, or I shall offer myself his substitute!" he cries with commendable enthusiasm and pluck, since he knows he is no match for the Yankee.

"On one condition," returns Mr. Grimes, who also produces and lights a cigar, while the irrepressible Sandy is scribbling away for dear life in shorthand at the rate of a thousand words a minute, more or less.

"Name it, monsieur."

The baron provoked this duel by an insulting allusion to the American flag. It has had a trial by arms, and the decision rests against him. Let him frankly apologize, not to my principal only but to Americans everywhere, and I am sure Mynheer Joe will be satisfied as well as myself."

The proposition is reasonable.

"Parbleu! I see no reason why it should not be done in common justice, since it has been decreed that my principal was in the wrong. It was a serious slight though a somewhat pardonable one, and will haunt me always. What say you, monsieur le baron do you withdraw your allusion to the flag under which this gentleman serves?"

The Russian snubs.

"I am compelled to, since I discovered that it covered only cowards, for he has proven very plainly that I made a mistake. Mynheer Joe knows my offense was made only to provoke him to a meeting, so that I need retract my words no further than this."

"You have had the meeting, are you satisfied, baron?" asks the second.

"For the present, yes," replies the other, between his teeth, "but I do not end it, my American friend. No man has ever yet run me down and lived. Your time will come."

"No man on earth has ever worked a foeman in a duel, Russia, but you are a man of luck, I'm [illegible] Take care it is not your luck that is snuffed out like a candle." We Americans stand to lose [illegible] with Western [illegible]

[To be continued.]

GOOD ROADS.

Money Value to Farmers.

PROFESSOR W. C. LATTA, Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind., Writes as follows: That good roads have a money value to farmers will be granted by all. That the money value of improved highways is alone sufficient to justify the cost of their construction will be confidently claimed or readily admitted by many farmers, questioned by others, and denied by not a few.

In view of the financial and many other advantages of good roads, a majority of the farmers of the State would doubtless favor their construction as rapidly as practicable under some efficient, economical and equitable system of highway improvement. But there is a considerable proportion of the farmers—doubtless one-fifth, and possibly one-fourth—who have little knowledge or appreciation of the benefits of good roads, and who therefore object on account of the great cost of highway improvement. The farmers of this class know that they will have to bear their full share of the burden of such improvement; they discredit the wholly without reason the statements and conclusions of many public writers as to the losses and gains to farmers from poor and good roads respectively; hence, they view with apprehension the general agitation in favor of improved highways. Ignoring or underrating the educational and social advantages as well as the comfort and enjoyment of good roads, or feeling unable to pay the price of such benefits, these farmers regard with distrust and distinctive measures for highway improvement, and they are likely to oppose efforts for the betterment of our roads unless they can first be convinced that good roads will prove a paying financial investment. Addressing, therefore, in behalf of those who for any reason are not influenced by the higher considerations in favor improved highways, I raise the question, Will it pay the farmers in dollars and cents to improve their public roads?

Before attempting to answer this question, let us consider in what ways permanently good roads will prove financially beneficial to farmers. All will agree, I think, that a good road will:

First—Economize time and force in transportation between farm and market.

Second—Enable the farmer to take advantage of market fluctuations in buying and selling.

Third—Permit transportation of farm products and purchased commodities during times of comparative leisure.

Fourth—Reduce the wear and tear on horses, harness and vehicles.

Fifth—Enhance the market value of real estate.

But while it is easy to enumerate the ways in which improved roads will be financially advantageous to farmers, it is very difficult to estimate in dollars and cents, the benefits to accrue therefrom. Distrusting my own judgment in the premises and fearing also that my opinions would have little weight with others, I sought the advice of the farmers themselves. Letters of inquiry were sent to sixty of the most intelligent farmers in forty counties located in the central and northern parts of the State. The substance of these letters is given herewith:

First—About what proportion of the public highways in your county are now good gravel roads?

Second—Please estimate the average increase in dollars and cents in the selling price on acres of land throughout the county, as the result of such gravel roads.

Third—If all the public roads in your county were converted into improved highways, how much, in your judgment, would it increase the average selling price an acre of land throughout your county?

Fourth—What would be a fair estimate of the cost a mile of converting our common dirt roads as they now exist into good gravel roads, provided, of course, the work were to be performed economically under some competent general supervision, and not hampered by local restrictions?

Fifth—Supposing that your county were divided into 100-acre farms, and that the average distance of each farm from market were five miles, what, in your judgment, would be the average annual cost in dollars and cents to each farmer of our unimproved highways?

In answering the fifth question please take into account the reduced loads, increased time, extra wear and tear, and loss in sales from inability to deliver products when the market is best.

Over forty replies to these queries were received. As would be expected from the difference in soil, surface, and distance from gravel beds, there is a wide range in the estimates of the different correspondents. Many of the estimates are necessarily mere guesses, while others are based on a thorough knowledge of the matters under consideration.

The averages of these estimates should give—and they probably do give approximately—the consensus of opinion held by the most intelligent farmers of the State as to the cost and money value of improved highways and the loss due to poor roads.

The approximate average for the forty counties are as follows:

First—The average estimated in excess in the selling price of land due to the existing improved highways is 26.75 per cent.

Second—The estimated average increase in dollars and cents in the selling price on acres of land throughout the county, as the result of such gravel roads, is $14.75.

Third—The estimated average increase in the selling price on acres of land throughout the county, if all the public roads were improved highways, is $31.25.

Fourth—The estimated average cost a mile of converting our common dirt roads into good gravel roads, provided the work were done under some competent general supervision, and not hampered by local restrictions, is $706.25.

Fifth—Supposing that our county were divided into 100-acre farms, and that the average distance of each farm from market were five miles, the estimated average annual cost in dollars and cents to each farmer of our unimproved highways is $18.75.

The average increase, therefore, of $6.48 an acre is lower than was intended for the lands near the improved roads.

Second—The estimated average increase an acre that would result from improving all the public roads is $8.

Third—The estimated average cost of converting the common public roads into improved highways is $1146 a mile.

Fourth—The estimated average annual loss a hundred acres from poor roads is $762.8.

OUR THREE GREATEST CANONS.

Yosemite, Yellowstone and Grand Canon of the Colorado Compared.

The justly famous Grand Canon of the Yellowstone is like the Colorado, extravagantly colored and abruptly countersunk in a plateau, and both are mainly the work of water. But the Colorado Canon is more than a thousand times larger, and as a score of new buildings of ordinary size would not appreciably change the general view of a great city, so hundreds of Yellowstones might be eroded in the sides of the Colorado Canon without materially augmenting its size or the richness of its sculpture. But it is not true that the great Yosemite rocks would be thus lost or hidden. Nothing of their kind in the world, so far as I know, rivals El Capitan and Tenaya in a few dwarfs or in my own feeling about them. None of the substitutes or binoculars prerequisite to the cannon that I have seen or heard of approaches in majestic grandeur the granite face of El Capitan or the Tenaya side of Cloud's Rest. These cliffs, types of permanence, are almost unadorned, for few lichens of the canon that are sheer are about half as lush and lovely as those of deserts. Climbers who already dotted the rock in numerous places, and who could be seen or heard at the time, seemed company would draw near, yet, in a sense, entirely [illegible] she would take no place [illegible] temple, palace or tower. Nevertheless, Frederic Weber, comparing the Grand Canon in a general way with the adjacent Yosemite, says: "And the Yosemite and the lovely Yosemite. Dumped down into the wilderness of forests and mountains, it would take a guide who knew of its existence a long time to find it." This is striking and shows no well above the levels of commonplace description; but it is confusing—and has the final fault of not being true.—John Muir, in the Century.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

Under many a fancy waistcoat beats a plain heart.

Lost wealth may be recovered, but lost time never.

Men and wasps are little most when there is nothing in them.

To be learned is to have a full receiver; to be wise is to have an initial dip spring.

One worthless act of saying may hold together a score or more of priceless pearls.

Criticism is like a stone—it either sharpens or rubs the edge of talent according as it is applied.

All brave men have for me only as brave who have affections to fight for, whether in the daily battle of life or in physical contests.

Paying people and being pitied oneself are two very different things. The first is soothing and sweet; the second is annoying, or even maddening, according to the temperament of the patient.

If you have an evil day approaching or a "bad quarter of an hour" in room of you, or any kind of disagreable duty or engagement whatever, meet it without delay. It is better as a rule, manfully to face it at once than to be compelled to do so later.

High Time For Change.

A story is told of an old New Hampshire family which may or may not be strictly true, but which passes for truth among the inhabitants of the place where it originated.

A man who had struggled through boyhood under the name of Zephaniah Smith married a young woman whose incautious parents had christened her "Pamela Jane." When their first child, a girl, was born, they announced their intention of giving her a number, which she might change for any name she chose when she reached years of discretion.

They were blessed with seven children and pursued the same course with each child. Numbers two, four, five and seven were boys, and lived on in the town where they were born, never seeing any need to select Christian names to the day of their death.

But when "Three" Smith became engaged to a young man by the name of Hills, she considered it desirable to change her number to "Susan."

Shortly after that "Six" was married to a young Foote, who promptly named her "Lucy."

"One" clung to her name and single blessedness until middle life, when, having relented sufficiently to accept an offer of marriage from Thomas Hogg, she saw the advisability of becoming "Mary" with some haste.—Youth's Companion.

Discovers a River in Canada.

W. J. Wilson, an explorer of the Canadian Geological Survey, has returned with his party from a tour through the unexplored country to the southwest of James Bay. Mr. Wilson reports the discovery of a large river, hitherto unsurveyed and running between the Albany River on the south and the Ottawaquasi River on the north.

The newly discovered river has a course of over 300 miles and bears [illegible] the Indian Bay. Several [illegible] were also crossed by the all the lands of the country. The average-looking party.—New York Times.

HOW NEW YORK CITY GETS ITS DAILY FOOD.

HOW FAR THE METROPOLIS WOULD BE ABLE TO SUBSIST BY THE PROVISIONS WITHIN ITS BORDERS IN CASE AN EMERGENCY SUDDENLY CUT OFF THE DAILY SUPPLY FROM OUTSIDE—DANGERS OF FAMINE TO WHICH THE CITY HAS BEEN EXPOSED DURING SEVERE STORMS OF THE PAST.

HOW a great city is supplied with its daily victuals and drink is familiar in a general way to most people. The consumer tells with at least an approximate accuracy how much of that an average American eats and drinks. It is also an interesting problem, knowing how much a city like this consumes to consider how far it has provided for anything beyond its immediate needs. How does its store of food compare with the well-stocked larder of a provident housewife? How long would breakfasts and luncheons and dinners go in their present abundance and variety, if a hostile fleet held the Hudson, the Sound, and laid out the bridges across the Harlem or in more probable contingency if a hurricane, a blizzard, or an earthquake effectually cut the lines of transportation in two and no one could mend them?

The resources of a country as of a city are apt to be underestimated in considering a question like this. People do not realize until they have tried it how far a little can be made to go on a half-ration or quarter-ration basis. The Germans calculated in 1870 that Paris was able to stand a two months' siege. In fact, the city held out for 133 days.

Very possibly, as many schools of dietary experts contend, people would be better off if they did not eat so much. Nevertheless, in the lines suggested by which follows it has been assumed that people will keep pretty closely to their usual habits of eating and drinking, even in time of severe siege, and that they will not pause in this probably unsuggested course until the warehouses, which are the city's pantries, are empty.

SUPPLIES FROM THE WEST.

If the trains from the West should stop coming in for three days the retail butchers would cease to get their normal supply of fresh meat; if the interruption of traffic continued for a week they would be to give practically none at all. Now and again the city gets to the very verge of this latter condition. Dealers said that in the great snow-storm of 1888 only a day or two separated the city from an almost absolute famine. But the trains came through in those two days and the danger passed.

The Western packing houses, which supply the greater part of the meat eaten here, figure on keeping about enough meat "in sight" to supply one week's demand. Generally speaking, there is one day's supply in the "cooler," ready for immediate delivery. Another day's meat is in the cars at the yards. This means, of course, at Hoboken or Jersey City, in many cases, and strictly speaking, not in New York at all. While these cars are being unloaded trains aggregating a third day's supply are coming in. The allowance for two days more is on the road somewhere between here and Chicago, Kansas City or St. Louis, and at the packing houses in the West a sixth day's meat is being loaded on the cars.

Perhaps a tenth of the city's meat supply, the greater part of it killed "kosher" for the use of the orthodox Jews, comes from the city abattoirs which face on the East River. They could keep up their normal output, perhaps, for a day or two after the Western meat had given out. The six days' supply which they have "in sight" is made up substantially as follows: One day on the "hooks," ready to be carried away to the retail shops, one day in the killing pen, one day's supply of live cattle being unloaded in the yards, one day's supply of live cattle on the train coming East, and one day's supply in the Western stock yards, loaded and ready for shipment.

A DAY'S SHIPMENT OF CATTLE.

Exactly what a day's supply amounts to is a question more difficult to answer than the published statistics would seem to indicate. Figures showing domestic receipts and exports to foreign countries are made up, but these take no account of numerous small shipments, especially of pork, made from points near by, or for the trade of places in this vicinity which are supplied from the New York markets. One expert of high authority has computed that the people of the greater city and its suburbs eat about 20,000,000 pounds of meat every week. Roughly speaking, an average day's supply is about 1,700,000 pounds. A day's supply of pork is more nearly 2,000,000 pounds. Mutton and lamb are not eaten to such an extent, but the demand for these two meats will reach 250,000 pounds a day.

If the packing houses, cold storage rooms and butcher shops were ransacked therefore, the amount on hand at an average time would be something like this: Beef, 3,500,000 pounds; pork, [illegible] pounds; mutton and lamb, [illegible] pounds, certainly not a small accumulation. New York has come to be the greatest veal-eating city in America, and three or four days' supply at nearly 200 carcasses a day would probably be found on hand.

In the event of the hypothetical siege, washout or earthquake severing communication with the rest of the world New Yorkers would probably have lived to eat for a long time. In warehouses all about the city, and in the flour mills themselves, are stores of flour which ought to last for three weeks, and in the [illegible] and retail grocery stores there would be as much more. Millers and jobbers in this country have always proceeded on the supposition that a barrel of flour is consumed annually for every man, woman and child. Although the last census gave a larger figure, they still trust the old "rule of thumb" in preference. While the barrel spiece average holds good for the whole country, the large cities, where fresh vegetables and other foodstuffs are available in greater variety and for a longer period of each year, consume slightly less than their proportional share of plain wheat flour. It is probably fair to allow a barrel and a half a year for the 3,300,000 or more inhabitants of Greater New York. This means about 8200 barrels per day. There are no figures which show the amount on hand in the numerous warehouses, but men of experience in the business say that it will average something like 200,000 barrels.

As to the raw materials from which flour could be made there are definite statistics. The "visible supply" of each grain is known at all times within narrow limits. The country stored in this city should reach a maximum within the next few weeks, and will then fall irregularly until next year's crops are harvested. On October 26 of last year there were in store in Manhattan and Brooklyn warehouses 4,702,414 bushels of wheat, 10,726,186 of corn, 836,132 of oats, 84,263 of rye and 148,622 of barley. On August 9 of this year the accumulations had shrunk to 3,000,000 bushels of wheat, 7,200,000 of corn, 10,000 of oats, 13,000 of rye and 10,000 of barley.

BREAD AND BUTTER FOR A MONTH.

After bread and breadstuffs the thoughts of the eater naturally turn towards butter. Unfortunately the butter supply would be exhausted long before the bread gave out. It is doubtful if there is ever much more than a month's supply on hand.

GIFTS OF THE EGG SUPPLY.

"Butter and eggs and a pound of cheese" went together in Mr. Calverley's ballad. Eggs are stored in so many places in and about the city and in such varying quantities that accurate information, except as to the receipts from day to day, cannot be obtained. The proprietor of a large cold-storage warehouse states that in his opinion the supply of eggs in storage at one time would never suffice for the city's needs for more than a fortnight, and he doubted if the supply would last so long if all other sources were cut off.

The fact that the weekly receipts of cheese quadruple between March and July is alone sufficient to show that there must be a large accumulation in summer to supply the winter's needs, and this is the case. There is probably enough cheese to last for more than two months.

When prohibitive prices are the rule for fresh provisions housekeepers usually resort to canned goods. It would seem that the city could do the same. Canned peaches and pears, peas and green corn could still be had, supposing that people did not try to live on them exclusively, after flour and water porridge became a luxury. Canned goods are almost the only edibles the whole supply of which the dealers receive at the same time. The strawberry season being over, for instance, all or practically all of the strawberries that three and a quarter million people will eat until the fresh fruit comes again are packed away in brightly labeled tins within carting distance of the retail counters.

The fresh fruits and vegetables, milk and cream (except, of course, the canned, condensed variety), and fresh fish would not be expected to last very long. At the same time there might be enough of some less important food products of which the actual consumption is small to last a long time. It might easily happen that the city had seasoning in plenty, for instance, with no substantial food to put it on.—New York Post.

Ancient Tiles.

The discovery of the encaustic tiling in the Babylonian palace of Nebuchadnezzar proves that to the mere of glazing and coloring the people of the time of Abraham were as proficient in certain classes of art work as the best of the modern artists. The world seems always to have had latent ability to excel in the production of beautiful things, and it has been manifested in past ages wherever race, climate and governmental conditions made it possible. This age has achieved more than any other largely because of the growth of free government and the fortunate mingling of races in Eastern Europe and in America, and the consequent rise of high ideals in every department of human activity.—Boston Transcript.

The Home of the Banana.

Nature seems to have made Jamaica the home of the banana, but it remained for American enterprise to turn the fruit to gold. It is estimated that possibly bunches of bananas were shipped from this island last year. At an average of thirty-five cents a bunch, this would yield $3,150,000. It is also stated that about $1,750,000 is paid out annually in wages by fruit companies. This would bring a total of $5,000,000 to the island in one year as a direct result of the fruit trade.

The man with a family of grown up daughters is surely under home rule.