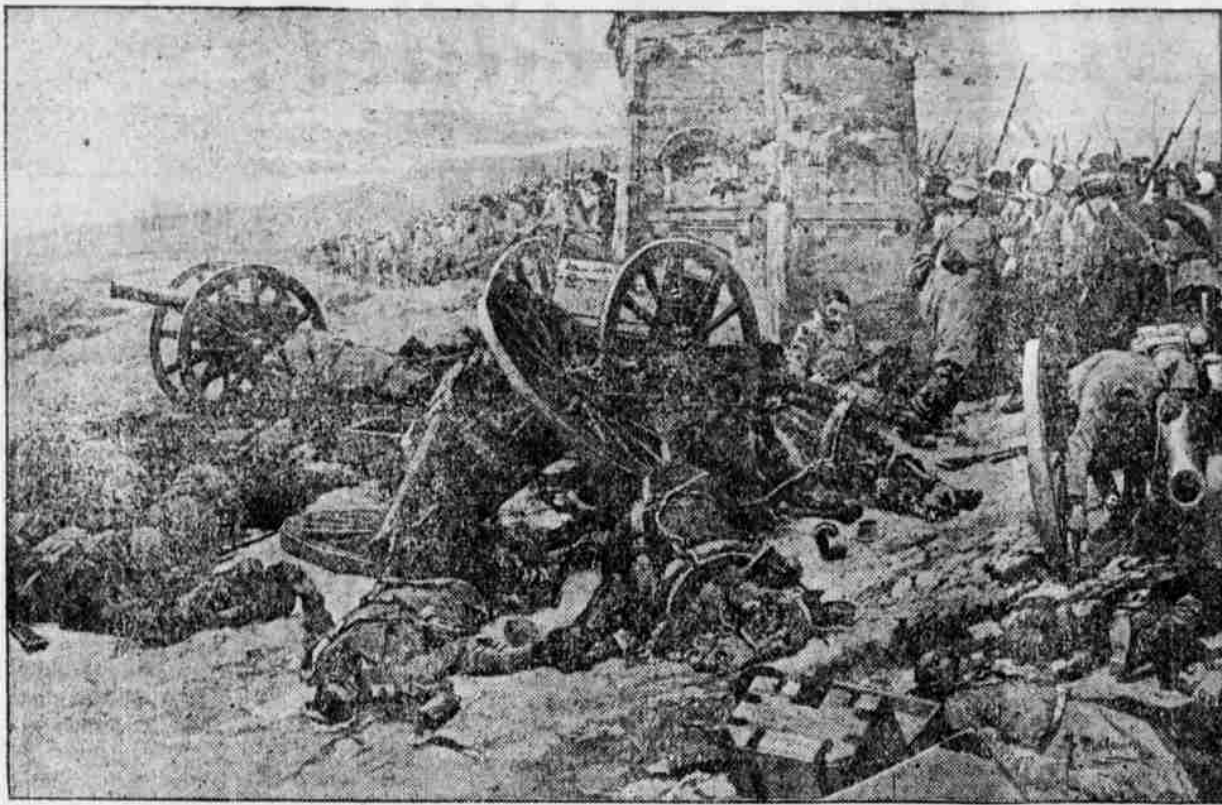


THE RETREAT FROM MUKDEN.



MOTHERHOOD.

I wonder so that mothers ever fret
At little children clinging at their
gown;
Or that the footsteps, when the days are
wet,
Are ever black enough to make them
frown.
If I could find a little muddy boot,
A cap or jacket on my chamber floor,
If I could kiss a rosy, restless foot,
And hear it patter in my home once
more;
If I could mend a broken cart to-day,
To-morrow make a kite to reach the
sky,
There is no woman in God's world could
say
She was more blissfully content than I.
But ah! the dainty pillow next my own
Is never ruffled by a shining head;
My singing birdling from its nest has
 flown!
The little boy I used to love is dead.
But now it seems surpassing strange to
me
That while I bore the badge of mother-
hood
I did not kiss more oft and tenderly
My little child, who brought me only
good.
—Mary Clemmer Ames.

THE HARDCASTLE TWINS.

WELL, May darling, what is to be done? Uncle Jim has come to life again. He is apparently married, and is the proud father of twin boys. So my chances of inheriting are—

And Eric Strachan gave a half choke, and looked at Maisie, and the girl looked first at him and then away from him, and her beautiful eyes were clouded.

"And next week we were going to ask the courts to be allowed to presume your uncle's death, and you would have slipped into title and estates, and—oh, Eric! What a man Lord Hardcastle is, dead one minute and alive the next!"

"What you might call unreliable," said Eric dryly.

In early youth Lord Hardcastle had had a disappointment in love, and, though anyone who knew him would have thought him the last man in the world to have taken such a matter seriously to heart, he did, for he shut up his house and wandered literally all over the face of creation for many years.

He had no relative living but Eric, and not only was he a bad correspondent, but when his rare and laconic epistles from Canada, Australia or South America did arrive only an average of one word in three was decipherable, for his handwriting was simply abominable.

He had been shot, stabbed, had fallen down a disused shaft or two at the diggings, and been shipwrecked twice, and seemed to thrive upon it; and once he wrote he was suffering from what looked like "galloping consumption," but the consumption either failed to gallop, or the air of the Blue Mountains had cured him, or the bad writing may not have been "consumption" at all; the symbols may have stood for a pain almost anywhere. Seven years before when in England, he had made the acquaintance of his nephew Eric, who was 18; he took a huge fancy to the bright young fellow, gave him a very handsome check, indeed, told him to look upon himself as heir to the Hardcastle estates, and promised he would write to his solicitors to see that Eric had a decent allowance worthy of the heir to thousands, and he had better try for the army, and live well.

When old Hardcastle, leaving a very grateful lad behind him, returned to his hotel, he met a very old croupy who was sailing on the following day for the Argentine. Buenos Ayres was one

of the few places Jack Hardcastle had not visited, so, forgetting all about his plans for Eric, he said he would come, too. There was no bother about packing, for he had only arrived the day before from Sydney, and had not unpacked yet; so at dawn the next morning this globe-trotter and his croupy started for Buenos Ayres, and poor Eric was forgotten. The young fellow was practically alone in the world, and if it had not been for little Maisie, his boyhood's sweetheart, would have refused the fairly good clerkship in the city which had been offered him, and lived the life of an idle man on the very slender income his parents had left him, and the prospects of help from his rich, eccentric uncle.

They had been married nearly a year now, and two happier people never lived out of paradise; but their income was only a small one, and there were prospects of another little mouth to feed. They had never quite given up hope that in the nick of time the eccentric uncle would turn up like the godmother in the fairy story, and now had come this awful, ill-written letter, saying he had twin boys, and no mention of his wife—he probably forgot to mention she was dead. Maisie spread it out upon the table, and once more deciphered as much as she could, practically spelling out each symbol.

"I'm bringing over my two lovely twin boys; you will be delighted with them; they're the image of Rose' (I suppose that is his wife). 'They yell a good deal at night—all boys do, but you can rig them up out of the way where they will disturb no one.'"

"Oh, Eric, how can we find room for them all?"

"Twin boys? It looks to me like 'twin frogs.' I never saw such writing. Caesar and Brutus! Did you ever hear such names for children? They're heathen names, too. Awful!"

And then Maisie gave a faint shriek as she looked at the envelope, for it had been posted, not in Sydney, but in London! True to his eccentric instincts, Hardcastle had thought, as he intended to come over, and as the next vessel would carry the mails, including his letter, he might just as well bring the letter over in his pocket and post it in town.

"We must prepare a room for a possible wife and nurse, and we shall want a wee bed for the twins, Eric."

And, quite unconsciously, the little woman glanced toward a wee bed which was being prepared for another little tenant, and there was an expression on her face which made Eric bend over her and kiss her.

They turned out of their own room to make room for Lord and Lady Hardcastle, hired a wee bed, and placed it with a bed for the nurse in the dressing-room. Eric flew out and ordered unheard-of luxuries, and had scarcely returned when a carriage drove up.

Maisie was sitting in the drawing-room, eight feet by eight, trying to look dignified, and Eric himself went to the door. He hesitated for a moment to open it—he had preceded their little servant—and, ere turning the handle, heard:

"You can go back to town, John, or whatever your name is, and take the twins—why, where the devil are the stables?"

Now, there are no stables in Palmyra Villa—far from it.

And then Eric opened the door. A little man as brown as a berry, as hard as nails all over, with gray hair and eyes, and an alert look, was Jack Hardcastle. He did not attempt to shake hands. Small as he was, he seemed to fill the narrow hall.

"Well, young man, what have you to say for yourself?"

"I am glad to see you, uncle."
"Of course, of course—only natural; but do you mean to say that on five hundred a year you can't occupy a larger dog-kennel than this?"

"I am only earning two-fifty, uncle."

"Do you mean to say Spooner & Co. are not paying you five hundred a year?"

"No, sir—why should they?"

"Because I told them to, of course—they're my solicitors. I own I forgot I had arranged to grease your wheels a bit for you before I left England last—dear me, that's seven years ago—and when I did think of it—let me see, I was in the Andamans then—I wrote myself—and in my own handwriting, to make sure—and told them to pay you five hundred a year as long as you behaved yourself, and I got a cable back months afterward—I was in Mexico then: 'Five hundred bunches of bananas not arrived. I couldn't understand what they meant—I suppose there was something the matter with my handwriting.'"

Maisie could stand this no longer. She had stopped looking dignified, and was crumpled up with undignified laughter. So she came out and introduced herself, and the little gray man kissed her.

"But you are not alone, uncle?"

"There's only me and the twins."

"But where are Lady Hardcastle and the nurse? I have made all preparations, and am dying to see the twins."

They were in the eight foot by eight now, and Hardcastle seated, looked blankly at his hosts.

"Do you know, my dear," he said, "I'm bothered if I know what you're talking about. I was never married, and never shall be, and I do not require the services of a nurse."

"But your twin boys?" And she produced his letter.

"Twin boys!" he gasped. "Twin dogs! Poor old Rosie only had two, so we called them the twins, and they've taken every prize down under"; and he was purple.

And then he went to the front door, and in stalked two huge British bulldogs.

They had been settled at Hardcastle House for some little time, for Eric had been ordered to throw up his clerkship, which he did with alacrity—when Maisie heard sounds of mirth proceeding from the day nursery, and quietly went upstairs.

She found her first-born on the knee of Lord Hardcastle, and Lord Hardcastle was giving the first-born a writing lesson!—The Gentlewoman.

He Wasn't a Legislator.

A traveling man who "makes" Kansas City frequently was dining in the cafe of one of the large hotels when he thought he'd play a trick on his waiter. "See that man at the next table, George?" he said.

The waiter nodded assent. "That's Dr. Alonzo Tubbs, the Missouri Legislator, who is trying to stop all tipping." The waiter grew interested at once. "Well, ain't dat too bad," he said. "Ah's been waitin' on him, too. 'Well, you won't get any tip there,' said the traveling man. 'Ah suttinly treated him right,'" replied the waiter.

"A few minutes later the man at the other table left and the waiter returned to the traveling man. 'Well,' said the drummer, 'what did I tell you?' " 'Xcuse me, sah, but ah thinks you tole me er fabrication,' said the waiter, grinning. "Dat man ain't a legislatah—he's a gentleman." The man had given him a quarter.

Slightly Paradoxical.

He—I see that that man Atkinson now says a woman can live on \$225 a year."

She—Did he? Well, perhaps she can if she's willing to kill herself doing it."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Big Fruit Cannery in California.

A new fruit cannery is about to be established in Santa Clara, Cal., which will put up 8,000,000 cans a year. This season it expects to put up 2,000,000.



To save the annoyance of foul-smelling chicken boxes in which you have live poultry, slip two or three sheets of thick paper in the bottom; when empty throw these away.

Skim Milk for Pigs.

On any farm where pigs are raised and skim milk is available, it may be fed with profit in connection with grains of various kinds. To use the skim milk without the grain is not getting the best out of it. The usual plan of feeding skim milk to pigs from two to three months old is to make a mixture of middlings or ground corn with five times the quantity of skim milk. This ration furnishes about the same nutriment that does the milk of the sow, and the pigs will thrive on it. Some pig raisers try a ration consisting of one part of middlings, one part of oil meal and four parts of ground corn mixed with water in lieu of skim milk, and find it fairly satisfactory. Considerable care must be used in the feeding of young pigs, and it pays to try and arrange a ration which will keep them growing as sturdily as possible.

The Egg-Laying Hen.

Since poultrymen have begun to aim at a high standard in egg production and to strive for the two-hundred-egg hen (the type not the individual), much advance has been made, although the White Leghorn still heads the list. Of course, there are hens and hens even of this egg-laying breed, and some of them fall far below the standard. It is interesting to note the formation of the real egg producer, and the illustration, which has been drawn from a photograph of a prize egg producer, will show this formation very clearly, as compared with



TYPE OF BEST LAYER.

the average hen of this or any other breed.

The egg producer has a long back, which is easily noted when she is seen with ordinary fowls. The breast is also low, and there is a heaviness of the body behind. In one word, the carcass may be called plump. The comb and wattles are fiery red, the eyes bright, and the bird has an alertness which does not seem to be prominent in other individuals not so good layers. It pays to look over the birds very carefully, and if one has a standard to go by it will be seen that nine cases out of ten the bird which looks like a layer of few eggs will be found to be so.—Indianapolis News.

Rest Cure for Lameness.

A roomy yard or large box stall is a better place for a horse requiring rest on account of lameness than a grass field. Very often the rest may be rendered more complete by judicious surgical shoeing, which throws the part actually involved into a state of rest. Many make the mistake of turning horses out during the day and bringing them in at night. Generally speaking, the animal would be better off out at night than during the day, the exception being when there is a great variation between the day and night temperature. The horse is nocturnal in his habits; he can graze and get about comfortably in a low medium of light, if he cannot actually "see in the dark," as he is popularly supposed to be able to do, and he can get food, moderate exercise and the beneficial effect of night dews and damp grass to his feet, and is subject to no disturbance.—American Cultivator.

Poultry Pickings.

There is less profit in half-starved hens than in those too fat.

The crocodile, the chicken and the ostrich take pebbles with their food to aid in grinding it.

The qualifications for a successful poultryman are patience, perseverance, pluck, enterprise and capital.

If you do not love your poultry well enough to give them the proper care, you had better go out of business.

If there is any tendency to looseness of the bowels among the poultry, give them coal ashes to pick over. This will correct it.

Milk may soil the old hen's feathers, but there is nothing better for her in the way of food and drink.

A good way to clean ducks, after picking is to rub them well with a cloth that has been dampened and dipped in corn meal.

When bumblefoot appears, lance the bottom of the foot and poultice it with bread crumbs soaked in milk, or a scraped raw potato.

To cure feather pulling, wash the feathers of the victim birds with a mixture made by dissolving powdered aloes in alcohol.

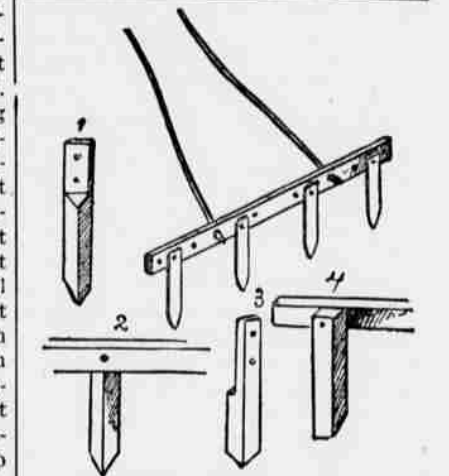
Pasture for Hogs.

For early pasture for hogs sow barley or a combination of barley and oats. A little later sow rape—in fact, rape may be sown almost as early as barley on a well-prepared seed bed, and by having two fields of rape the hogs may be supplied with pasture the whole season as soon as the rape reaches a sufficient growth to pasture it. This is accomplished by turning from one pasture to another, allowing the rape to grow in one field while it is being pastured off in the other. For late summer or fall cowpeas make an excellent pasture for hogs. The same land which is sown to barley early in the spring may be planted to cowpeas after the first of June, and this will furnish pasture in August and September.—Cor. Farmers' Advocate.

Simple Garden Marker.

A marker is one of the handy tools of the farm, and is readily made by taking a strip of inch material of the desired length, and, at the proper distance from the ends, making holes in which to insert poles to form a shaft to which a horse may be fastened. At intervals on this strip make holes so that the teeth may be moved as desired. These teeth may be made of wood and of varying thicknesses and lengths to suit the various seeds. A few bolts will do the fastening perfectly.

For general use the necessary number of teeth may be made triangular in shape, the upper end containing two bolt holes, so as to lengthen if desired. (See Fig. 1.) A neat adjustment of a tooth is shown at Fig. 2. Heavy board



MARKER FOR THE GARDEN.

teeth may be used where coarse seed is to be used if one desires, the teeth being attached to the bar in the same manner as the others. Figs. 3 and 4 show such a tooth and its attachment to the bar.—Exchange.

Uncle Sam's Big Farm.

It is estimated that the total area for farming purposes in the United States is 841,000,000 acres—an area larger than England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, France, Germany, Austria, Spain, Japan and the Transvaal. There are 14,439,000 persons engaged in agricultural pursuits, while all other industries employ but 18,845,000.—Baltimore American.

Garden Hints.

The California poppy is the most brilliant red annual. Do not transplant.

Early plants of marigold flower in pots before replanting, and never stop until frost.

Zinnia is gorgeous and always in flower. It is well to get selected strains for pure colors.

Morning glory is the best vine for the trellis. Soak the seed in warm water before planting. It self-sows. The first frost kills it.