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—Success Magazine.

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—Toledo Blade.

Conservation Comedy.

"We countrymen have the best of it. When all else fails we can eat the forest preserves." "I don't know that you have the best of it," retorted the city fellow. "We have our subway jam."
—Louisville Courier-Journal.

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By the Aid of the Incubator

By Mary Gilbert

Esra Townley was forty years old and a bachelor. Few men arrive at this state unless the door to their hearts has been closed by a woman's hand, and Esra was no exception to the rule. While still an awkward schoolboy he had centered his affections on pretty Abbie Cummings, and the scorn in her eyes had never shaken his loyalty.

She was still Miss Abbie, an alert, self-reliant little woman, serenely conscious of the fact that the village applauded her wisdom in refusing to mate with so shiftless a man as Esra. Perhaps there were moments when womanliness conquered wisdom—when she yearned for the lonely man. But her dark eyes told no tales and Esra, naturally diffident, had never dared come to the point of proposal.

They had lived across the street from each other all their lives, but were still only good neighbors, with no apparent prospect of changing their relationship.

Esra's cottage stood in the center of an acre of ground, the greater part of which was devoted to his garden. There were hives of bees standing under the old apple trees, while behind them was a small poultry yard.

Every spring Esra laid plans for hatching a large flock of chickens, but he had never succeeded in raising more than nine. His interest in poultry was unabated, and he availed himself of the first spring auction to become the possessor of an incubator.

It was rather loose as to doors and wobbly as to legs, and the heating apparatus was hardly in a state to court investigation. But Esra's expectations of success were as sure to bloom as were the hardy perennials in Miss Abbie's garden. He saw in the much-worse-for-wear incubator a sure road to the realization of his hopes.

Having carefully read the tattered book of directions, he set up the machine in his barn. Then taking a basket, he went down the street to the village store. When Miss Abbie entered the store a few moments later, she found every one laughing heartily.

"There will be great doings in your neighborhood in about three weeks," said the young clerk who had stepped up to wait upon her. "I suppose you know that Esra Townley has an incubator? He is going to start the machine tonight, and has stocked up with cold storage eggs. I told him that we would all be up to see how the machine turned out. Maybe we won't have some fun with him then?"

Miss Abbie went homeward with her head in a whirl. Why should people pick on Esra as the butt of such a joke? What should she do about it? Tell Esra of his mistake? No, he should never learn from her that he had been an object of ridicule.

Suddenly her face lighted up with a smile, showing that the right idea had come. Never had she been more cheerful and serene than during the next three weeks. At times her eyes would twinkle as at some secret joke, and more than one village gossip wondered what good fortune had befallen Miss Abbie.

Esra was not an early riser, but on the day that the incubator hatch was due he awoke just before dawn. It seemed to him that he heard the barn door creak. Dressing himself quickly, he went out to investigate. Everything was in perfect order, with no sign of any disturbance.

But hark! What was that sound? A faint peep from one of the eggs in the incubator? Were they already beginning to hatch?

Never had he so many callers as walked up the path that day. One and all they turred away, baffled, bewildered and sure of only one thing—that the joke was not on Esra.

"There were 28 chicks out the last time that I counted," their host explained jubilantly, "and of course they just keep a-coming. I tell you it was a great streak of luck for me when I got that hatching machine!"

When the hatch was over and the chickens consigned to the care of a home-made brooder, Esra cleaned out the incubator and brushed up the broken egg shells. Among them he noticed a bit of gleaming black, and stopped to pick it up.



Joke Not on Esra.

It proved to be a tiny seal, that made his eyes open wide in astonishment. Surely there could be no mistake. It was the setting of a ring that Miss Abbie had worn for many years, and would have been instantly recognized by any of her village friends.

How came the seal out of the ring? Above all, how came it to be lying there, among the egg shells in the incubator? Miss Abbie had not been among his visitors—of that he was very sure. Wondering would neither solve the mystery nor restore the ring to its owner, so a few moments later he was knocking at her door.

Miss Abbie welcomed him cordially, and ushering him into her cozy sitting-room, made a cheery comment on the weather.

"It is a fine day," Esra admitted, "but that is not what brought me here. I have just found something that I mistrust belongs to you and no one else."

He extended the seal, and Miss Abbie took it at once, gazing at him with startled eyes. For perhaps the first time in all her life, she felt ill at ease in his presence.

"Why, where did you find it, Esra?" she gasped.

"That is the queer thing about it, Abbie. It was in my incubator, and I should like to know how it managed to get there."

"I never wanted you to know anything about it," she faltered.

"About what?"

"Why, the incubator. The boys knew that those store eggs wouldn't hatch, and they were coming up to laugh at you."

"But they did hatch," protested the bewildered Esra. "I have 45 chickens in my brooder this minute."

"You have the chickens," Miss Abbie admitted. "But they didn't come from those eggs."

"Not from those eggs!" Esra echoed blankly. "Then where on earth did they come from?"

Miss Abbie's confusion was increasing every moment. It was decidedly becoming, brightening her dark eyes, and bringing an almost girlish flush to her cheeks.

"I set four of my hens the night that you set the incubator, and came over early in the morning and changed the eggs."

"What morning?"

"Day before yesterday—when they were just ready to hatch."

"Whatever made you do it, Abbie?" Esra's tone was gentle as well as wondering.

"I—I didn't want you to be disappointed," she faltered, "or have them all laughing at you."

There was silence for a moment, then Esra spoke again.

"I didn't suppose you'd care, Abbie. If I had ever dared to think so—"

For once in her life Miss Abbie was speechless. But any one seeing her face at that moment would have known that her days of wisdom were at an end.

GOOD CIGAR WAS WASTED

Man Was Sure He Would Have a Berth Until Told the Train Was a Freight.

"Do you know what time the next train will pass through here going north?" asked a man who had been compelled to stay over night in a small town in Arkansas.

"There will be one in about twenty minutes," replied the ticket agent.

"Bully! Do you ever smoke?"

"Yes, sometimes."

"Here's a cigar that I bought in Dallas. You can't get anything like it in this town. I think you'll enjoy it. They charge 17 cents apiece by the thousand for that brand."

"Thanks, I'm afraid it may spoil my taste, but I'll take a chance on it, just the same."

"Say, can you fix me out with a lower berth for St. Louis?"

"I can telegraph to have one reserved for you on the train that passes through here at 5:30 tomorrow morning."

"No, no; I want to go on the train that's coming now. Can't you fix me out on that one?"

"Nope. I'm very sorry I can't do it."

"O, come on! you can arrange it some way."

"No, it's impossible."

"Well, I'll have to fix it with the conductor, then, I suppose."

"You won't be able to get a berth from him."

"I won't eh! You watch me. There's a sleeper on the train, isn't there?"

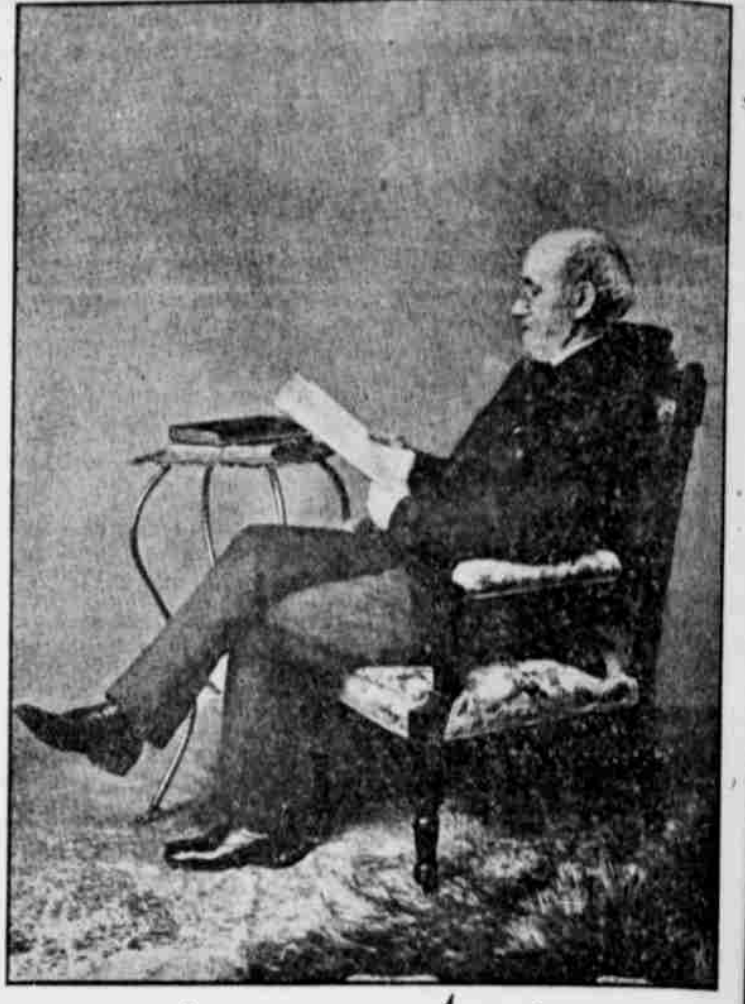
"No."

"What! No sleeper? What kind of trains do you run on this line, anyhow?"

"Well, this one that's coming is a freight train."

"Uncle Tom" in England.

I see it stated that "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was "a wild success from the moment of its first issue in England." This is altogether inaccurate. "Uncle Tom" was declined by a well known London publisher, but another firm brought out an edition of 2,500 copies at half a crown. This proved a failure, so the price was reduced to one shilling and then the book sold rapidly. In a few weeks every one was reading it. The firm which had made a good thing out of this speculation were anxious to secure Mrs. Stowe's next work, so they gave her \$500 for the early sheets of the key to "Uncle Tom's Cabin," of which an edition of 50,000 copies was printed, but the book proved a disastrous failure. Mrs. Stowe's second title was "Life Among the Lowly," but this was changed in England to "Negro Life in the Slave States of America."—London Truth.



John Minto

OREGON'S STATE FAIR.

Now Fifty Years Old, and Known Throughout Entire Northwest.

Salem, Or.—John Minto, the first secretary of the Oregon State Fair, is going to be present at the opening of the semi-centennial of this project September 11 next, and he promises to be in the grand stand every day for the week the fair is to be in effect.

This despite his years and the fact that he has not missed an Oregon State Fair since the organization fifty years ago. This is the news Frank Meredith, secretary of the Salem project received recently from Mr. Minto.

According to this veteran, the first Oregon State Fair started auspiciously, wound up in debt, redeemed itself and after fifteen years of prosperity and an evidence of good will acquired the grounds comprising eighty acres at Salem from the county court as a gift.

"We told the County court at the time we were broke," recited Mr. Minto, "that if fifty of our farmers went away from Salem every year to attend the state fair and each one spent but \$10 each, \$500 was taken out of the county and if, on the other hand, 500 farmers were attracted here and they only spent the same amount, it brought \$5,000 into the city and county."

"At the time of which I speak we only needed \$3,000 from the County court to save our property. The court listened, gave us the money and Salem today has the great state fair which I would not like to miss."

From such a beginning has grown the Oregon State Fair to which 75,000 persons paid admissions last year. To such an extent has this fair grown that this year there are \$21,000 in cash purses for the harness races alone. There are two events with \$5,000 purses each and in another event the purse is \$1,000. In five events the purses are \$1,000 each; there is one \$1,500 purse and numerous smaller events. All grown from a fair which might have fallen for but \$3,000.

Washington has 15 entries, Oregon has 17 horses entered and from away down in California there have come 36 entries for the harness events to be decided at this fair. There is to be a steep chase event that is to go four times around the inside of the trotting track. From all indications the list will fill the full sixteen entries expected by the fair officials.

Aside from the racing events there will be exhibits from nearly every county in Oregon. Ben Worsley will take his "canned flowers" from Astoria Centennial to the Oregon State Fair intact. The Clatsop county court has authorized him to make this exhibit and Worsley, about whom Sunset Magazine wrote in the August issue, will have a complete line of fruits, grains and grasses from the county at the mouth of the Columbia river.

Those who are interested in raising prunes in the Willamette valley have arranged a special exhibit to boom their industry and the hop raisers of the state who at this time are offered 40 cents for their crop are going to show the thousands of visitors what they have to offer in this line.

Governor Oswald West is keeping closely in touch with the development of the plans for holding the fair and L. W. Hill, president of the Great

Northern railway company, has promised to come all the way from St. Paul to deliver an address on the good roads question. His father, the Hon. James J. Hill, the nation builder, says he will also deliver an address if his health permits.

The plans for this fair are comprehensive and much care is being taken to make it a huge success. All the railroads have granted reduced fares on account of the project and extra equipment is to be in Oregon and Washington to take care of the thousands who are expected to join the permanent fair campers. There will be special music, fireworks and numerous free attractions during the week, in addition to the big Parkie outfit of carnival shows.

Took Drastic Action.

Tailor—Has Mr. Owens taken any action on that bill of his yet?

Collector—Yes; he kicked me on the last time I called to collect it—Boston Transcript.

Purist—How is this? Your ad reads "R. E. Vise, Rectifier and Compounder," and you tell me you are proofreader.

R. E. Vise—Why, yes; I rectify errors and compound words.—Judge

Diplomacy.

A North Dakota German farmer aspiring to fill an appointive office wants to keep on good terms with both parties. At ten on election night the result was still uncertain when he was called upon for a speech.

"Ve meets," he said, "to celebrate dis glorious victory. Ve knows yet vich vay it goes. Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!—Success Magazine.

FASHION HINTS



This charmingly simple dancing frock for a young girl is of plain and excellent silk muslin. Half the waist and overskirt are of the embroidery, and the other half of the plain material. The empire bow of black velvet gives a "character touch."