LIFE MYSTERY.

There are songs enough of the home life,
Of parents and children sweet,
I sing of the many who stand alone,
And whose lives are incomplete,
Who in some way have missed the choicest
Of blessings they most would prize,
And look upon happiness only
Through other more fortunate eyes;

Who bravely carry the burden
Of a heavy daily cross,
Whose tranquil, smiling faces
Give no hint of pain or loss;
Yet whose hearts are filled with yearning,
Beyond their strength to deny,
For the things that are sweetest and dearest
Which alone can satisfy.

Oh sad are the ones who possessed them,
And have watched them fade from sight,
With the lingering look from loving eyes
That had filled their lives with light;
But sadder are those who, softly,
In their inmost souls must say:
"Not you!" to one another,
They meet in their narrow way;

Yet who feel that the sun is shining
E'en now on the thoughtful brow
Of the man or woman in all the world
Before whom their hearts would bow;
Who in turn are wistfully waiting,
With eager outstretched hands,
To welcome the long-delayed one
Who would answer their soul's demands.

Oh, for those who miss each other
Through all life's long sad years,
Unloved, uncared for, and lonely,
My eyes o'erflow with tears.
But I think the loving Father
Will some time make it clear,
And Heaven's sweetest joys be given
To those who missed them here.
—Minnie May Curtis, in Chicago Inter Ocean.

A CASE IN EQUITY.

BY FRANCIS LYNDE.

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XIV.—CONTINUED.

There was a rasping noise, as of a hastily opened drawer, and the old man sprang to his feet and leveled a revolver at Thorndyke. His eyes blazed, and his voice quavered with excitement.

"By the 'Mighty! if ye don't get out o' here—"

Philip stood his ground long enough to show his contempt for the argument of force; then he turned his back on the angry man and ran up the street to catch an electric car for the new courthouse. As soon as he could find a magistrate, he swore out a warrant for Pragmore's arrest and went himself with the deputy who was to serve it. As a matter of course, they found the office locked and empty; and, leaving the officer to continue the search for the notary, Philip went back to the Johannisberg to prepare the papers in the suit against the town company. The constable had promised to report in the course of the afternoon, and when evening came without any word from him, Philip resolved to go to the jail and see if Pragmore had been caught. With the heedlessness which goes hand in hand with triumphant perseverance, he left the forged deed, together with the unfinished papers, on the writing-table in his room at the hotel; and, picking his way through the obstructed streets, he was soon in the neighborhood of the courthouse. Under the branches of a water-oak, at a point where the light from the electric lamps at the crossings made a garish twilight, he stumbled over the body of a man lying across the sidewalk. Before he could recover himself he was promptly garroted, thrown down and held by two footpads while a third rifled his pockets. The assault was well planned and deftly executed, and when his assailants had left him Thorndyke was astonished to find that they had taken none of his valuables. Then it came to him like a sudden stroke of illness that their object had been to secure the forged deed, and he grew cold with dismay when he remembered where he had left it. The next moment he was racing madly toward the hotel, stumbling and falling over heaps of building material and paving-stones, and colliding blindly with chance pedestrians who happened to get in his way.

He breathed freely again when he reached his room and found that the papers were undisturbed, but the disquieting experience taught him the lesson of prudence which he might otherwise have gone wanting. Buttoning the papers into an inside pocket of his coat, he went out again, taking care to keep in the well-lighted and frequented streets until he reached a hardware store where he could buy a revolver. With the weapon in his pocket he felt safer; and, leaving Broadway, he once more turned his steps toward the jail. Pragmore had not been found; and, after assuring himself that a description of the missing notary had been telegraphed to the neighboring towns on the railway, Thorndyke went back to the hotel. Approaching the building by a walk through the grounds which led him beneath the windows of his own room in one of the southern gables, he was surprised to see them brilliantly lighted; and, bolting up the stairway at the end of the corridor, he was barely in time to save the Johannisberg from destruction. In his absence the room had been thoroughly and ruthlessly ransacked, and one of the gas jets—whether by accident or design he never knew—had been swung around against the mosquito netting, which was blazing and dropping a shower of small firebrands upon the white counterpane beneath it.

When he had put out the fire and gathered up his scattered belongings, Philip began to have a juster appreciation of the desperate character of the men with whom he had to deal, and he determined to take no more risks. After having his room changed, he telephoned to the stable for his horse and rode out to the Duncan farm, sleeping that night in the attic bedroom with the forged deed under his pillow.

XV.

ON THE MOUNTAIN.

The level rays of the morning sun were shooting across the eastern spur of John's mountain, pouring a noiseless volley of radiance against the opposite cliffs of the Bull, and bridging the valley of the Little Chiwassee with bands of yellow light that made the shadows blue and cool by comparison. Up among the topmost twigs of the tree the breeze whispered steadily, with the sound like the patter of gentle rain; but in the depths of the forest, where the path from Duncan's to the plateau wound upward through the tangled undergrowth, the air was still and resonant, giving back sharply the snarl of the gravel and the rustle of dry leaves under the feet of the two men who climbed slowly toward the mountain-top. Notwithstanding the approach of autumn and the youth of the day, the heat was great enough to make the steep ascent laborious and exhausting; and Thorndyke stopped at the base of the upper tier of cliffs while Duncan went down on his hands and knees to drink from a spring bubbling clear and cold from the shelf of sandstone.

"I'm no disputin' yer courage, ye understand that," he said, after he had slaked his thirst. "Ye're a bonny fighter, Master Thorndyke—I maun say that for ye—but ye'll no win wi' such a man as Sharpless at that gait."

"No, I'm pretty well satisfied of that, now; though I still think there will be more fighting than parleying in the case, from the way they have begun on me."

Philip had been giving his companion a succinct account of the events of the previous day as they climbed the mountain, and Duncan had consented to take charge of the deed until it should be needed.

"Hae ye made up yer mind what ye'll do next?"

"Not definitely. As I told you awhile ago, it depends very much upon what Kilgrow says. Yesterday I intended to prosecute immediately in both the civil and criminal courts, but I'm not so sure now that that would be the proper thing to do."

"Aye?" said Duncan, seating himself with his back against the cliff and making an inverted N of his sinewy length.

"No; to be frank about it, I think I lost my head when that deed turned up. It was a foolish thing to go to Pragmore the way I did. I might have known what would happen in case I wasn't able to scare him."

"An' can ye no sue them yet?"

"Oh, yes; but they know as much as I do, now, and they will be prepared at all points. We can beat them in the end, but they can delay a settlement indefinitely. And I'm more afraid of delay than of anything else."

"Aye?"

"Yes. They have all the resources of the syndicate behind them, while I have nothing. They can give any amount of bail on the criminal charge, and when we get our verdict in chancery there may be nothing to recover from."

"But, man, there's the whole town built on Johnnie Keelgrow's land!"

"Yes, it's there to-day, and it may be there to-morrow; but it has grown up like Jonah's gourd, and it may be quite as short-lived."

Duncan nursed his chin reflectively. "That's just what Robbie Protheroe's aye hintin' at. He's a sharp lad, is Robbie."

"Of course I don't know anything about it," continued Thorndyke, following his own line of thought; "but other towns have flourished and failed, and Allacoochee may or may not prove to be an exception. Anyway, I'd like to get the thing settled while the pressure is high. It will be easier to get $50,000 now than $10,000 after the tide begins to turn."

Duncan's jaw fell, and he stared at Philip in speechless astonishment. "Feefty thousand dollars!" he exclaimed, when he could find breath to put his amazement into words. "Eh, man, man, but ye'll be killin' the goose outright!"

"No fear of that," laughed Philip, rising and taking the path again. "And if they don't call off their desperadoes it'll cost them more."

He spoke confidently, but he was troubled with many doubts and misgivings which poured in thickly upon the heels of yesterday's overconfidence. One insurmountable obstacle the second thought had brought up to block the way to a legal contest: the court would require a heavy bond from the complainant, and who was to furnish it? Kilgrow had nothing, and the loss of his own fortune put it out of Thorndyke's power to offer security. Clearly, the thing must be managed in some way without a suit, and Philip's perplexity kept him silent while they were pushing through the woods on the plateau toward the Pocket.

When they came out upon the crag from which Thorndyke had first looked down into the narrow valley, they saw Kilgrow working in the field below, and Duncan summoned him by a shrill whistle. Thirty minutes later, the old mountaineer joined them on the cliff, and Duncan laid before him a plan which Philip had outlined. It was a proposal that they should try to bring about a settlement of the claim by moral suasion before proceeding to extremities; and Kilgrow's presence at the conference would be necessary, since he would have to execute a quit-claim in case Sharpless and Fench came to terms: As Duncan had foretold, the old man refused, positively and definitely: he could not be persuaded to trust himself in Allacoochee, and all the assurances of protection that Philip could give him went for nothing.

"Then there is only one other thing to do," said Philip, when he had exhausted his eloquence in the effort to convince Kilgrow that no harm should come to him; "you'll have to give me the power of attorney to sign a deed for you. Where is the nearest notary outside of Allacoochee, Mr. Duncan?"

Duncan caressed his stubbly chin and considered. "There's auld Judge Garry, down at Glenco," he suggested.

"How far is that from here?"

"It's mair than a good saxteen miles round by the valley pike, but I'm thinkin' it's no that far across the mountain. —How is that, Johnnie, man?"

"I reckon hit ain't more'n ten mile th'oo the gulch."

Thorndyke looked at his watch. "Are you good for the tramp, Mr. Duncan? I'll need a witness."

Duncan signified his willingness to go, but it was with great difficulty that they persuaded the old mountaineer to trust himself within sight of the railway. When he finally yielded, they took up the line of march to the southward, with Kilgrow leading the way. After threading the forest of the plateau for three hours or more, they began to descend into a deep ravine, and Philip heard the murmur of running water long before they came in sight of the swift stream gurgling through a leafy tunnel at the bottom of the gorge. They stopped at the margin of the brook while Thorndyke got a drink.

"Your mountain miles are good measure, Mr. Kilgrow," he said, taking out his watch again. "How much farther is it?"

The old man lifted his hat and scratched his head reflectively with one finger. "I reckon hit mought be 'bout two sights an' a horn-blow f'om yere."

Philip laughed and turned to Duncan: "I'm afraid you'll have to translate that for me."

"Ye'll be none the wiser when I do. Twa sights—that's as far as ye can see, an' then as far as ye can see beyon' that; an' a horn-blow—that's as far as ye can hear the scrawin' o' a coo's horn frae the far end o' the second sight. D' ye ken the noo?"

"Perfectly," said Philip. "I hope we'll get there before dark."

They did, but it was afternoon when they came to the end of the third division of distance and saw the scattered houses of the little village on the railway. Judge Garry's house was pointed out by a passing teamster, and Philip, going in for information, found that the judge was in Allacoochee, but was expected home at five o'clock. They waited, Duncan with Scotch resignation, the mountaineer with an indifference born of long practice in the art of doing nothing, and Philip with true Anglo-Saxon impatience. When the judge made his appearance, the business was quickly dispatched, and Duncan and Kilgrow started on their return over the mountain, leaving Thorndyke to go to Allacoochee by the evening train.

The train was due at eight, and while he was wearing out the second period of inaction on the porch of the tavern where he had eaten supper, Philip was able, for the first time since the finding of the deed, to go back to the events which had immediately preceded that piece of good fortune. He had Helen's letter in his pocket, and he read it again in the thickening twilight. It was a good letter, after all, he admitted; sensible and practical, and showing forth in every line the nobility and trueheartedness of the writer. None the less, she should have known—she would have known, had she really loved him—that her proposal could be accepted only on the condition he had imposed—that a single sentence of warm affection from her at such a time would have outweighed all the acts of self-abnegation that could be crowded into a lifetime. And yet he could not help wishing that he had not been so prompt to return cold formality for kind-hearted common sense. She would doubtless be glad enough to be free—oh, that, of course; but he might have been as frank and informal with her as she had a right to expect him to be—as their long friendship and engagement demanded. And just here a brush from the nettle of shame stung him. How could he ever hope that she would attribute any but the basest motive to his letter when she learned the truth about Elsie? Would she not always accuse him in her heart of having been glad of the pretext afforded by his loss for breaking openly an engagement which had been long ignored in secret? He was sure she would, and he checked himself impatiently when he found that he was setting the contempt of the woman he had asked to release him above the love of the woman who had saved his life.

That thought brought back to him Elsie and the present. Had she really saved his life? Was it quite beyond doubt that she was the one woman in the world who could lead him out of himself into a sphere of usefulness and accomplishment? It was by no means as clear and well-defined as it had appeared to be on that day when he had sat up among the pillows and fancied himself inspired. Nevertheless, as he had accepted the help, he must abide by the choice of that day—and he would, come what might.

No matter which way it turned, the train of reflection led quickly to discomforting conclusions, and Thorndyke was glad when the sound of a distant whistle assured him that he could presently pass from the depressing atmosphere of introspection into temporary oblivion of action. It was but a step across to the railway, and he was tired enough to postpone taking it until it became a necessity. The whistle sounded again, and he sat lazily watching the eye of yellow light staring southward from the signal lamp over the station, while the rumble of the approaching train floated up the valley on the evening breeze. Had he known that Glenco was a flag station for the night train, and that he was the only passenger, he would have bestirred himself when the lamp flashed red and then back to yellow again in answer to the engineer's call for signals. After that it was too late; there was a rush and a roar, a discordant clanging of the engine bell mingled with the hissing of steam, and before he could cross the street the train had thundered past without stopping.

Circumstances, and the power to pick and choose among the possibilities, have much to do with one's peace of mind. Half an hour earlier Philip had debated with himself the necessity for hurrying back to Allacoochee that night. The small hotel was clean; the supper had been of the kind which prophesies a wholesome breakfast, and he was weary enough to call it a day's work and go to bed. None the less, when he realized that his last chance for reaching Allacoochee had faded into a distant roar and two red eyes staring back at him down the long stretch of straight track north of Glenco, he was immediately possessed with an importunate devil of impatience. As a matter of fact, since there was an early train in the morning, it could make little difference whether he slept at Glenco or at his room at the Johannisberg; but it was a part of his plan that he should reach Allacoochee at once, and go he must, if he had to walk. So much he said to the hotelkeeper, who was at a loss to understand the impatience of his guest. A man might walk, he said; it was only ten miles. And then, again, a man might ride, if so be he were willing to pay for a horse. Philip caught at the alternative and offered to pay liberally. The horse was found, and after many minute directions about the road, which were qualified, repeated and amended until they were hopelesssly obscure, Thorndyke rode away in the darkness.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ENGLISH MERCHANT SERVICE.

Nelson and the Famous Cook—Fine Seamen and Heroes.

Horatio Nelson was sent on a voyage in a small ship to the West Indies. She was probably a scow. She was commanded by Mr. John Rathbone, who had served as master's mate under Capt. Suckling. Nelson was absent on this voyage about a year. I confess, as one who has served under the red flag, that I love to think, and am honored by thinking, of Nelson as a merchantman. The famous Cook was also a merchantman. Indeed, some of the finest seamen and greatest heroes of naval story have come out of our mercantile marine.

But it is scarcely necessary to say this, seeing that the merchant service very greatly antedated the establishment of the royal navy. Even in Elizabeth's time one cannot think of Hawkins, Frobisher, Drake and the many other stars of that splendid galaxy of sea-chieftains as queen's men in the sense that a royal naval officer is now a queen's man. They were buccaneers; the merchants found them ships; the Cinque ports and the 'long-shore yielded them crews who were composed of merchant sailors. The navy grew out of the mercantile marine, and glorious as is the white flag, not less honorable is the red, whether for its memories of heroic combat or for its faithful discharge of the duties of that peace whose victories are not less renowned than war's.—English Illustrated Magazine.

Grim Shrewdness.

Sir Wemyss Reid tells a story redolent of a grim shrewdness characteristic of canny Novocastrians: "There was a worthy, long since forgotten, in my time, who was a prototype of Rogue Riderhood, in 'Our Mutual Friend.' He was known as Cuckoo Jack, and he lived upon the Tyne in a well-patched old boat, picking up any trifle that came his way, from a derelict to a corpse. One day an elderly and most estimable Quaker of Newcastle, in stepping from a river steamboat to the quay, slipped and fell into the stream. Cuckoo Jack was at hand with his boat and quickly rescued the luckless Friend and landed him, dripping, on the quay. The good man drew half a crown from his pocket and solemnly handed it to his preserver. Jack eyed the coin for a moment with lack-luster gaze, spat upon it solemnly 'for luck,' and, having placed it safely in his pocket, said, in a matter-of-fact tone, to the soaked Quaker: 'Man, ah'd hev gotten five shillin' for takin' ye to the dead hoose.'"—London Telegraph.

An Unhealthy Place.

"Silas," said Mrs. Acres, laying aside a daily paper which their son Caleb had sent them from the city, "Silas, do ye hear me? I wish that boy of our'n were safe to hum."

"Why, Sarah? Ain't gettin' foolish about him, air ye?"

"Not 'xactly; but, you know, Silas, Caleb never were strong, an' the city ain't no place for him. Law, here I've been reading in this paper that 38 people died in New York yisterday! We ain't had a death down here since old man Cubber died of the rheumatism. They're dropping off in New York mighty fast, and I feel Caleb'll be took, sure."—N. Y. Truth.

Entitled to Discount.

Mr. Cash—Don't you think I'm paying you too much for giving my daughter piano lessons? Prof. Crochet will do it for half the money.

Mr. Knoteworthy—Oh, well, he can afford to.

"Why, is he so very well fixed?"

"I wasn't thinking about his money affairs. He is stone deaf." — Boston Transcript.

Business Sagacity.

Some years ago Lord Salisbury had occasion to enter into a barber's shop in a suburb of Portsmouth. The tonsorial artist recognized his customer, for when his lordship passed the shop some two or three days after the event he was surprised to find a placard in the window bearing the following notice: "Hair cut, three pence. With the same scissors as I cut Lord Salisbury's hair, six pence."—N. Y. Sun.

Pleasanter Inside.

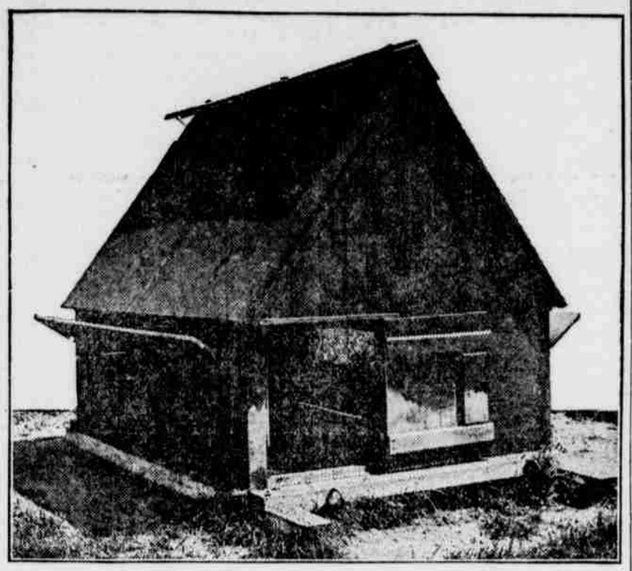
"Don't you love, Miss Everybody, to sit in the house on a stormy night and hear the dreamy pattering of the rain on the roof?" lisped Mr. Mush.

"Yes, indeed I do. It is so much pleasanter than to sit outside in it."—Twinkles.

If you dream of a crown the token is of political, social or ecclesiastical preferment.

Hog Cots

By R. S. SHAW
Dean of Agriculture



Hog Cot Used at Michigan Agricultural College.

Climatic conditions in Michigan are too extreme to permit of the use of hog cots for all classes of pigs, for all purposes during the entire year, but for the summer season the system of cotting and yarding cannot be excelled. Cots are especially desirable for dry brood sows and young males and females being reared for breeding purposes. They are desirable because an abundance of fresh air, sunshine and exercise are provided.

The illustration represents a form of cot recently designed and constructed and now in use in the hog lots at the Michigan agricultural college. It is 6x8 at the foundation, with the sides raised perpendicularly three feet before receiving the half pitch roof boards. The center boards on the sides are hinged so that they can be swung open in hot weather; the opening thus made is covered with a strong woven wire, clamped above and below between inch boards. The inner clamp boards project an inch beyond the outer ones, thus breaking the joint and preventing drafts when the openings are closed. The two ridge boards are also hinged so that they can be opened in hot weather. The openings permit a free circulation of air, thus lowering the temperature and greatly relieving the oppression of the pigs seeking shelter. These openings close down tightly, thus making the cot warm in the coldest weather. Probably the greatest objection to this cot is the expense of material and construction.

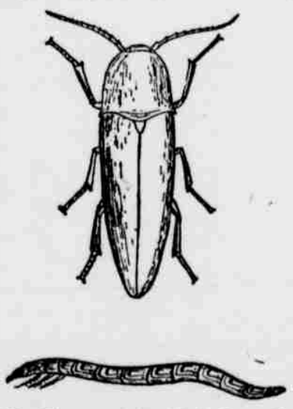
Wire Worms

By R. H. PETTIT, *Entomologist*
Michigan Agricultural College

Low ground and more especially mucky ground, is apt to be infested with wire-worms. These are slender, yellow, little creatures, cylindrical in form, and in size varying from half an inch to more than an inch in length. All have hard, polished skins amounting almost to shells, and six short legs behind the flattened heads, besides a sucker like false-foot on the last segment. Wire-worms usually feed on the roots of grains, corn and other grasses, though they will burrow into potatoes, sugar-beets and other root crops, and even apples lying on the ground.

The adults are the common snapping-beetles or click-beetles, the little fellows that jump up into the air with a click, when placed on their backs. These beetles lay the eggs from which the wire-worms hatch, and the wire-worms in turn become click-beetles after passing through the crysalis stage in their little earthen cells in the soil. It is probable that two years are required for the larvae to attain maturity.

Wire-worms are primarily insects of grass-land and the fact that they require two or three years to develop helps to explain why it is that they



Wire Worm and Its Adult Form, the Click Beetle.

are often worse the second year after grass than they are the first, most of them being full grown at that time.

In corn the most noticable injury is to the seed after planting, though the larvae also feed on the roots after the corn is up. Experiments have failed to show any practicable method of treating the seed so as to prevent injury by wire-worms. It has been shown, however, that late fall-plowing kills many of the pupae by breaking open the earthen cells in which they have prepared to spend the winter. The use of commercial fertilizers has failed to check this pest except when used in excessive quantities. It is good to use wood-ashes because of their tonic effect on the plants, but, of course, this is recommended only for aggravated cases and not for regular use in the absence of the pest in dangerous numbers.

The most satisfactory way to deal with this pest is to keep the soil free from them by a short rotation of crops. If the grain fields are seeded to clover, and after the first or second year the clover sod is planted to some planted crop, there is less chance for June grass or other grasses on which wire-worms live, to get into the fields. If an old meadow or pasture is to be put into crop, two years must elapse after it is broken before it is safe to plant any crop liable to be eaten by wire-wors. To do this plow the grass in early fall, and sow clover, either with oats, wheat or rye. Allow the clover to stand two years and follow with corn or beans as desired.

RAGWEED

By R. J. BALDWIN, *Michigan Agricultural College*

The vitality of its seeds and its ability to find a footing for growth on road and lane sides, fence rows and all other out of the way places makes ragweed one of our worst farm weeds. It is not eaten much by animals, and if bitten or trampled what is left of it can produce seed under the hardest circumstances.

The plant is recognized by its finely divided leaves, which suggest its name. When fully grown the staminate flower forms a very conspicuous tassel, while the pistilate or seed producing flowers are partly hidden in the axils of leaves and branches.

The use of cultivated crops which are kept clean is the surest way of cleaning fields of this pest. Even when labor is high priced, if it can be had at all, it will pay to go over the corn and bean fields with hoes and remove the weeds missed by the cultivator.

A practice which is very effective in controling ragweed is to clip the stubble fields after the grain has been harvested. If ragweeds are present in the grain they are cut six or more inches higher by the binder, and the part of the plant left branches farther down and matures quantities of seed. The mower gets these plants below the branches leaving them unable to do further harm. This operation will always dispose of many other seeds as well as ragweed, and if the land is seeded to clover, the hay will be much cleaner the following year.

The following is quoted from Bulletin 260: "The seeds of ragweed are light brown or black, top shaped, broadly oval, the sides irregular ridged vertically, with five to ten teeth at the apex. Sometimes the hard covering is removed by a clover huller, exposing the naked seed.

Water for Poultry.

Poultry should be given free access to water, especially during hot summer weather. Several patented dishes are on the market which furnish a constant supply of water, free from manure and other filth. Hens which are not provided with a supply of water in their own quarters always make a nuisance of themselves around the stock tanks and well tops.

The dairyman who is looking for results will not allow the dog or the small boy to worry his cows. He knows that if he wants a well filled pail, they must not be frightened, but kept quiet and content.