

Mr. Wyatt, coming home on the train, heard two of his neighbors discussing the dearth of maids in their suburb. Mr. Deering remarked mournfully that his family had not had a cook for two months. He advertised and offered all kinds of inducements, but it seemed impossible to inveigle any one to preside over their kitchen. Day before yesterday they did have a ray of hope, but it was gone.

"Our laundress, Mrs. Johnson, brought her niece, who has just come from Sweden, to our house, and although the girl couldn't speak a word of English, Mrs. Deering engaged her at once. But yesterday Mrs. Johnson sent her small son over to inform us that Ingeborg had changed her mind, and we heard this morning that she had been promised to the Fairbankses before she came to us. But when she went to see Mrs. Fairbanks, she declined to remain there."

"Well, that's funny," said Mr. Dean. "We tried to get that same girl, but she simply shook her head when Mrs. Johnson interpreted my wife's offer, which, if I don't exaggerate, included the use of our piano, automobile and tennis court."

The gentlemen laughed, but there was a note of anxiety in Mr. Wyatt's merriment.

"Your tales rather alarm me," he said. "My wife has been scouring the country for a maid, and last night she told me with delight that she had

finally secured one. I was going home this evening in the happy anticipation of finding the fair Ingeborg cooking the supper, but now I don't know what to expect."

"Well, don't imagine she'll be there," said Mr. Deering. "I'm sure she's a Swedish will-o'-the-wisp."

To Mr. Wyatt's surprise and relief, Mrs. Wyatt met him at the gate with the good news that Ingeborg was installed in the kitchen.

"If she'll only stay," he remarked, feelingly.

"Why, she appears perfectly contented. What makes you suggest her leaving?"

"I was just hoping that our domestic troubles were really over," answered Mr. Wyatt, not wishing to disturb his wife's peace of mind by repeating the stories he had heard on the train; but it was not until Ingeborg had been with him several weeks that he could believe she intended to remain.

When at last she became a "neat-handed Phyllis" under Mrs. Wyatt's careful training, he asked her one day how she happened to choose their home among all the places which had been offered to her.

"Well," she replied, brightly. "I have say to myself, I want to be happy; and you lady she look worry, and an-udder has sad sigh, and you she have—vat you call it? a yarring voice;—and ven I see Mrs. Wyatt, I tells mine-self, I be happy vit that; she smile."

## The Freedom of the Black-faced Ram.

By CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS



ON the top of Ringwaak Hill the black-faced ram stood motionless, looking off with mild, yellow eyes across the wooded level, across the scattered farm-ment, and across the bright, retreating spirals of the distant river, to that streak of scarlet light on the horizon which indicated the beginning of sunrise. A few paces below him, half hidden by a gray stump, a green juniper bush, and a mossy brown hillock, lay a white ewe with a lamb at her side. The ewe's jaws moved leisurely, as she chewed her cud and gazed up with comfortable confidence at the sturdy figure of the ram silhouetted against the brightening sky.

This sunrise was the breaking of the black-faced ram's first day in the wilderness. Never before had he stood on an open hilltop and watched the light spread magically over a wide, wild landscape. Up to the morning of the previous day, his three years of life had been passed in protected, green-hedged valley pastures, amid tilled fields and well-stocked barns, beside a lillied water. This rugged, lonely, wide-visioned world into which fortune had unexpectedly projected him filled him with wonder. Yet he felt strangely at ease therein. The hedged pastures had never quite suited him; but here, at length, in the great spaces, he felt at home. The fact was that, alike in character and in outward appearance, he was a reversion of far-off ancestors. He was the product of a freak of heredity.

In the fat-soiled valley-lands some fifteen miles back of the Ringwaak Hill the farmers had a heavy, long-wooled, hornless strain of sheep, mainly of the Leicester breed, which had been crossed, years back, by an imported Scotch ram of one of the horned, courageous, upland, black-faced varieties. The effect of this hardy cross had apparently all been bred out, save for an added stamina in the resulting stock, which was uniformly white and hornless. When, therefore, a lamb was born

with a black face and blackish-gray legs, it was cherished as a curiosity; and when, in time, it developed a splendid pair of horns, it became the handsomest ram in all the valley, and a source of great pride to its owner. But when black-faced lambs began to grow common in the hornless and immaculate flocks, the feeling of the valley-folks changed, and word went around that the strain of the white-faced must be kept pure. Then it was decreed that the great horned ram should no longer sire the flocks, but be hurried to the doom of his kind and go to the shambles.

Just at this time, however, a young farmer from the backwoods settlement over behind Ringwaak chanced to visit the valley. The sheep of his settlement were not only hornless, but small and light-wooled as well, and the splendid, horned ram took his fancy. Here was a chance to improve his breed. He bought the ram for what he was worth to the butcher, and proudly led him away, over the hills and through the great woods, toward the settlement on the other side of Ringwaak.

The backwoodsman knew right well that a flock of sheep may be driven, but that a single sheep must be led; so he held his new possession securely by a piece of stout rope about ten feet long. For an hour or two the ram followed with an exemplary docility quite foreign to his independent spirit. He was subdued by the novelty of his surroundings,—the hillocky, sloping pastures, and the shadowy solemnity of the forest. Moreover, he perceived, in his dim way, a kind of mastery in this heavy-booted, homespun-clad, tobacco-chewing, grave-eyed man from the backwoods, and for a long time he felt none of his usual pugnacity. But by and by the craving for freedom began to stir in his breast, and the blood of his hill-roving ancestors thrilled toward the wild pastures. The glances which, from time to time, he cast upon the backwoodsman at the other end of the rope became wary, calculating, and hostile. This stalwart form, striding before him, was the one barrier between himself and freedom. Freedom was a thing of which he knew, indeed,

## Farmers of Western Canada

You want to get all you can realize out of your grain, but the only way to do so is by shipping it in carloads to Fort William or Port Arthur and having it looked after and sold for your account by a first class grain commission house, acting as your agent.

We are an old-established, independent and reliable commission firm, well-known over all Canada, and we possess unsurpassed facilities for so handling Wheat, Oats, Barley and Flax for farmers who rise to the ambition of shipping their own grain, and we are prepared to handle to the best advantage for our customers all grain entrusted to us. We make liberal advances against railroad car shipping bills immediately we receive the same, and make prompt returns after sales are made. We are not track buyers, and do not buy your grain on our own account, and we always furnish our customers with the name and address of the buyer we sell to.

Owing to the influence of the elevator interests in the Winnipeg Grain Exchange, the commission rates for handling grain have recently been suspended, but an independent commission firm, which does not buy grain at a handsome margin of profit, must make some definite charge for the services it renders. We, therefore, propose to charge 1c. per bush, on Wheat and Flax, ½c. per bush, on Barley and ¾c. per bush, on Oats.

We solicit a continuance and increase in the patronage we have for many years received, and we invite you to write us for market prospects, shipping instructions, and our "Way of doing business," and you will be sure to gain advantage and satisfaction thereby.

## Thompson, Sons & Co.,

700-703D Grain Exchange

Winnipeg, Canada.

### Why Not Appoint a Trust Company as Your Executors?

It is impartial.  
It is trustworthy.  
It is responsible.  
It is perpetual.  
It has a trained staff.  
It has command of investments.  
It renders regular statements.  
It retains your own Solicitor.

### The Toronto General Trusts Corporation Bank of Hamilton Building, Winnipeg.

## THE CANADIAN BANK OF COMMERCE

HEAD OFFICE, TORONTO

CAPITAL, \$10,000,000 REST, \$6,000,000

B. E. WALKER, C.V.O., LL.D., President ALEXANDER LAIRD, General Manager  
A. H. IRELAND, Superintendent of Branches

BRANCHES IN EVERY PROVINCE OF CANADA AND IN THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN

### BRANCHES IN SASKATCHEWAN

BRODERICK	LASHBURN	REGINA
CANORA	LLOYDMINSTER	SASKATOON
DELISLE	MELFORT	SHELLBROOK
DRINKWATER	MELVILLE	TUGASKE
ELBOW	MILESTONE	VONDA
ELFROS	MOOSE JAW	WADENA
HAWARDEN	MOOSOMIN	WATROUS
HERBERT	NOKOMIS	WATSON
HUMBOLDT	NORTH BATTLEFORD	WEYBURN
KAMSACK	OUTLOOK	WILCOX
LANGHAM	PRINCE ALBERT	YELLOWGRASS
LANIGAN	RADISSON	

### FARMERS' BANKING

Every facility afforded Farmers and Ranchers for the transaction of their banking business. Notes discounted and sales notes collected.

ACCOUNTS MAY BE OPENED AND CONDUCTED BY MAIL  
A GENERAL BANKING BUSINESS TRANSACTED