



AMERICAN TRICK

By MADE ROBERTSON.

serious frame of mind. Then, too, he was by no means certain as to her feelings toward himself. Some definite assurance either way would, he felt, have been grateful, although it is safe to affirm that had such assurance been unfavorable to his hopes he would none the less have been anxious for further information.

However, he was denied the satisfaction of even well-grounded suspicion. She had such a baffling sort of manner. Never had he been able to surprise her into an admission of anything, however trifling, which might be taken as an indication that she aroused within her emotions of any kind whatever. It was certainly very difficult to know what to do.

Many times had he almost taken advantage of a momentary silence on her part. Times without number had he nearly clasped her in his arms as she promissed to tell him, but she was too quick for him. The boldest effort on his part had been made one evening after he had brought a friend to call upon her. Minna, Bob and the friend had all sat in the kitchen and pulled taffy. Next evening Bob said, sheepishly:

"Do you know, Minna, what Ike was telling me last night?"

"How could I know without you told me?" returned Minna, with spirit. She was washing dishes and she clattered them in the pan.

"He was asking me if I were going to marry you?"

"And what did you tell him?"

"Told him I didn't know."

"That was right," said Minna, swirling the dish-cloth around.

"And he—she said I was a durned fool if I didn't."

Minna went off into peals of laughter. Then she sobered up—

"Didn't you?"

"Didn't marry you."

"So you would be—if you got the chance?"

"That's what I told him. If I got the chance, but I can't get the chance, decidedly."

"What right had you to tell him you couldn't get the chance?"

"Cause you ain't never give it to me."

"No, and I never will!" returned Minna, with emphasis.

"Jes' what I thought," said Bob, dismally. "Guess I'd better go."

"Guess ye had," remarked his hostess, hospitably. As she spoke she wiped out the dishpan and hung it upon the nail behind her. "If you'd learn a few things before I let you out!"

"But you're a big sight cleverer'n me," answered Bob, meekly.

"That's so," said Minna, laconically. As Bob passed dejectedly out of the kitchen door.

Bob could not truthfully disown the remark, as he had made it frequently, in confidence, to his near companions in the village. So, after this unexpected home-thrust, he remained uncomfortably silent.

Minna pursued her advantage.

"Nice dolings, them, for a man!" she contemptuously. "Talkin' about girls when they can't talk back for themselves."

If the reported conversation had not been wholly imaginary, Bob would have been stricken with remorse. As it was, however, although inwardly trembling, he saw an opening and took it.

"But I spoke back for you, Minna; I did."

"Oh you did, did you?" was the discouraging comment. "Since it was you said the worst, seems to me it wuz all you could."

"They said a lot more'n I did," Bob continued, with fictitious courage.

"They said as how I needn't be hangin' around here, fur y'd allus scorn me till the judgment, and not marry me at all."

"There was some truth in their remarks," remarked Minna, snubbingly.

Bob gathered all his vanishing boldness together for a final effort.

"But there's wussor nor that," he said, with well-forced gloominess. "I said as how I knowed you would marry me."

"Who made you so wise?" interrupted Minna, sarcastically.

"An' a man bet me you wouldn't; an'—an' I bet him you would."

"Beasts!" ejaculated the much-incensed Minna.

"An' I bet a fearful lot, Minna. Gosh! I'm scared to think of it. If I got to give him all that money the farm'll have to go, sure."

Minna looked up, frightened.

"How much?" she asked, faintly.

"Wonder how much she'll stand?" Bob asked himself, perplexedly. Then he glanced at her tentatively.

"I'm most afraid to tell you. It's—it's—gosh! Minna—it's a hundred dollars!"

"Oh, my!" ejaculated Minna; "you ner er did!"

"A hundred dollars!" repeated Bob chokingly, and overcome by the feelings he had aroused he buried his head in his hands.

"TRY WUZ TALKING ABOUT YOU," in his hands. From this safe retreat he continued disjointed remarks, broken by emotion.

"Don't care for myself—(sigh). I don't want to live, anyway; but the farm'll have to go, sure, and poor mother and father!" (sob).

"Old no, no," said Minna, tearfully.

"They're old, now, to start over again (a protracted sigh); but I kin work for 'em. I'll do it; but—"

Bob's shoulders shook with nobly suppressed emotion—"I'll come hard to lose the old place now (sob), after all them years."

"Oh! don't don't, don't, Bob! I can't bear it," gasped Minna, choking down the tears. "I'll—I'll—"

Bob waited a moment. Then he went on:

"Poor sister can't go to school, or nothing," rocking himself to and fro in apparent grief; "an' there's no wood got for the winter, an'—here he wept aloud, and, seeing this, Minna too wept aloud.

"Oh! Bob," she cried; "how could you be so—so—" and she burst again into tears.

FARMER AND PLANTER.

SAVING CORN FODDER.

The Southern Method Works Best with the Cornfield.

I have carefully noted recent correspondence in regard to the manner of saving corn fodder in the south. The southern method, as is generally known, is to strip the blades off below the ear, and top the stalk, blades and all, above the ear, in other words, cut off the "upper story" of the stalk and let the "basement" and the ear stand in the field.

Now there is nothing that teaches us quite as thoroughly as experience. Somewhere about thirteen years ago I visited the southern states, and saw Mr. Greeley and went south instead of west. Milk was ten cents per quart, and I bought a dairy farm and outfit complete—forty good cows, plenty of good well-water, besides connection with the city water-works—

and above all, a large tract of land. As a matter of course, cows that gave ten-cent milk had to have plenty of filling, and we set to work to supply it. We put stable manure in drills a little less than four feet apart, and drilled in corn which was thinned to about one stalk in a row, and in the end we had one foot apart. The corn grew more than twelve feet tall, every stalk of it. We fed all we could of it green, and cut the remainder up, and "stocked" it up in the field, where it remained a long time until it was sure it was thoroughly dried out. Then we hauled it and ricked it up. The result was a large lot of spoiled corn fodder.

There is too much water in the southern cornstalk to cure it; and it is so large and woody, that it is rejected by anything less than digestion than an ensilage cutter, and it came to the conclusion, after that, to be content with taking off the top six or eight feet of the stalk. In other words, I fell in with the customs of the country as gracefully as possible. There is nothing on the farm that has so much water in it as the lower end of a cornstalk, unless it is some of the milk we get in this city. The southern cornstalk can not be cured so as to stand storage. Therefore the farmer has dropped into the habit of "topping" above, and "blading" below the ear. This is true, but it gives him extra work, but it gives him a most excellent quality of fodder.

The start to which southern corn attains, under favorable circumstances, is almost past belief. The growth of corn on the lands bordering on the great Dismal swamp is something really astonishing. I visited one farm a year or two since, upon which was one continuous field of corn, of about 600 acres. The soil was a rich, dark loam, and in July it had attained its full growth. The corn ears were higher than our heads, and in fact many of the ears were too high to hang a hat on, and the stalks were so tall that the tops could not be reached by an umbrella held by the outstretched arm. All these stalks from top to bottom were well bladed with broad, long blades of fodder. The lower portion of the stalk, however, was in perpetual twilight, the sun's rays not being able to penetrate within four feet of the ground. In such fields as this, when the sun shines as it knows how to shine in the "Sunny South," the lamp of the "fire-fly" (lightning-bug) was plainly seen, in the perpetual twilight near the base of the stalk. Such a large stalk, however, is not profitable in proportion to its size.

By judicious selection many farmers have been able to get as large an ear from a smaller stalk. The trucker for example, who puts in a crop of corn in June, after potatoes have been dug, uses a variety that reaches a height of about eight feet, and cuts it all up close to the ground, but in a similar field corn of the south, which in this vicinity, reaches such a large growth of stalk, is not considered of any value below the ear. We have individual farmers here, who annually plant from 300 to 350 acres in corn, and who never save one per cent either "blade" or "stalk"—it all goes to waste, except such good as the same may do the soil by being plowed under, in preparing the ground for the next crop. I was shown one field of corn last season, upon which twenty-seven annual crops of corn had been grown in twenty-eight years.

There are many things about southern farming that can and should be remedied; but cutting the corn-stalk off above the ear, where corn is twelve feet or more in length, is not the worst mistake a farmer can make. If some genius will get up a corn that will make a six-foot stalk and a two-foot ear, he can find customers for that same corn down this way. By the way, we have a fine stand of corn this year. We were nearly four inches behind in our usual rainfall, until the last forty-eight hours, during which time we have been favored with a liberal supply, that puts the ground in first-class shape. Our corn field were never cleaner than now. The corn that is present in the crops are taken off, other crops are put in, among which will be large areas of "ninety-day corn"—corn that will mature in ninety days.—Farmers' Home Journal.

FEEDING PIGS.

The Best Results Attained Through the Sow.

Generous treatment of the brood sows always pays in the increased thriftiness of the pigs; while to stint the sow is to stint the pigs, and in doing this an injury will be inflicted that no after treatment will entirely overcome. It is not necessary or best to have the sows fat, yet it is very essential that she be in a vigorous, thrifty condition, and whether she is carrying or suckling a good litter of pigs, it is very important that she be supplied liberally with food, and that the supply be of nourishing food for her pigs. A good brood sow is either carrying or suckling a litter of pigs the greater portion of the time, and it requires good manage-

ment to feed and care for her so that she will be in trim all of the time. The quality, as well as the quantity, of the food is important, as she can not in anywise furnish the nourishment unless she is first properly supplied with the food.

Young pigs must commence to grow as soon as they commence to nurse. They are, of course, too young to eat themselves, hence must be fed through the sow. A good start secured while they are young will make it a much easier matter to keep them growing, and the easiest way of securing profitable hogs is by a quick growth, and if a quick growth and an early maturity is secured it is very important that the pigs be kept growing from the start.

By feeding the sow liberally with nourishing food she will be able to furnish sufficient feed to her pigs to keep them growing right along, so that when the change is made to something else they will be in healthy condition, and will not suffer in any way by the change.

For a week after farrowing, as a rule, the feeding should be light, and then the ration should be rapidly increased until she gives all that she will eat in a clean, healthy condition, and she must be kept up until the pigs are weaned. It will be difficult, no matter how well fed she may be, to keep her from running down, and the liberal feeding must then be kept up to make her come right again. And then after she is bred, liberal feeding is necessary so that she can properly nourish her pigs and be in condition to stand the drain of suckling another litter.

Feeding the sow liberally, both during gestation and while suckling her pigs, will help materially in making her pigs vigorous. There is no danger of the pigs making too rapid growth. In fact the feeding and management should be such as will secure the most rapid growth. A good sow will suckle her pigs an average of ten weeks, and this is fully one-fourth of the time they should be allowed to properly grow for market, and as it is the most important stage, is very essential that good treatment be given and this can not well be done unless good treatment is given the sows.—Cor. Farm and Ranch.

Wherein an Education Pays.

To be the most successful farmer a man should be well posted and well educated. There are few branches of knowledge from which he can not draw in every-day life. In the natural sciences the graduate of the highest institutions of learning in the land will find in the ordinary work of the farm a constant application of what he has learned. The more practical and thorough than that prescribed in the curriculum of any of our schools. The introduction to a line of study in this direction given at our schools is carried on indefinitely and to the end of his life, and the farmer's entomology will assist the farmer in determining among the insects which surround him his friends and his enemies, and being able to protect the one and destroy the other may be of great advantage to him. In regard to birds, beasts and reptiles, it is along this line that an education may be put to a practical use. Intelligent effort is always rewarded.—National Stockman and Farmer.

HERE AND THERE.

A vegetable-headed man is one with carrot hair, redish cheeks, turnip nose and a sage look.

Better let the hogs or sheep eat the fallen fruit than to allow it to rot under the trees, as by this plan both the stock and the trees will be benefited.

The watering trough is apt to be neglected and become more or less foul during the hot weather. See that it is clean and the water pure.

A hard row to hoe" evidently refers to a cotton row on sandy land in wet weather, and beautifully rooted with crab-grass.

Because you are through with your harvester for this season is no reason why it should be permitted to remain in the yard, as it is a pest to the other crop has been planted and matured.

A great many farmers fall, like the speculator, by "biting off more than he can chew," or "wading beyond his depth," or planting more than he can properly cultivate. All these aphorisms mean the same thing.

Never neglect to repair your harness or vehicles as soon as they need it, since by their giving way at some unexpected moment a good horse may be ruined or a human life lost. "A stitch in time," etc.

Vegetable matter is nature's fertilizer, and all that is not used to purpose in feeding should be turned under. The time spent in turning under weeds and refuse will bring back much more than it cost.

Have two shares to each plow and you will then neither have to stop work in order to go to the blacksmith's nor have to continue with a dull tool. You will save the cost of the extra share every season.

Be sure to educate your horse or colt on both sides, since while he may be perfectly familiar with an object when seen by one eye, it will most surely frighten him when seen for the first time with the opposite one.

Farm tools and implements properly cared for and intelligently handled usually give satisfaction, and last longer than a responsible manufacturer or reliable dealer said they would.

Fatten and market all matured stock. Young growing stock pays a better price for feed than does the exception of the milch cows, the work teams and the breeding animals. No matured stock should be kept any longer than is necessary to fit for market.

It depends much upon the farmer's location whether he should keep this or that kind of stock, but he is near a good city market the mutton breeds will be profitable. Others will find it best to keep sheep for both wool and mutton, but all farmers should keep sheep.

THE FEAR OF SNAKES.

Many Children and Some Grown Persons Suffer Therefrom.

There are authenticated instances of children becoming attached to snakes and making pets of them. The solution of a question of this kind is sometimes to be found in the child mind. My experience is that when young children see this creature its strange appearance and manner of progression, so unlike those of other animals known to them, affect them with amazement and a sense of mystery, and that they fear it just as they would any other strange thing. Monkeys are doubtless affected in much the same way, although in a state of nature where they inhabit forests abounding with the larger constrictors and venomous tree-snakes, it is highly probable that they also possess a traditional fear of the serpent form. It would be strange if they did not. The experiment of presenting a caged monkey with a snake, and carefully watching his behavior when he gravely opens the parcel, expecting to find nothing more wonderful than the familiar sponge-cake or sauculent banana—a well-known serpent with either instilled in half a hundred important scientific works, and out of respect to one's masters one ought to endeavor not to smile when reading it. A third view might be taken which would account for our feeling towards the serpent without either instinct or tradition. Extreme fear of all ophidians might simply result from a vague knowledge of the fact that some kinds are venomous; that, in some rare cases, death follows swiftly on their bite; and that, being sufficiently intelligent to distinguish the noxious from the innocuous—at all events while under the domination of a sudden violent emotion—we destroy them all alike, thus adopting Herod's rough and ready method of ridding his city of an inconvenient babe by a general slaughter of innocents.

It might be objected that in Europe, where animosity to the serpent is greatest, death from snake-bite is hardly to be feared; that Pontana's six thousand experiments with the viper, showing how small is the amount of venom possessed by this species, how rarely it has the power to destroy human life, have been before the world for a century. And although it must be admitted that Pontana's work is not in the hands of every peasant, the fact that death from snake-bite is a rare thing in Europe, probably not more than one person losing his life from this cause for every two hundred and fifty who perish by hydrophobia, of all forms of death the most terrible. Yet, while the child of a snake-bite is a major cause of persons, the most violent emotions, dogs are universal favorites, and we have them always with us, and make pets of them in spite of the knowledge that they may at any time become rabid and inflict the most dreadful and fatal poisoning and destruction on us. This leads to the following question: Is it not at least probable that our excessive fear of the serpent, so unworthy of us as rational beings, and the cause of so much suffering and cruelty, is, partly, at all events, a result of our superstitious fear of sudden death? For there exists, we know, an exceedingly widespread delusion that the bite of a venomous serpent must kill, and kill quickly. Compared with such ophidian mania, the bashfulness of the lizard, hamadryad, and tiepolonia, the viper of Europe—the poor viper of many experiments and much (not too readable) literature—may be regarded as almost harmless—at all events, not as dangerous as the hornet. Nevertheless, in the cold northern clime, even as in other worlds where nature elaborates more potent juices, the delusion prevails, and may be taken in account here, although its origin cannot now be discussed.

For my own part I am inclined to believe that we regard serpents with destructive hatred purely and simply because we are so taught from childhood. A tradition may be handed down without writing, or even articulate speech. We have not altogether forgotten to be "lower northern clime," even as in other worlds where nature elaborates more potent juices, the delusion prevails, and may be taken in account here, although its origin cannot now be discussed.

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HOUSEHOLD BREVITIES.

Shirred Eggs.—Put a piece of butter the size of a hazelnut in a teacup with a pinch of salt and a little pepper. Break in two eggs without stirring. Set in a pan of boiling water to cook. When the whites are set serve immediately in the cup they were cooked in.—Detroit Free Press.

Lemon Essence.—When one is using lemons plentifully, an excellent essence may be made at the slightest cost. Put the grated rind of a dozen lemons into a pint of alcohol, add a teaspoonful of lemon oil, bottle and cork tightly and set in a warm place; shake every day for two weeks, when it will be ready for use.—Country Gentleman.

Date Custard Pie.—Is good for a spring dinner. Cook half a pound of dates until soft enough to rub through a sieve; then to a pint and a half of sweet milk, add two well-beaten eggs, one pinch of salt, a little powdered cinnamon, and bake in one crust. Use the whites of the eggs for a meringue to cover the top of the pie after it is baked.—Home Opinions.

Baked Eggs.—Break six or seven eggs into a buttered dish, taking care that each is whole and does not encroach upon the others so much as to mix or disturb the yolks; sprinkle with pepper and salt and a bit of butter upon each. Bake in a moderate oven until the whites are well set. Serve very hot, with rounds of buttered toast or sandwiches.—Orange Judd Farmer.

Strawberry Ice Cream.—Take one quart strawberries, wash them, and then sweeten so that they will not curdle the cream. Take three pints of cream, and if rich, one-half pint of milk. Put strawberries and cream together and sweeten all sweeter than if to be eaten before freezing, as the freezing takes out the sweetness. Other flavors may be made with just the same care, including peach, pineapple and vanilla.—Boston Budget.

Asparagus on Toast.—To those who like it this is the most delicious vegetable that can be served; those who dislike the peculiar flavor of the stalks into a small bunch, cut off the hard lower part and plunge the heads into a saucepan of salted boiling water. Let them boil from ten to fifteen minutes, piercing them with a long pin to try if they are tender. Have ready a quart of cream, and when the asparagus is ready to use, cover the dish with a hot bowl that it may reach the invalid in good condition.—Ladies' Home Journal.

Parker House Rolls.—Rub one tablespoonful of butter into one quart of flour, beat one-half pint of new milk, and when cool, pour it into a well, or bay, in the center of the flour, add half a tablespoonful of white sugar, a pinch of salt, and half a cup of yeast, or half a well soaked yeast cake. Do not stir the mixture, but allow it to stand for eight or ten hours; mix it in dough and let it stand until light, mold and roll out on the bread board until about half or three-fourths of an inch in thickness, and cut with a circular cake cutter, rub the top of each with melted butter and fold them in half, over on the other half, after the manner of a turnover, place a tiny bit of butter on the top of each, place them upon the tins upon which they are to be baked, let them rise, and when light bake quickly.—Farm, Field and Fire side.

THE WOMAN WHO BORROWS.

An Unmistakable Nuisance to Be Found in All Grades of Life.

A man who is a thief and a criminal, but a woman who is a professional borrower is usually a lady and a Christian. She borrows everything, from your diamond ring to your wash tub, and never returns anything but a bad temper, and a few words of free-fire. I think justice as well as love is stone blind, but it is high time something was done to restore her sight. I lived next door to a professional borrower once. That's why I am poor to-day. She borrowed all sorts of things in her grocery, and a few of fee, sugar, eggs, salt, vinegar, etc., although the grocery store was just across the street. She did not take the daily papers, but came after ours as soon as they arrived. Our magazines and books were her legitimate prey.

She said since that she had to buy another bookcase to hold the many volumes she acquired in this way. She had a daughter, a young lady, who dressed as stylishly as the neighbors could afford. It was a use to lending her my opera-glasses and fan, but when she asked for my opera wrap as well I drew the line. I remember one day she came in in great haste to say she was going to the opera that evening and please would I let her take my wrap. I told her I expected to use it myself. "Oh, dear," she said, "now I suppose I shall have to go over to Windsor and get my cousin's and I'm all tired out now. You see, it's going to be very swell this evening, so ma got me a new dress and hat, and she's Smith's evening frock, and net and Helle's fonce fan. You know they go beautifully together, and my sister has a pair of white gloves she got Christmas, and I thought with these and your velvet cape I would be all fixed." She had such an injured look that I positively felt I must help her.