TREADING DOWN THE HERD'S GRASS

By Charles Adams.

IT was in haying time, and the weather was so fair that we had mowed all the grass in the "south field." We had doubts about cutting down so much, for there were only three of us to take care of it; but the weather had cleared off bright and windy that morning, after a thunder shower in the night.

"There are pretty sure to be three or four days of good, hard weather now," said Napoleon, or "Poley," as we called him. "Let's down with it!"

And we did. There were six acres of it, all stout grass, following clover the summer before; two tons and a half to the acre of long stalked herd's grass, which, when dry and ready to go into the barn, is about as stiff and hard to pitch and handle as so much wire. Any country boy who has ever "mowed away" knows what such grass is when it is pitched off the cart to him in big forkfuls.

The sun shone hot all that first day, and heavy as the grass was it "made" well. We raked it into windrows with the horse rake during the afternoon. Father was away in the north part of the State, "cruising" for pine and spruce, in the employ of a lumber company, and Napoleon and I had the haying to do, with the assistance of one hird man.

The next morning, as soon as the dew was off, we turned the windrows. There were about twenty rack-loads of the hay. We planned to haul in ten loads that second day and ten the next.

Seven or eight tons of hay, as every one knows, are about as much as three men ought to handle in one afternoon. It has all to be pitched over twice with forks and trodden down in the haymow; and this latter part of the work, in the case of coarse herd's grass, is the worst, for the tramping has to be done in a hot, close barn, amid choking dust.

Until noon of the second day, when we began hauling, the weather was fair; but immediately after 12 o'clock a change was apparent. A gray haze appeared in the south, soon followed by small shreds of cloud, which increased in size. In Maine we knew those signs only too well during the warm season. Such southern rains come on suddenly.

"It will pour by 3 o'clock," said Napoleon. "And all this hay out! What's to be done.

The only thing we could do was to swallow a hasty luncheon and begin hauling as fast as possible.

We sent word of our plight to our next neighbors, the Whitcombs, and as they had finished their haying a day or two previously, they kindly sent over their two hired men, with hay rack and ox team, to help us.

We had been saving what we called the "west bay" of the barn in which to put this herd's grass. The usual cross girders had been taken out of this bay, making one long haymow of it, fifty feet by twenty, and we knew that the crop in the south field would fill it to the "great beams" of the barn, eighteen or twenty feet above the barn floor.

When we drove in with the first load the hired man started to pitch it off into the bay, and I undertook to stow it. Napoleon had remained out in the field to roll the windrow up into "tumbles," ready to be pitched upon the cart as soon as it returned from the barn.

The hired man was a large, strong fellow. At every forkful he flung off about a hundred-weight of that coarse, snarled hay, and I soon found that I was going to have quite as much work as I could manage, for I had to pull the hay back into the long, deep bay, tread it down in the dust and heat, and return to the front in time to take the next tough, snarly forkfuls as they came rolling down off the cart. I could not do it; no one could. My weight, indeed, was not sufficient to tread the coarse stuff down.

This first load was no sooner pitched off and the cart backed out than in drove the Whitcomb rack, piled high with another load. One of the men with this team had remained in the field, rolling up tumbles; the driver was ready to throw off the hay, and they all seemed to think that I could take care of it.

Finding myself worsted, I ran into the house to see if I could not get some of the women to help me tread the hay down, but they had all gone raspberrying.

As I ran back to the barn, however, I happened to see in the lane two three-year-old colts that we were pasturing for Grandfather Adams. They were handsome brown Morgan colts, of which the old gentleman was very fond, for they were well matched, and he expected to exhibit them as a trotting pair at the State fair. He was out nearly every day looking at his pets, giving them salt or titbits, and seeing to it that we kept the watering trough in the lane pumped full of water. He also made us put horse bells on the horns of all the young cattle, for fear they would hook those colts.

It came into my mind that I might make them tread that hay down in the mow. My need of aid was pressing. I ran out to the lane and called the colts through the yard into the barn, then led them across the barn floor and urged them into the mow. The hay was just about level with the barn floor when I drove them in, and I put up a board to keep them from coming out. The Whitcomb load was half off by this time; but I pulled a part of it back, and then, bringing a horsewhip from the wagon house, I ran those colts up and down the mow. They were fine, plump, heavy colts, and the way they tramped that herd's grass down was a joy to behold.

The Whitcomb cart had no sooner backed out of the barn floor than in came our cart with its second load. Napoleon had loaded it hastily, for the sky was darkening.

"Pitch it off! Roll it off!" I exclaimed to the hired man. "I'll take care of it! I'll stow it now as fast as all of you can bring it to me!"

I would wait till I had half a rack load of it rolled back and distributed about a little; then I would get up on the front girders with the horsewhip and send those colts back and forth, from one end of the long bay to the other. Eight feet are much better than two for treading down hay, and the difference between 140 pounds of boys and 1600 pounds of colt was at once apparent. It was a great scheme!

Meanwhile the loads came in hurry and haste. One was no sooner pitched off to me than another was ready. We were all working as swiftly as possible. But while throwing off the eighth load our hired man suddenly stopped, leaned on his fork, and began to laugh.

"Say," he drawled, "I s'pose you see that this haymow is fillin' up pretty fast. It is up to the front beams now. 'Tain't any o' my business, but how are you goin' to git the colts down off'n the mow?"

In the heat and hurry of the emergency I had not thought of that, and they were being elevated higher and higher with every load. In fact, they were up nine or ten feet above the barn floor already; too high for them to jump down without breaking their legs.

The hired man stood and laughed. "Those colts'll be up in the roof of the barn when this field of hay is in," said he.

When he drove out to the field he told Napoleon of the fix I was getting into with the colts, and Poley came running in to see about it.

"That's a pretty go!" he exclaimed. "What will Grandpa Adams say? I don't think you ought to have taken those colts for such a job. The dust is making them cough."

"Well, they might just as well be on the great beams as where they are," said I. "Now they are up here, I am going to keep them at it till this hay is in."

There'll be the mischief to pay if grandpa finds it out!" replied Napoleon. He hurried back to the field, however, for the cart was waiting.

I felt not a little anxious about the situation; but the loads were coming think and fast. As I could could not get the colts down, I kept them treading, and getting higher with every load. The rain did not begin until nearly five o'clock, and we hauled in eighteen big loads of that herd's grass, there were only about two loads that became too wet to get in.

But those eighteen loads had filled that haymow quite up to the great beams of the barn. As the hired man had anticipated, the colts were up in the top of that high barn with hardly room to stand under the roof. Truth to say, too, they were hot and sweaty.

The men from Mr. Whitcomb's went off home, laughing over it; as for Napoleon and me, the more we studied the problem of getting the colts down, the more difficult it looked. We set a long ladder and carried up two buckets of water to them, and let them stand in the hay and eat what they wanted. In fact, we were tired out with our hard afternoon's work, and there were the cows to milk, and all the barn chores to do. It was Saturday night and our hired man went home.

While we were milking we heard Grandpa Adams calling the colts. It was now raining hard, and he had come over to see that they had opportunity to get under the barn yard sheds.

"Now what shall we tell him?" said Napoleon, anxiously.

Of course I ought to have gone and confessed. I knew it, but I did not want to have him find out what I had done. It disturbed me a good deal to hear the old gentleman out in the rain calling, "Nobby, nobby, nobby!" and "Cojack, cojack, cojack,' up and down the pasture but I kept quiet, and when at last he came back to the barn and looked for us boys, to ask about the colts, Napoleon and I kept out of sight.

Grandfather at last decided that they must have taken shelter in the woods at the far side of the pasture, as they sometimes did, and although still somewhat disappointed by their non-appearance, he went home without making any further search.

Day had no sooner broken next morning than Napoleon and I were at the barn. We knew that we must get those colts down in some way even if it were Sunday. It was really work of necessity, but how to manage it and not injure the animals was something of a problem.

We went quietly to Mr. Whitcomb's, and called out his two hired men, and held a conference. We hit upon a scheme and to carry it out we were obliged to go to a sawmill half a mile distant and bring four sticks of timber, two by eight inches, and each twenty-four feet in length.

These we set up aslant, close together, reaching from the barn floor to the top of the haymow, and forming a kind of a chute. Taking halters and bits of rope, three of us then climbed on the mow, and by pushing against their sides suddenly as they stood in the smarly hay, threw down first one, then the other, of the colts, and tied their legs securely, to prevent them from struggling. Then we dragged them forward to the top of the chute.

While we were thus employed Napoleon had gone to bring the long, large rope from a set of pulley blocks, and also an old buffalo skin. Having wrapped the skin round one of the colts, to prevent injury to its sides, we then let the animal slide down the chute, steadying it with the large rope passed around its body.

We were fortunate to get both of them down without accident, and we then untied their legs and turned them out.

The colts were in the pasture, feeding as if nothing had happened, when Grandfather Adams came at eight o'clock. He looked them all over, but could not find a scratch or a mark on either of them. They did cough a little for several days afterward, but he did not chance to hear or notice that.

That winter, however, in December, when father began to take the hay out of the mow, he had some difficulty. Napoleon and I were from home at the time, teaching district schools several miles away, but he wrote to us:

"I should like to know how you two boys stowed that herd's grass hay last summer, and what you did to it; you must have used a pile driver. I have sent for a grip fork, and I want you both to come home Saturday and help me pull out two or three tons of it with a tackle and block."—Youth's Companion.

MIRROR ON THE HAT BRIM.

Form of "Busy-Body" by Which the Wearer May See Behind Him.

In all the larger cities it is a common thing to see a mirror fixed on the front of a house so that the occupants may sit inside and enjoy the view up and down the street without being observed and without cultivating the somewhat ungainly habit of leaning out the window. These devices have acquired the popular name of "busy-bodies," but to the trade they are known as window mirrors, which is somewhat prettier.

A very similar device has been recently designed to be worn on the brim of a hat or the visor of a cap in order that the wearer may enjoy a constant view of what is transpiring in his rear, without the necessity of constantly turning his head. It is said to be a very desirable piece of apparatus for automobilists, bicyclists, vehicles as well as pedestrians, as it enables the wearer to keep in constant knowledge of the position of objects behind him, and yet without taking his attention from what is going on in front of him.

The device is fastened to the hat brim or cap visor by means of a couple of screws, and the mirror is designed to rock on its pivot so that it can be fastened at any angle to suit the circumstances under which it is worn. It is placed a little to one side of the centre of the hat brim, which is the best point for obtaining the desired sweep of the rear view.

Goats to Kill Snakes.

That useful animal, the goat, is being put to a new use on a farm ten miles northwest of Columbia. A carload of them was turned loose on a piece of ground on the Branham-Hearn farm for the purpose of exterminating rattlesnakes. The plot of ground is thickly covered with undergrowth and there are so many rattlesnakes on it that workmen are afraid to enter it to clear it up. Goats were suggested, and Hewitt Brothers, the proprietors of the farm, ordered a carload at once. The experiment is being watched with much interest. Goats on the State farm at Columbia have proved their efficiency in the clearing of thickly covered ground, but some doubt if they will be able to exterminate the snakes as well.—Kansas City Times.

Paris' Wonderful Clock.

The Grand Palais in Paris possesses a wonderful clock, which was shown in the Paris exhibition of 1855. It was the work of Collin, and has just been overhauled. It is claimed for this chef d'oeuvre, says the Débats, that it does not vary more than the hundredth part of a second in a year. It is four and a half meters in height, and indicates the time in the twelve chief cities of the world, each city having its own dial. The clock not only marks the year, month and day of the week, but its pendulum forms a barometer of singular precision.

The Germs of Death

By the Editor of Collier's Weekly

IT may be maintained that nobody ever dies a natural death. Old age, the premature old age, which is the only kind we know, is a pathological condition. Such are the opinions of Dr. Elie Metchnikoff, not a fakir, but a serious person, who studies things through a microscope at the Pasteur Institute. Each of us swarms with tiny beasts of prey, which travel up and down our body, seeking what they may devour. By attacking our beneficent cells, previously weakened by the unwise life we all lead, they produce an artificial senility, the malady which kills those men whom in our ignorance we call very old. Looked at from Dr. Metchnikoff's standpoint, old age is merely a problem for medical science. How shall we help our beneficent cells in their struggle against the enemy? One way would be to take every baby and cut out his larger intestine, an organ which ought not to have been included in our anatomy. At present this can not be done, as the operation is risky. A second method would be to destroy the beasts of prey. But we do not yet know [illegible] they exactly are. Some are a legacy left by our ancestors, immedia[illegible] remote, who suffered from heritable diseases. Others, more mysterio[illegible] perhaps the instruments of a sort of essential disease, of that old ag[illegible] precociously kills all who do not die still earlier of tuberculosis, pne[illegible], the bubonic plague, or croup. Until we know more we can only ref[illegible] our diet, eating little meat or none, and subsisting chiefly on butter, chee[illegible] and sour milk. By these imperfect means we may prolong life a litt[illegible]—two hundred years or so. Up to ninety, for example, we may be as active as the President of the United States, and thereafter, for a hundred years more, as reflective as the Prime Minister of England. This would still leave us half a century for art, philanthropy, or croquet. But when death does finally draw near, will not its approach be as distasteful as ever? By no means, says the doctor. Under present conditions death is like an unnatural sleep, which overtakes us early in the day—say before dinner. In the future it will come after a full meal, when the day's work is done.

An Aristocracy in America?

The Impossibility of an American Aristocracy of Wealth :: :: ::

By Anna McClure Sholl

CHIEFLY upon two conditions depends an aristocracy—the continued possession and exercise of power, and the consequent unity of aims and ideals. The aristocratic body in England, for instance, is self-conscious; its members are united by mutual understanding. They acknowledge certain well-recognized laws of life and manners. They depend upon each other to uphold these laws. Individually, wealthy Americans may be both self-conscious and self-assertive, but collectively they are antagonistic to one another. The accumulation of wealth implies struggle, and struggle does not bring forth the kind of qualities which make the gentle and stately men and women of Van Dyck's canvases one great family.

One of the greatest perils of the republic, and one reason why a genuine American aristocracy can never be formed is that a strong class has arisen, without its strength being officially recognized, as in the aristocracy of rank, and certain duties and obligations toward society are imposed upon it by that recognition. For if wealthy Americans lack social unity among themselves, they lack also to a greater degree, the sense of social responsibility, that mark of a true aristocracy. The sense of his public duties, inborn in an English aristocrat, is owing, to be sure, largely to the law of primogeniture, a law which also insures to him that wealth without which the aristocratic ideal can not be perfectly enforced. He is expected to take his seat in Parliament, to give his aid in legislation, to perform certain public duties which have no connection with his own material prosperity. Another bar to unity of social aims and ideals among the wealthy is their frequent lack of genuine culture. To know rather than to feel is the aim, and ideals are not born of knowledge alone. The culture which implies courtesy and humanity—those aristocratic essentials,—is too often lacking.

If this unity of social ideals upon which an aristocracy largely depends does not now exist, is it likely to be evolved out of the present conditions? Its evolution would depend largely upon the permanent power of one class, exercised in the right direction. But though the second condition may be possible, the first can never be. Under conditions peculiar to American life, great fortunes are constantly changing hands. Accumulated by the fathers, they are squandered by the sons, or divided among many children, or lost through mismanagement or speculation. The aristocracy of wealth constantly endangers its position by its very style of living, making large demands on even large fortunes. The law of decay, which eventually protects society from power of whatever nature, operates to disperse wealth so that the powerful class can not be the permanent class, can not therefore form an an aristocracy. It is the safeguard of the aristocracy of rank that its power is mystical as well as material; can never, therefore, wholly perish. Another bar to unity and permanency in the wealthy class is the constant inundation of newcomers. Into the rose-lighted drawing-room may stride at any moment a breezy Westerner, or a member of the first generation, his riches raw upon him.—McClure's Magazine.

The Care of Children's Eyes

By D. T. Marshall, M. D.

ORIGINAL research in a large eye clinic has proved to me that many parents, even of fair intelligence, are extremely neglectful of the eyes of their children.

Either from some congenital defect of the inner eye, or from the presence of squint and the consequent inability to fix both eyes upon an object, the work is thrown upon the better eye, and the poorer eye gradually becomes less capable from mere disuse. It would be well for parents to test the vision of their children by covering first one eye and then the other with a small card or book, and asking them to read some sign or describe some object at a convenient distance. It is often a matter of great surprise for one to find that a child sees very little with one of his eyes. If children having such eyes are fitted with suitable glasses when young, the vision of the poor eye may be made equal to that of the other, and by use become stronger instead of weaker. Children with squint can often be cured without operation by wearing proper glasses.

This is a contagious disease which is characterized by the growth on the inside of the eyelids of small granules as large as pin-heads, or larger, which look very much like grains of pearl sago after they have been soaked in water. In some cases this disease gives rise to no symptoms, but in most cases there is sooner or later redness, and sensitiveness to light. Later on there may be clouding of the cornea (the tranparent part of the eyeball), extreme sensitiveness to light, and in extreme cases blindness. Even when the disease gives rise to no symptoms, later in life it may cause a contraction of the inner surfaces of the lids, which causes the eyelashes to turn in and rub on the eyeball, thus giving rise to great discomfort and loss of good vision.

The method of exposing the inner surface of the eyelid is very simple. For the lower lid, the most common seat of trachoma, simply put the finger on the lower edge of the lid, and pull down, at the same time telling the child to look up. To examine the upper lid, take hold of the eyelashes with the thumb and forefinger of one hand, and with the other hand gently press a pencil-point or the edge of a card against the fold above the stiff part of the lid, and fold the lid backward, at the same time telling the child to look down. The eyelids turn back with a snap. It does not hurt. If the inside of the lid is not smooth and clear, the child had better be taken to an oculist for examination. The above method of turning the lid is useful when one is called upon to remove a foreign body from the eye. Cinders and grains of sand do get into the eye, and it is not always convenient to get a doctor to take them out. Turn the lid back, and with a toothpick or hairpin, around the end of which a bit of cotton has been smoothly wound, gently wipe out the offending object. If you have no cotton at hand, wet the end of a toothpick and crush it up, thus forming a kind of brush.