

JOAN OF THE SWORD ISLAND

By S. R. CROCKETT, Author of "The Raiders," etc.

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CHAPTER XXVII.—Continued.

The only one of the party wholly without a settled plan was the woman most deeply interested. Theresa von Lynar simply rode to Courtland to save her son or to die with him. She alone had no influence with Prince Louis, no weapon to use against him except her woman's wit.

When in the morning light of the second day they came in sight of Courtland, and saw on the green plain of the Alla a great concourse, it did not need Al Pitker's shout to urge them forward at a gallop, lest after all they should arrive too late.

"They have brought him out to die," cried Joan. "Ride for the young man's life!"

But all their careful plans and scrupulous intents were in a moment cast to the winds by the urgency of the need. Expecting to find themselves instantly captives, they found themselves instead among a stout and independent people, stirred to the highest point of hatred and excited disgust by the cruelty of the scene and the horror which they knew must too certainly ensue.

The sight of their favorite Prince Conrad raised the highest hopes, not only among the populace, but in the army of Courtland itself. It had long been a standing toast in every guard-room, "To the succession of the cow!" For they looked to their ideal knight, Conrad, that hero without stain, to deliver their country from the degrading weakness and subservience of the reign of Louis, and especially from the intruding Muscovite and hated Cossack who had supplanted themselves as guards in the very place of their Prince.

Hence the shouts of "Prince Conrad!" "Our deliverer!" "The true Prince!" "Down with Louis!" "Drive out the Russ!" which saluted them everywhere as the cavalcade advanced slowly through the press.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The Truth-Speaking of Boris and Jorian.

This is the report of Captains Boris and Jorian, which they gave in face of their sovereigns in the garden pleasure of the palace of Plassenburg.

"Speak out your minds, good lads!" said Hugo, leaning a little further back.

"Ay, tell us all," assented Helene, "tell us how you delivered the Sparhawk, as you call him, the officer of the Duchesse Joan!"

So Boris saluted and began. "The tale is a long one, Prince and Princess," he said. "Of our many and difficult endeavors to keep the peace and prevent quarrelling I will say nothing."

"Better so!" interjected Hugo with a gleam in his eye. Jorian coughed and growled to himself. "That long fool will make a mess of it!"

"I will pass on to our entry into Courtland. It was like the home-coming of a long-lost true prince. There was no fighting—alack, not so much as a stroke after all that both of shouting!"

"Boris!" said the Princess warningly.

"Give him rope!" muttered Prince Hugo. "He will tangle himself rarely or he be done!"

"I mean the blessing of Heaven there was no bloodshed," Boris corrected himself. "There was, as I say, no fighting. There was none to fight with. Prince Louis had not a friend in his own capital city, saving the Muscovite. And at that moment Prince Ivan the Wasp was glad enough to win clear off to the frontier with his Cossacks at his tail. It was a God's pity we could not ride



"I am his wife!" said the Princess, then down. But though Jorian and I did all that men could—

"Ahem!" said Jorian, as if a fly had flown into his mouth and tickled his throat.

"I mean, your Highnesses, we did what ever men could to keep the populace within bounds. But they broke through and leaped upon us, throwing their arms about our horses' necks, crying, 'Our saviors!' 'Our deliverers!' God wot, we might as well have tried to charge through the billows of the Baltic when it blows a northerly right from the Gulf of Bothnia! But it almost broke my heart to see them ride off with never a

spear-thrust through one single Muscovite belly-band!"

Here Jorian had a fit of coughing which caused the Princess to look severely upon him. Boris, recalled to himself, proceeded more carefully.

"It was all we could do to open up a way to where the young man Maurice lay stretched on the Cross of Death. They had loosed the wild horses before we arrived, and these had galloped off after their companions. A pity! Oh, a great pity!"

"Then came the young man's mother near, she who was our hostess at Isle Rugen—"

"Why did you not abide at Kernsberg, as you were instructed?" put in Hugo at this point.

"Never mind—go on—tell the tale!" said Helene, who was listening breathlessly.

"The young man's mother came near and threw a cloak across his naked body. Then Jorian and I unbound him and chafed his limbs, first removing the gag from his mouth; but so tightly had the cords been bound about him that for long he could not stand upright. Then, from the royal pavilion, where she had been brought for cruel sport to see the death, the Princess Margaret came running—"

"Oh, wickedness!" cried Helene, "to make her look on her lover's death!"

"She came furiously, though a dainty princess, thrusting strong men aside. 'Way there!' she cried, 'on your lives make way! I will go to him. I am the Princess Margaret. Give me a dagger and I will prick me a way.'"

"And, by Saint Stephen the holy martyr! if she did not snatch a bodkin from the belt of a tailor of the High Street and with it open her way as fealty as though she were handling a Cossack lance."

"And what happened when she got to him—when she found her husband?" cried Helene, her eyes sparkling. And she put out a hand to touch her own, just to be sure that he was there.

"Well," said Boris, quickly sobered, "it was in truth a mighty quaint thing to see. The Princess Margaret took the young man in her arms and caught him to her. The Lady Theresa kept his wrist. They looked at each other a moment without speech, eye countering eye like knights at a—"

"Go on!" the Princess thundered, if indeed a silvery voice can be said to thunder.

"Give him up to me! He is mine!" cried the Princess.

"He is mine!" answered very laughingly the lady of the Isle Rugen. "Who are you? And you?" cried both at once, flinging their heads back, but never a moment letting go with their hands. The youth, being dazed, said nothing, nor so much as moved.

"I am his mother," said the Lady Theresa, speaking first.

"I am his wife!" said the Princess.

"Then the woman who had borne the young man gave him into his wife's arms without a word, and the Princess gathered him to her bosom and crooned over him, that being her right. But his mother stepped back among the crowd and drew the hood of her cloak over her head that no man might look upon her face."

"Bravo!" cried Helene, clapping her hands. "It was her right!"

"Little one," said her husband, pointing to the boy on the terrace beneath, who was lashing a toy horse of wood with all his might, "I wonder if you will think so when another woman takes him from you!"

The Princess Helene caught her breath sharply.

"That would be very different!" she said, "yes, very different!"

"Ah!" said Hugo, the Prince, her husband.

Thus the climax came about in the twinkling of an eye, but the universal turmoil and wild jubilation in which Prince Louis's power and government were swept away had really been preparing for years, though the end fell sharp as the thunderclap.

For all that, the trouble was only deferred, not removed. The cruel death of Maurice von Lynar had been rendered impossible by the opportune arrival of Prince Conrad and the sudden revolution which the sight of his noble and beloved form, clad in armor, produced among the disgusted and impulsive Courtlanders.

Yet the arch-foe had only recoiled in order that he might the further leap. The great army of the White Czar was encamped just across the frontier, nominally on the march to Poland, but capable of being in a moment diverted upon the Princesdom of Courtland. Here was a pretext of invasion ripe to Prince Ivan's hand. So he kept Louis, the dethroned and exiled prince, close beside him. He urged his father, by every tie of friendship and interest, to replace that prince upon his throne. And the Czar Paul, well knowing that the restoration of Louis meant nothing less than the incorporation of Courtland with his empire, hastened to carry out his son's advice.

In Courtland itself there was no confusion. A certain grim determination took possession of the people. They had made their choice, and they would abide by it. They had chosen Conrad to be their ruler, as he had long been their hope; and they knew that now Louis was for ever impos-

sible, save as a cloak for the Muscovite dominion.

The country rose behind the retiring Muscovite, and Prince Louis was conducted across the boundary of his Princesdom under the bitter thunder of cannon and the hiss of Courtland arrows.

Meanwhile Joan, casting aside with an exultant leap of the heart her intent to make of herself an obedient wife, rode back to Kernsberg in order to organize all the forces to meet the common foe. It was to be the last fight of the Teuton Northland for freedom and faith.

The Muscovite does not go back, and if Courtland were conquered Kernsberg could not long stand. To Plassenburg (as we have seen) rode Boris and Jorian to plead for help from their Prince and Princess. Des-sauer had already preceded them, and the armies, disciplined and equipped by Prince Karl, were already on the march to defend their frontiers—it might be to go farther and fight shoulder to shoulder with Courtland and Kernsberg against the common foe.

The presence of Prince Conrad in the city of Courtland seemed to change entirely the character of the people. From being somewhat friv-



"I will go!" said Margaret wiffully, clous they became devoted to the severest military discipline. Nothing was heard but words of command and the ordered tramp of marching feet. The country barons and knights brought in their forces, and their tents, all gay with banners and fluttering pennons, stretched white along the Alla for a mile and more.

The word was on every lip, "When will they come?"

The day after the deliverance of the Sparhawk, Joan announced her intention of riding on the morrow to Kernsberg. Maurice von Lynar and von Orsen would accompany her.

"Then," cried Margaret instantly, "I will go, too!"

"The ride would be over tollsome for you," said Joan.

"I will go!" said Margaret wiffully.

"I shall never let him out of my sight again!"

"We shall be back within the week! You will be both safer and more comfortable here!"

The Princess Margaret withdrew her head from the open window, momentarily losing sight of her husband and making vain her last words.

"Ah, Joan," she said reproachfully, "you are wise and strong—there is no one like you. But you do not know what it is to be married. You never were in love. How, then, can you understand the feelings of a wife?"

She looked out of the window again and waved a kerchief.

"Oh, Joan," she looked back again with a mournful countenance, "I do believe that Maurice does not love me as I love him. He never took the least notice of me when I waved to him!"

(To be continued.)

Land Was Out of Sight.

"Yes," said one of the traveling men, who was telling stories in front of the hotel. "I was once out of sight of land on the Atlantic ocean twenty-one days."

"On the Pacific one time I didn't see land for twenty-nine days," said another. A little, bald-headed man tilted his chair against a post and knocked the ashes from his cigar.

"I started across the Kaw river near Lawrence in a skiff once when I was a kid," he said, "and was out of sight of land before I reached the other side."

"Aw, come off," came from one of the crowd. "The Kaw isn't more than 300 yards wide anywhere along near Lawrence."

"I didn't say it was," said the little man quietly. "The skiff turned over and I sank twice."—Kansas City Times.

A Far-Seeing Scot.

The following story is told of an eccentric Scottish keeper on an estate in the north of Scotland:

He was once guiding a shooting party up near the top of a steep and high mountain. Suddenly, when they had reached a great height, one of the beaters gave a loud yell, and seized himself by the back of the neck. Through his interlocked white fingers bright blood oozed. The man had been peppered with stray shot in the nape.

The keeper, seeing the blood, and thinking the accident much worse than it really was, hawled out excitedly—

"Rin, Dugald! Rin doon the hill! Heaven only tens hoo far we'll ha'e to calrry ye!"

AROUND THE CIRCLE

KEEP THE DOLLARS MOVING IN YOUR OWN COMMUNITY.

IT MAKES WEALTH FOR ALL

Buy of the Man Who Will Buy of You and Your Dollar Will Come Back Again.

(Copyright by Alfred C. Clark.)

As on the western prairies in pioneer days, the trapper's camp fire, kindled to prepare his frugal meal or to warm him from the biting wind, fanned into renewed vigor, spread, first on the tiny blade of grass to neighboring blades, and thence to the tangled masses all around until the broad plains were one vast sea of seething flame destroying all before it, so the mail order business, started in the eastern cities on a small scale, fanned by the breeze of judicious advertising, has spread until it now covers the length and breadth of our land and threatens disaster to the smaller dealers everywhere. The note of warning has been sounded, the light is visible in the sky, and yet, apparently oblivious to it all, the ones whose safety is being endangered, heed not the alarm nor the signal of disaster. The country merchant and the farmer, whose combined efforts can stem the tide of destruction that threatens to engulf them, are alone unconscious of the approaching devastation, that, like a great sea of consuming flame, is threatening to engulf them.

The country merchant and the farmer—the simple, honest dwellers in the rural districts, are the victims this gigantic peril is reaching out for to fill its rapacious maw. Each year its grasp becomes firmer, its power greater. Only a few short years ago the catalogue house was a thing unheard of, to-day it stands as one of America's greatest institutions. And with great fortune comes great power, so now the mail order business may well be classed among the powers of the nation. Its efforts are already being felt at the national capital.



The Endless Chain—It Keeps the Dollar at Home Where It Belongs.

where our laws are made, and unless a check is administered the passage of the parcels post bill will mark one of its greatest triumphs.

But let us look at a few of the simple reasons why the farmer should patronize the home dealer. In the first place their interests are centered in each other. Every season of plenty on the farm means a prosperous year to the country merchant. So in the prosperity of the farmer does the country merchant expect to gain. The farmer finds, therefore, in the country dealer, a staunch and loyal friend and a defender of his rights. They pay taxes together, live side by side, their children play and go to school together. When the crops are poor or misfortune comes, to whom does the farmer look? Not to the mail order magnate, but to his neighbor, the country merchant. How often does the mail order concern take any interest in the political questions or legal measures beneficial to the farmer? Yet with their bright-hued catalogue of pictured "bargains" they reach out an open hand for the farmer's hard earned dollar. And does he get value received? Not often. The first order he may, but that is only a bait. The business is not founded on principles. It is not built on honorable methods, its mighty walls are erected on graft. The goods are shop-worn or shoddy, or perhaps many kinds of goods have defects so cunningly concealed that the naked eye can scarcely see a difference between these articles and those of a much higher grade. You are expected to send cash with the order or have it ready when the goods arrive with the big C. O. D. mark on the package. Your crop failure, or shortage of money doesn't interest the mail order house, your credit with them is good only so long as your pocket book is filled. Your order is made out and you pay for goods you never saw, put up and selected by men you do not know. If these goods do not prove to be worth the money, if the shoes do not wear well, or the suit is shoddy goods, will the mail order firm make them good? Not often. Yet the local dealer will do this. He knows his honesty is his best drawing card. So much for the advantage of dealing with honest men and not with grafters.

Snakes Reared for Their Skins.

The idea that snakes are useless creatures and should be exterminated wherever found, will have to pass away, says the Shoe Trade Journal, as in Australia they are now being systematically reared for the sake of their skins, which have a considerable commercial value in London, Paris and New York. Snakeskin is the fashionable material for slippers, belts, bags, purses, jewel boxes, card cases, dressing-table accessories, etc. Rabbit trappers supplement their means considerably by catching young snakes and extracting their poisonous fangs. The blacks are also expert snake catchers. To them the snake is an agreeable article of diet.

The Fortune Tempted.

A well known British nobleman was actually engaged to Miss Courts, but on her challenging him one day whether it was her personality or her great fortune which appealed to him he frankly acknowledged that although he was much attached to her, her vast property had been his special inducement in betrothing himself.

Her reply was characteristic: "Let us then remain the best of friends instead of being the poorest of lovers."

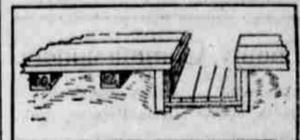
selves in this connection. With the rapid growth of the mail order business being established. These large firms are daily reaching out for new sections of trade. What will be the result along this line? With the growth of the catalogue house comes the death of the rural mercantile trade. Let them once destroy the country merchant and the markets of the world will be in the hands of a few wealthy capitalists. Their branch houses will appear in all the country towns and the farmer will no longer be independent. His friend, the country dealer, who through competition was forced to pay the value of the butter, eggs, etc., will be a thing of the past, and in his place will appear the fat, gloating face of the capitalist, in whose benumbed conscience there is no thought of pity, whose breast contains instead of a heart a great lump of cold stony gold, whose one ambition is to build up a greater fortune than the world has ever seen, and who cares naught for the tears or trials, woes or weeping of his victims so long as he can squeeze a little more of the coveted glittering treasure from him.

Again, the dollar spent with the local dealer stays in the community where it blesses the spender over and over again. The merchant pays it to the butcher for meat, the butcher gets his bread of the baker and therefore drops the dollar into the baker's till, the baker pays it to the miller for flour, and the latter buys his grain from the farmer, so the dollar once more jingles merrily in the farmer's trousers pocket. But spend it with the mail order house and it is gone never to return. It goes to build up the great commercial interests of New York or Chicago. Does it pay the farmer to send his money to help beautify and build up these great cities? Has he not more interest in beautifying and building up his own section of the country? If not, he should. If a place is good enough for a man to live in and to make his money in, it is good enough for him to spend his money in. Who helps build the churches, school houses, streets, bridges, etc.? Does the mail order house help? Will they give a dollar to educate the farmer's children, or donate anything to support the farmer's widow or orphans? Do they help to pay the taxes, or add anything to



A WOODEN GUTTER. How Most Serviceable One Can Be Constructed in Cow Stall.

A correspondent of Prairie Farmer tells of his method of constructing a wooden gutter in his cow stable. The general plan is brought out in the accompanying illustration. As shown no cement is used. The stand-



Wooden Gutter in Cow Barn.

ing floor for the cows is shown at left. Back of this is 16-inch gutter eight inches deep. To the extreme right is the floor of the alleyway.

The gutter is made by framing sides and bottom; supports are every three feet at sides. Inside of the frame work, including bottom, the ceiling is made of 2-inch matched stuff, carefully planed and pointed so as to not interfere with the work of the stablemen. When one desires a wooden gutter this plan is said to work satisfactorily.

A SILO SHOWING.

For Consideration of the Man Who Doesn't Believe in Silos.

Here is a nut for you to crack. C. P. Goodrich took a close, accurate census of 48 patrons of creameries around the city of Fond du Lac, Wis. He figured up all the items of their expense in keeping their cows, what they fed, etc. Then he went to the creamery and got just what each herd earned and compared them. This is what he found:

There are five creamery patrons who fed ensilage. No. 4, who made on butter \$29.18 profit per cow; No. 7, who made on butter \$14.05 per cow; No. 17, who made on butter \$12.59 profit per cow; No. 21, with \$20.17 profit per cow, and No. 25 with \$27.79 profit per cow.

One cheese factory patron fed ensilage. No. 4, whose profit on milk delivered was \$22.23. These six silo men averaged \$21.02 profit per cow, while the average profit of creamery patrons was only \$5.94 per cow. The gross returns for the silo men averaged \$52.52 per cow, while those who did not feed ensilage, received on an average of but \$34.00 per cow, a difference of \$18.52 in favor of the ensilage men.

Can anyone doubt, in the face of these facts, asks Hoard's Dairyman, that it will pay to build a silo? Is it possible that all this gain in gross receipts and profits is because these men feed ensilage? Or, is it in part, because these men are more progressive, up-to-date farmers, have better dairy cows, study to feed a balanced ration, and, in short, have less of old fogyism than many of those who do not have silos? These are questions for you to ponder on and answer. My own opinion is that, although I think any man is making a great mistake who keeps a herd of dairy cows without having a silo, the feeding of ensilage did not, and could not, of itself, make this astonishing difference of over 54 per cent. in gross receipts and more than 500 per cent. in net profit.

STRIPPINGS.

A calf dropped through the fall months will usually make better growth during the year than a spring calf.

The coats and skins of cows are too generally neglected, but it is a mistake to use a currycomb at any time.

No cow will yield a full flow of milk, no matter how well fed, if she is in any way uncomfortable—so, see to her comfort.

One night and day exposed in cold, wet weather will injure a cow more than ten nights in good quarters can repair.

The dairy cows that get out only occasionally and only then to get muddy should be brushed regularly every morning.

The keeping of cows means retention of soil fertility, the raising of maximum crops and prosperity for any farm community.

The cow and the sow are certainly a great combination—the cow giving the milk and the sow and pigs growing on the skim milk.

Unless cleanliness is observed in the highest degree, we admit hundreds of uncertainties in the manufacture of dairy products.

Does Your Cow Do This?

Any cow falling to provide eight pounds of milk a day now, when winter and high-priced feed-stuff are here, can hardly be considered a profitable one. Of course, this does not apply to the heifers or to cows almost due to freshen.

A Good Suggestion.

Prof. Henry of Wisconsin makes a good suggestion: Let dairy communities by neighborhoods, keep either Jersey, Holstein, Guernsey or Ayrshire cows exclusively for profit and convenience. All are good dairy breeds.