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RURAL TOPICS.

IMPROVING PASTURE LANDS.

At the meeting of the Dairymen's Convention at Cleveland, Ohio, the subject of improving old, worn-out pasture lands was discussed; and the general conclusion was, that they must be plowed, and seeded to a variety of grasses, or the dairy business in that State would be ruined for the want of good pastures. A member said that most of them were fast declining in productiveness so that without a radical change on the part of the dairy farmers they would soon fail of support and the foundation of this whole business would be giving way. He said the assessors' returns of the dairy counties showed a decline in the productive capacity of pasture lands amounting to one-third or more, the past ten years; and on account of this decline dairy farming was becoming unprofitable. The lands were originally quite fertile, but not deep, and the vegetable matter at the surface had been all exhausted; and no plowing or means of restoration being used, the clay soil had become very compact from treading while wet, and the grasses killed off by constant feeding off or over-stocking—then worthless weeds came in, and the old pastures would have to be broken up and enriched in some way, and when seeded down, a mixture of grasses should be used, in accordance with the English plan, though he would not recommend using as many varieties. The following he believed would be found adapted to most of the clay lands, and would form a good mixture of dairy pasture: Timothy, Red top, Blue grass, Orchard grass, Meadow Fescue and English Bye grass. White clover might be added with advantage, where it is known to flourish. This condition of old pastures is common to the whole country east of Illinois, and all require about the same treatment.

FEEDING HORSES.

A writer on this subject says: "For a period of over 30 years, more or less, horses have been under my control. I personally superintended the feeding. During this time no horses have died, and I have had little sickness. A straw-cutting, with rawhide roller, has been in continual use till the present time. In the cutting of the food for two teams, enough is saved in one year to pay for its purchase. While the horses are eating their dinner, enough can be cut for the most meal; then watered, to moisten it and destroy the dust, and with it four quarts of meal is ample for each horse. The meal is one-third corn, one-third oats, and the other shorts. A variety is made by giving a few small potatoes or carrots weekly. The benefit resulting from this manner of feeding is that we have no sick horses, they always being in good health and order; there is no danger of founder from hired men, feeding when too warm; they can eat it sooner, and are ready to go out; neither is anything wasted (by throwing from the manger, &c.) and it does them more good, I believe, as no whole grain is passed and lost. Being out of meal for a few days, a number of feeds were given them of small ears of corn, with plenty of cut hay, moistened. Two had to be taken to the city immediately for treatment of colic, and by prompt action at once, they recovered. This is the last of whole grain feed. Of course the same good quality of hay and grain is given when cut as when they cut it for themselves."

UTILIZING STRAW.

The following method of utilizing straw is used: "I have made it a practice to cut my grain as early as it would do to cut, and to put it up in shock in the field in good order, to allow it to properly cure (for if cut early or a little green, it should have time to cure), and then, as soon as it will haul it in and stack it or mow, if possible, without rain. Then, when threshed, I put the straw in the mow, as I do the best hay. Straw thus cut and cared for is bright and clean.

For the past six years I have fed, from September to March, from six to eight horses on straw and corn, and without one exception, they have done well, and have not had any more grain than when fed on good hay, and no straw. I am so well pleased with the result that I would rather have good early cut, well cared for wheat or oat straw and corn for my horses than the best of hay with either corn or oats. But if the grain is allowed to stand until dead ripe before cutting, and then allowed to remain, (as it often does) in the field for weeks in the rain and sun until bleached, and when threshed, stacked in the most careless manner—so that it retains all of the rain that falls on it for months—it will not make any better

feed than hay treated in the same way, which I presume all will agree would be very poor feed for any animal, and of little value in the compost heap.

A PORTABLE FENCE.

Every farmer at some time needs a portable fence, for enclosing hay stack, or to divide a field temporarily, and the following is a good one: "I take three hewed or sawed sticks, four or five feet in length, placing one at each end of the boards that I am about to use, and one in the centre; fasten them down securely for a platform. I then take four 14 foot boards, 6 inches wide (I prefer that length to 12 or 16 feet), and lay them on this platform, leaving spaces between the boards of 7, 6 and 8 inches. I use three cross pieces, 4 feet long and 5 or 6 inches wide, securely nailed with annealed or wrought nails, and clinched, placing one at each end and one in the centre. The bottom board will be 5 inches from the ground, and the second or panel will rest on the three cross pieces. When putting up this fence, I let it lap the width of the cross pieces, and drive two stakes, one on each side of the panels, and fasten with withers, or wire, and I then have as good a fence as I want for turning stock. Where a fence is needed only for a short time, one stake is all that is necessary. Two men can draw and build fifty rods of this fence in a day, and not work very hard at that. This fence can be made in a different form where a man has plenty of short pieces of boards, say 3 1/2 or 4 feet long, by nailing them to two 2 by 4 inch scantlings 14 feet long, leaving spaces between the pickets or boards 3 inches wide. In localities where fencing is scarce, and the farmer has not the means to fence his entire farm, this kind of fencing is very handy, as fields that are occupied with grain can be stripped of their fences, and good enclosures made for the pastures, and whenever other fields are wanted for grazing, this fence can be easily changed. In some States the grain fields would need to be fenced, but here where stock is not allowed to run at large in the highway, it is unnecessary to fence any fields except the pastures."

VALENTINITY.

The "Rural Topics" will now be discontinued, owing to my having other business that will occupy my entire time. It is now nearly two years since I commenced their publication, being subscribed for by over 100 papers, in different parts of the country, from the start. The publishers of these papers will, undoubtedly, regret to have them discontinued, as many have written to me that the farmers everywhere speak very highly of them. Having been a constant writer on rural affairs for about forty years, and now having engagements to write for some of the best agricultural papers of the country at more remunerative prices than these "Rural Topics" afford, I am admonished not to over-tax myself with too much mental labor at my time of life.

T. B. MINES,
Ex-Editor of the Rural American,
Linden, N. J.

CRANBERRIES.

That a farmer should be able to clear \$1,000 a year off one acre of his farm (which is at the rate of \$100,000 a year from the ordinary hundred-acre farm) would seem a statement too marvellous to be true. Truth is stranger than fiction. In some cases small plots of land this, and more than this, has been realized by the cultivation of that despised plant the cranberry (*Vaccinium macrocarpon*), which in many places in Canada is looked upon as belonging to everybody in general and nobody in particular, being too insignificant to be specially appropriated.

The avoca, a crop of cranberry. For three successive years from three quarters of an acre of land belonging to P. Ryan, Atlantic Co., N. J., was no less than 300 bushels. This is at the rate of four hundred bushels an acre. Cranberries fetched during these three years an average of \$4 a bushel. This gives us \$1,600 as the gross return from one acre of cranberries for one year. Deducting \$500 for the expenses of weeding, picking, marketing, etc., this leaves us \$1,100 as the clear net profit from one acre in one year, which exceeds the thousand dollars of profit from one acre of land in one year which we mentioned above as so incredible.

This profit is not unparalleled. Addison Pitts's land, in North Reading, Mass., produced as much. In Burlington County, N. J., one (1) acre netted \$1,800 in one year. One square rod in the same place produced at a rate which would net \$2,600 an acre. Elsewhere two (2) acres of land netted \$10,000 in ten years. These are well authenticated facts. They do not stand alone.

Let us, however, take the ordinary average every-day returns of profit from the growth of this wonderful fruit. In Burlington County, New Jersey, the market value of the fruit sold from 2,000 acres (more or less) set with cranberry vines was \$116,000 or \$58 per acre. In Monmouth County the gross receipts from about 250 acres was nearly \$25,000, which is \$100 per acre. In Ocean county there were about 200 set with cranberries, and the gross market value of the fruit was \$200,000 (more or less) i. e. \$100 an acre as before.

These profits, established by accurate statistical returns, are in spite of repeated failures, which came from past ignorance of facts now known. Take one instance:—Thousands of dollars have been spent to eradicate "millet grass," a plant which flowers under ground, which is now known to do cranberry no harm. Others have spent large sums, without return, in experimenting. We in Canada can reap the fruits of their labors gratis. We can draw the interest on the capital they have thus invested.

Nor is the climate against us. Cranberries are now grown in Wisconsin and Minnesota, and actually reported on, as such, regularly in their State Horticultural Reports. Their climate is as cold as ours, and perhaps less favorable to the cranberry, being drier.

Does it not then seem to be a strange national blindness, or gross national ignorance, which has prevented the cultivation of this berry, which is even indigenous to Canada and grows wild all about us?

In our back townships, especially, where there is much poor and swampy land, cranberries often grow wild, and are looked upon as the property of any one who will take the trouble to pick them. The owner of such a cranberry patch is often desperately poor, while he has a mine of wealth in what he looks upon as the least valuable part of his farm. As much as \$10,000 has been paid for five acres of cranberry vines, and \$20,000 refused for five acres which only cost \$500 to set out!

Many a farmer in the Province of Quebec, takes oats and hay to the nearest village, and can get nothing but "store pay" for it, while his wise compatriots at St. Brigid's get \$3 a bushel, cash, at the railroad station, for the cranberries which grow wild on his land as well as theirs.

It is true that the way in which cranberries are grown in New Jersey requires an immense amount of capital. There, arrangements are made by elaborate dikes, dams and ditches to flood the land to a depth of two feet or more. Much land is selected as the spot for cranberry culture, and pure white sand is carted at immense expense all over it, to a depth of two, or (in very rich muck) even to five inches. In this way some large fortunes have been invested, and, through ignorance of some apparently trifling detail, have been lost through failure in crop. The average net profit, nevertheless, is shown by statistics to be no less than thirteen and a quarter per cent, on the total capital thus (part wisely, part foolishly) invested in flooding and sanding.

But what if flooding be unneeded, and heavy sanding hurtful? Some judges say so. Flooding is mainly to destroy the fire-worm, which seems to burn the vines, or vine-worm (*Coritrix vaccinivorana*). Now enquires and personal search at St. Brigid's and elsewhere elicited no trace or laws of this worm as extant in Canada, though the "scald" and the "fruit-worm" exist here. From this we draw two inferences:—Firstly, Canadians may slip out from the ruinous expense of flooding. Secondly, they should not import vines from the States, for fear of introducing with them the fire-worm, which alone necessitates this expense.

The only obstacle to the cultivation of the cranberry universally—a result amongst us seems remote—a result which repays the trouble and expense of those visits to New Jersey and Canadian plantations by which it was obtained.

In New Jersey, except for the ravages of the fire-worm, unflooded lands produce as well as those flooded. This very worm, too, can be effectually destroyed, by burning the patch where it exists. True, the chance of fruit for two years, (if not three,) is thus lost. But then the vines bear better than ever afterwards; and the loss of a few years crop can be better afforded where the capital invested is so trifling as it needs to be where there is no expense of embanking and flooding. In any case the cranberry planter has to wait two or three years for the marvellous returns for his toil mentioned above. It seems a law of Providence that great returns do not come without long waiting. Were it not for this we should, almost in the

teeth of all proof, be half inclined to discredit the wonderful profits of cranberry culture mentioned and enumerated by ourselves.

As we incidentally remarked, the cranberries grown at St. Brigid's fetched \$3 a bushel at the railroad station, and the French habitant who grew them once got for one year's crop no less than \$2,750. We have growing wild in Canada most if not all of the different varieties mentioned as good for different purposes in the treatises on the cranberry published in the United States. The "Bell," the "Bugle," and the "Cherry" cranberry can all be found in our marshes. Why go elsewhere for them?

The most important thing for those who would benefit themselves and their country by attempting, on ever so small a scale, the culture of the cranberry, is to go to some of the "patches" near them in the fall and select the best vines. In the fall they can see the fruit on them. For marketing purposes select a fruit of a fine deep red color. Next to a full color, a full size in the fruit commands the best sale. Next to size we should consider the keeping qualities of the kind we select to plant. The larger-sized cranberry is often hollow and does not keep so well as the smaller varieties. But we can get as good varieties as we want here, in Canada, without going to the States.

But, though these plants must be selected and transplanted in the fall, when it is not too wet to get on to the marshes, and when we can see the fruit on them, they should not be planted out till the following spring, or they may be upheaved by the frost of winter and all our labor be for naught. The plants chosen must be kept during the winter in trenches where they will be as wet as possible.

The ways of planting them are various and interesting. The old fashion was to transplant the sod. This moved weeds with plants and brought out our enemies along with our friends. The cranberry plant has such a wonderful vitality that, if cut to pieces in a straw-cutting and harrowed into well-prepared land, the little bits will take root and become separate plants like those *Infusoria*, which, when cut in two, form two separate and distinct, and yet complete, animals.

There are two ways of planting which can be recommended, and both should be pursued early in the spring when the ground is very wet. Each will require ten barrels of cuttings for one acre. One is to make furrows with a plough one or one and a half feet apart, to lay the plants lengthwise (for a curious reason) with their ends reaching up towards the north-east, in the furrows, and cover with the hoe. The other good way of planting is to mark out the ground in lines, and press them in with a forked stick and the foot.

The preparation suggested for the ground in which we plant cranberries is as follows: Take wet muck land and drain it enough to plough, and harrow it well so as to kill out all weeds. Then cover it two inches deep with sand, if you have any handy, to keep the fruit clean and to keep the weeds from starting again. Or else, to use an expression coined in the West, "scalp" your land, i. e., take off the turf and sod and cart it away for manure. The land in which the cranberry flourishes is alluvial black, and wet muck is the soil on which the best patches known in Canada are grown. "Diluvial" land, clay, loam, land with drift, i. e., scattered stones or boulders, in its formation, and whose tendency is to stick together, and not fall apart after a handful of it has been squeezed in the hand; none of these are suited for cranberries.

But what we maintain is that the land where cranberries actually grow wild, will produce them much more plentifully and profitably with hoeing, weeding, planting, and, in short with such cultivation as possible. And this cultivation meets with an unexpected and great reward. It is only wanted for a few years till the plants are a fairly permanent investment. And the cranberry, drawing all its nourishment from air and water, wants no top-dressing. It is injured by that manure which is so much needed for everything else.

What we need in Canada is not only for a few capitalists to try the growth of the cranberry on a large scale, as a profitable investment, but for every farmer to see if the fruit will not grow on some wet spot on his own farm. This will cost him little or nothing. It will be an interesting experiment, and may result in a truly golden harvest.

The fruit is grown, as has been said, with most astonishing profit at St. Brigid's. Thirty acres of cranberry, near the River David, yielded

a gross income of \$375 last year, \$330 the year before, and \$2,250, or thereabouts, four years ago; or, a gross income of \$120 per acre for an average of three years. There are indeed cranberry patches scattered over all the Province. Wherever there is black swampy muck land there they may be expected to flourish, and how many miles have we not of this in our country!

There is one beguilement to guard against in planting them. How natural is it to select lush, hale, green and luxuriant vines to plant from! Beware of them. They are barren. They are fair to the eye but produce not the cranberry good for food. If the greenish-brown, viny, stunted vine, with thin and fine spears and runners, that we want. Different varieties of this might be tried the first year or two, and the best of these finally selected to propagate from in *extenso*.

When we in Canada have grown enough of this delicious berry (choicest and most deeply blushing bride for the Thanksgiving turkey,) for our own estatic use, we shall have an ample market in England for our purpose, for an American Company, whose efforts cannot be too highly praised, has taken steps to spread the knowledge of the excellent properties of the fruit, and of the different ways of preparing it for table. Before long we hope we shall at any rate cease to be sending to our cousins across the line, oats (which it takes so much trouble to cultivate) for forty cents a bushel, while we are paying them \$3 and \$4 a bushel for this little fruit which covers the ground so thick at times with its large berries, that they can be raked off the vines! Every motive of profit and patriotism would suggest to every land-owner among us who has wet black muck on his farm to see if he cannot incarcinate some portion of his inheritance with this red rain which makes the hay so green.

The information embodied above is derived from visits made to the farmers in New Jersey cranberry country and to St. Brigid's and other places in Canada and to the following books:—"The Cranberry; its Cultivation," by Mark S. Bassett, 1870,—"Cranberry Culture," by R. Eastwood, published by Orange, Judd & Co., 1855,—"Cranberry Culture," by Joseph J. White, Orange, Judd & Co., 1870.—The last mentioned book is the best on the subject. We would also express ourselves indebted to the report of the New Jersey State Agricultural Society for 1871, and of the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture for the same year. We would also refer intending cranberry cultivators to "Rural Affairs" for 1875, issued at the office of the *Country Gentleman*, as well as to the Reports of the Horticultural Societies of Wisconsin and Minnesota, which last may be seen in the library of the Montreal Horticultural Society.—F. C. Emmons, in *Report of Montreal Horticultural Society*.

St. NICHOLAS FOR MARCH combines almost every stirring element of childhood and youth, and is full of activity, variety and cheerfulness.

First in prominence is the opening of a new serial for boys, entitled "Drifted into Port," by Edwin Hodder, an English writer. This first part is illustrated by Sol Mytinger, and presents a scene in English school life that has seldom been equalled in power and interest.

Of Miss Alcott's serial, "Under the Lilacs," there are two long chapters which draw the reader's interest yet more closely to the pleasant people of the story. Mary Hallock Foote's excellent illustrations of this installment have the reality of pictures from life. Then, there are six bright short stories with pictures, and just half dozen interesting accounts, with appropriate illustrations of places, of people, and of people's doings, on land and sea in different parts of the world.

The element of travel and adventure is well represented in "Secrets of the Atlantic Cable," "A Monument with a Story," and "Westminster Abbey."

The Departments are full of attraction and suggestion; and the illustrations throughout are striking and appropriate.

THE GREAT FEMALE REMEDY, FOR MORRISTOWN.

This invaluable medicine is unfailing in the cure of all those painful and dangerous disorders to which the Female constitution is subject. It invigorates the debilitated and delicate; and by regulating and strengthening the system, fortifies the youthful constitution for the duties of life, and when taken in middle or old age, proves a real blessing, and on the approach of Child-birth, these Pills should be used for two or three weeks previous to confinement; the benefits to be derived are incalculable; they fortify the constitution, lessen the suffering during labour, prevent weakness of the organs, and enable the mother to perform her duties with comfort to herself and the child.

In all cases of Nervous and Spinal Affections, Pains in the Back and Limbs, Fatigue on slight exertion, Depletion of the Heart, Hysterics, and Whites, these Pills will effect a cure when all other means have failed; and, although a powerful remedy, do not contain iron, calomel, antimony, or anything hurtful to the constitution. Full directions in the pamphlet around each package. JOB MOSES, New York, Sole Proprietor. \$1.00 and 125 cents postage, enclosed to Northrup and Lyman, Toronto, Ont., General Agents for the Dominion, will insure a bottle, containing over 50 Pills, by return mail.

That Wife of Mine.

CHAPTER III.

(Continued.)

"Take my lady, sir, only a minute! I'll be back soon."

A staid professor, with blue spectacles, wandering aimlessly about with a baby in his arms! Who put there he could not tell, only that a wild-looking woman rushed into the little depot, and quite thrust it upon him, then disappeared.

What should he do with it? It was lying very quietly now—a fair little bundle of white wraps, and a still, innocent face.

The professor looked east and looked west—nothing but woods, woods, as far as could be seen, and between the weeds the glimmer of two iron rails. Away off in the distance a young woman was walking, in a red calico dress and a green sun-bonnet. She came nearer and nearer. The professor trembled to see her coming; and he could hardly have told why, except that he was alone with the baby.

The young woman looked in, rustic fashion, then spoke out—
"La! how pretty it is!"

The young man blushed to his forehead, and pulled his wide-brimmed hat closer over his eyes. The young man, I said; well, he was but thirty-five, and hardly looked thirty. A tall, rather spare edition of the *genus homo*; a man with a scientific cast of nose, and great tender, beautiful, dreamy eyes, that it seemed a shame to disguise with blue eye-glasses.

But then, the professor was near-sighted, very near-sighted. He was positive terror to him to go without glasses. He was always running into people. Therefore he kept seven pairs in different places, to meet the demands which a sometimes forgetful habit imposed upon him—one in each of his waistcoat pockets, one pair always hanging in sight in his room, and three others locked carefully away. These would all change places in due course of time, but it rarely happened that he lost track of them all at once.

And now, what should he do with the baby? The young woman in the red gown was fast disappearing; she was gone. Almost any common man would have laid it down, and let it take its chances of being found; but our professor was not a common man. He vaguely kept hoping that the wild, anxious, rather handsome young person who had so unceremoniously invested him with this strange charge would make her appearance again. He wandered to and fro. How still it was, save the monotonous breathing of the forest harmony, and the shrill chirping of many insects! He walked this side and that, wondering, if he should be recognized as the lecturer of the previous evening, what people would say of his dubious position as a *pro-tem*, family man.

The baby still slept. On its little face was impressed an angelic sweetness that touched his heart, but nevertheless he longed to be rid of the baby. His brain was in a mist; it always was in a mist about ordinary things. He knew possibly, that nut was sheep; but whether it was out up to boil, or boiled whole and then dissected, I think he would have been unable to tell. As to him of the systems of stars, celestial signs, or the Greek constellations, and he was perfectly at home, and would charm and dazzle by the hour with his brilliant theories and delightful speculations.

But the baby! Timo was passing on leaden wings, and still nobody came. Except the hand-car full of roughs, which stopped hardly long enough to let out old Perkins, the man who had charge of the lamps. He nodded to the professor.

"A fine boy that, general," he said. "I wonder if it is a boy," thought the professor.

"Usually travel with your family, general" was the next remark, with a twinkle of the cunning old eyes hid away behind the wrinkles.

"Yes, always—I beg your pardon—no; I haven't any family," blundered the professor, who joyously called a certain apparatus with which he sometimes illustrated his lectures, his family.

"Oh!" and the old fellow gave him a searching, sidelong look from under his beetling brows.

It here but once a day. Ain't you he man that lectured up to Morrishown last night? You lecturers are a popular sort of people, you are, and he chuckled again.

The poor professor felt his courage ebbing out in large drops at the thought of being recognized. He tried to disengage one hand in order to get at his handkerchief; but the baby quirmed, and, in an agony of fear, it should wake, he put it back again, while the perspiration rolled off of itself.

"Warm day," said Perkins, scratching his chin reflectively with his little finger. "Yes, I knowed you 'cause of them blue spectacles. Blue spectacles gives a man a uncommon and superior air."

Inwardly, Lat mildly, Professor Von Ra b cursed his unfortunate spectacles.

"Did you see a woman running wildly about?" he asked slowly and solemnly.

"Well, not here," replied Perkins reflectively; "but I've seen a lot of 'em running about wild up 'tother station, gen'ally; and the old man looked down remaining, and passed up his stubby chin. There's Miss Stiggins, she makes a pint of forgetting her umbrella till the last minute; and Miss Stott, that's deacon Stott's wife, she alters loses one of her children, and runs about yellin' like the town crier. Then there's them that stop to inquire 'bout all other folks' relations, and what they've got in their market baskets, right on the brink of eternity, with death a whistlin' all aboard! I've tuck 'em from under their car-wheels more'n ones, and never got so much as thanks for 'em."

"Is there a poor-house, or a foundling-asylum, or any place where I could leave this child?" asked the professor anxiously. Time was flying; he was due the next morning at nine at his class.

"Iud, sir! you can't mean it. Why, you don't say it ain't yours!"

The professor groaned in spirit.

"Don't tell me somebody put it upon me?—a woman who looked as near crazy as any one out of Madam well could," he queried savagely, though his voice was suppressed almost to a whisper.

"Law, that's the way they alleys do, them sort; and the wink that accompanied this irritating response nearly drove every rational thought out of the professor's brain. Whether to hurl the unconscious baby at the head of that grim and oily man, and fly, or apply his boot to the greasy habits, he hardly knew.

"Well, I wish you a pleasant journey, sir, you and the little one. Train's due in fifteen minutes—gits to Tarryville in two hours and a half—if no accident happens. No accident ain't happened since it's been a road; but Iud, sir, there must *always* be a fat time. That's a fine-looking boy, sir, Good bye."

It was plain that the man was determined to have his joke. The professor also determined to keep his temper—and the baby. What else was he to do for the time being? Plan after plan came into his head like lightning, and were rejected pre-emptively. Not a soul was in sight. He peered anxiously up and down the dark road. It was an utterly out-of-the-way place. There would be no train after to-day till to-morrow at the same time. What was he to do? Dinnerless, footsore and perplexed—he had never in his life been in such a dilemma. Perkins had gone; everybody had gone—He might have been the only man in the world, for all he saw of humanity.

Something would not let him desert the helpless creature; but what was he to do ultimately? Confined thoughts of an asylum in his own city occurred to him. Perhaps Providence would interpose. Here came the train; and, with a vague trust in something, he scarcely knew what entered the ear.

CHAPTER IV.
The baby still slept. Gently the professor laid it down upon his knee, thinking of the time when he had cared for just such a helpless creature, motherless, and, but for him, altogether friendless.

royal heart of earth to drop a seed! And the little German rivers shooting here and there—blue as the fountains of heaven—and the little German bridges, their rough points softened by distance into the seeming grace of art, though they were simple rustic foot-bridges—how the past came rushing back upon him!

It was in the last car; and taking off his spectacles he drew his hat, with that shining broad brim, still further over his brows. Thus shielding himself as such as possible, he presently fell into a reverie, and earth and all human belongings fell away from him like a garment.

It was a full hour ride to Tarryville. In fifteen minutes by the clock the baby stirred. Its protector started, and suddenly came back to the realities of life. The hat was actually staring at him, with wide open blue eyes. It was a refined little face, albeit the lace and muslin that framed it in were coarse and common texture, and its clothes were not exactly those of a babe of quality. He looked around, and drew his breath more freely, for they were all strangers. Then he placed the baby in a most comfortable position, and leaned back complacently.

At that moment a little gurgling sound, such as nothing but a baby can make, issued from the tiny red lips.

"Bless her little heart!" ejaculated a mild-eyed woman behind him—but she saw the baby. Women from almost any point of vision can see a baby.

"Dear me! it must be a girl," said the professor to himself.

"How old is she?" queried the woman, bending over.

"Well, a year or two, I guess," replied the poor man helplessly.

"You don't say!" and up went a pair of finely arched eyebrows. "How very small of its age! Can it possibly be a year?"

"I—I might have missed a few months," responded the professor, wondering what he had said. "I don't—think I really can tell—what age exactly—babies are—when they—"

"When they're nursing, I suppose you mean," said the woman complacently.

"Yes, I—I guess that's it, exactly." Here was a poser. Poor professor Von Ra devoted nearly five minutes to the solution of this question mentally. "I have every reason to believe she is," he made reply, in his slow manner. "Every reason to believe," cogitated the woman, who had begun to feel a peculiar interest in this mild-looking, large-eyed man. "Probably it's not his baby; but if not, why is it with him? Such a little thing ought not to travel without a mother, or nurse, or somebody."

The baby began an examination of its hands, then doubled them up and lunched out in a sort of free fight with nothing in particular.

For the moment the woman on the back seat had subsided; but the little one was too powerful a magnet.

She leaned forward and watched it. Presently there were two tears trickling quietly down the channels of her cheeks.

"Sweet little thing!" she murmured in a low, broken voice. "It makes me think of my own baby. It's your very image, sir."

"Ahem!" choked the Professor, crimson with indignation, and the baby came very near falling in the eagerness with which its protector tugged at the window with one hand.

The atmosphere was close enough; but the poor dear woman at his back had forgotten her morning's repast of cucumbers and onions.

The baby by this time had one hand in his long silken, brown beard, and the other in his watch-chain—a position which nothing in life but a baby could possibly achieve. While he was nervously trying to save his chain, which was an old heirloom, and very slender, it suddenly occurred to him that the woman in the next seat was crying. Yes, she was surely wiping her eyes with a handkerchief. That sense which is situated in the back of the head, and answers for sight, and which in him was very strong, told him so. Presently she leaned forward, and chirruped to the little one, who was evidently making up her mind to a change in the programme. Goodness had become tiresome to her small faculties. The pleasant smile and clacking checked the serious down curve of the crimson mouth, and she stared with rounder eyes and articulated gurgling at her neighbor.

"It sets me to thinking of a dear little girl that I lost not long ago, sir—the only one I ever had," said the woman, after a slight indulgence in infantile faith with the absorbed baby. "It's very hard, sir, to lose them—oh, it's very hard! One's home