

ESTABLISHED JUNE 19, 1871.

OMAHA, SUNDAY MORNING, MARCH 27, 1904.

SINGLE COPY FIVE CENTS.

EASTER BIRD OF THE WORLD

Doublets There Are Others, but None Just as Good.

WONDER STORY OF THE AMERICAN HEN

Beats the Country's Gold and Silver Mines and Cakes and the Wheat Crop—An Extraordinary Story.

The mightiest Easter gift of the lot is the Easter gift that the American hen has presented to the United States.

If the government were to decide to color up all the eggs that are being laid by her in one day, to present to the children of the country, the whole regular army could not do the work unless each soldier could manage to color 700 eggs, which is a pretty big contract.

As the country will consume not one day's, but several days' laying of eggs, the standing army would be literally overwhelmed, hdden, crushed by the work of the hen.

Her work produces enough eggs in any two days to give one to every human being from Alaska to Porto Rico, not leaving out the Eskimos of Bering Straits.

Forty-two and one-half millions of eggs a day is her average now. That gigantic one day's work weighs 2,635 tons—almost as much as the tonnage of a United States cruiser like the Atlanta.

While industrial combinations and financial operations have filled the air with their clamorous processes, the hen has scratched along in humble privacy, and has beaten on the records of the world. What for? For the value of her modest specialty has turned out to be greater than the whole value of the whole wheat crop of twenty-eight states and territories in one year.

The gold and silver mines of the country aren't worth mentioning in comparison with the simple bird. Only once in fifty years has the value of the gold and silver of the United States beaten the value of its eggs.

Figures cannot give any idea of the enormous value of this American citizen, for the figures are so big being doubtful or un-understanding to any one who is be-lieghted and violent statistician. For in-stance, what does 23,595,005 mean? Yet that is the number of chickens of laying age in the United States, according to the last census, which enumerated them as well as the rest of us.

The value in dollars of that noble ag-gregation of laying talent was \$70,000,000.

A Marvel of Eggs. The wonderful flock of birds laid more than one and one-quarter billion dozens of eggs in one year. This isn't a dream—no, it's that kind of a dream which begins "it estimated."

Only in one year—that of 1903—since records were kept by the government, has it happened that the American mines could beat the hen. In that exceptional year the precious metals were ahead by \$5,500,000.

The Gallion and the Chicken. Even in the ages of gold, when gallion after gallion bore it from Africa and child in the country, from the Pacific to the Atlantic, and from Canada to Mexico, the egg in value was the king.

Uncle Sam has figured up not only all the hens of laying age, but all the poultry of all ages in the country, not scorning either the broilers or the Methuselahs that pour into the market after a well spent and long life to pose on the stalls as spring chickens.

As the result of his count he finds that the poultry of the United States numbers more than a quarter of a billion, 239,813,533, to be exact, and the value is \$65,500,000—enough to give every inhabitant of this country a little more than \$1.15 as his share if they were sold for the account of the public.

Going back to the hens of egg-laying age alone, and leaving out the tender infants that are only consumers and not producers, Uncle Sam's men find that these industrious and nonstriking workers have produced almost \$27,000,000 worth of eggs, and a little more than \$144,000,000 worth of eggs. The exact total of their production in dollars is \$281,178,247.

And that, on the original valuation of the "plant" of \$70,000,000, means that the American hen has simply knocked into a cocked hat the income-producing capacity of trusts, mines, manufacturing concerns, and the street and any except the wildest freaks of speculative stock, for the income produced by the hen is 400 per cent on the original investment, with a little bagatelle of \$117,827 left over for pin money.

The Hen and the Hen. If a person could get a birdseye view of the shipping ports of this country at any \$1.15 in the year he would see droves of cattle, horses and mules go thundering up gangplanks and being hauled in slings up the sides of ships. Steers and cows by the thousands stream into ships at wharves in Boston, New York and Baltimore. Mules and horses in unending procession, day after day, go into ships in all the ports coast around the coast from Portland, Me., to Galveston, Tex. And still more herds go into still more ships on the Pacific shores.

Crossing each other, north, east, west and south, all over the continent, rush trains filled with them, not only day after day, but unendingly through the day and the night, with never a Sunday, never a holiday to give the whirling wheels and the singing rails a moment's rest.

Hogs and sheep and mules and cows and steers and horses—count them, watch them tramping, rushing to the sea, and then turn to figures gathered by the census and Treasury departments and find that all that teeming, never-ending stream of great brutes from millions of acres of pasture, does not amount in value to one-quarter of the value of the eggs laid by the little hen. And if you add the value of the hen herself to the value of the eggs, that whole aggregation of horns and hoofs, all those tons of flesh, do not amount in value to one-fiftieth of what wool and eggs are worth.

Now sweep your eye over the vast extent of continent from the great ranches under the Rocky mountains, over the plains of Texas, over the domain of railroad and slaughter houses from Omaha to Chicago. It is to see the immense city of Chicago itself, with its duchies and principalities of stock yards and abattoirs and factories and laboratories and warehouses and shops and railroad yards and wharves and refrigerating plants—all devoted to seizing the living beast and converting him to a thousand uses, hides, horns, hoof, tallow and meat.

Take in the roads that bear miles on miles of cars full of that product; warehouses scattered along a thousand miles of land; warehouses fronting every navigable nook on the oceans; refrigerating ships that are monsters, all stuffed full as they can hold, which, when they leave through the sea of the world, flooding the ports from London to Singapore.

And then please go back to the dun-colored caulkier that roasts in tiny non-shackle houses and drops her golden egg into any old box that the farmer happens to have picked up; and behold! all the tons of canned and fresh and salted beef, all

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And in dollars those eggs equal 57 per cent of the entire income produced by all the exports of all the meat products, from the pig's tail to the sirloin steak. Add the value of the poultry to the eggs, and the meat products are beaten.

New three-quarter animal products that are exported annually—horns, hoofs, bristles, bones and even glue; add wool and things made out of wool; then add every kind of leather; pile on it all even the exported boots and shoes—and with all those allies, the mass can beat the poultry and poultry products by \$15,000,000.

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But the poultry sold in a year beats that by \$19,000,000, and the eggs beat it by \$28,300,000.

And all the world's animal products that have in turn, come to these shores, from goats herded in Morocco and Switzerland to leather from every place where leather can be obtained, including even gloves made from that leather, including, too, all the cheeses from every land, even China—they aggregate \$127,869,563 in value, less than half the value of chickens and eggs.

It is almost and to think of the argonauts and all their strivings and battles and pas-sions; and of the Alaskan adventures, with their Klondike and Nome, their rippling open of the frozen north itself, their war against ice and blizzard and wilderness for gold, when we study the little seven-pound hen that is worth the gold and silver that engineers and miners and sluices and dynamite and thundering stamp mills have wrested from a whole continent do not equal in combined value, year by year, the value of the tiny, white oval that is gathered in aprons and baskets every morning in every hamlet, without a single exception, that is worth the selling.

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"But what had it but it struck to 'Paddy' Ryan's mind. Like other boys of the time, he had made a hero of O'Connell, and he could not get away from the prophecy, which O'Connell forgot about next day; so at last he told himself that, although he was set aside by his family to be a priest, he would mark it to be what he had said he could be if he only would—an orator.

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"But I want to hear Daniel O'Connell," protested the lad.

"Then buy a ticket," said the man.

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But the boy would not be discouraged. He sought out the stage entrance.

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"And who's Patrick Ryan?" asked that worthy.

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So Chaplain Ryan went among the soldiers in the prison as he had gone among the people in the slums of St. Louis. He made those who were wounded laugh even in and at their pain by his wit; he cheered up others with droll stories; he kept the whole prison as cheerful as any prison can be by means of his tongue; and there are men in the south today who will tell you stories that they heard from the lips of Chaplain Ryan when they were hostages of Uncle Sam between the years 1861-65.

In his work Chaplain Ryan came in contact with men of all sorts of religious beliefs and creeds. Never a radical he came to understand how men could feel differently on the subject of religion and still be sincere, and so when he was mustered out of the army he returned to his pulpit, his sermons were marked not only for their eloquence and wit as before, but for their liberal views as well. As a result, Father Ryan's name soon became known to Protestants, and before long his speaking acquaintance with men of other faiths was as large as with his own, and good Presbyterians were repeating and

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