

A MATTER OF TASTE.

Says the peacock to the rabbit, "Who's your tailor? Tell me, pray, for, good sir, he's cut your coat-fall in a most old-fashioned way."

BEN'S BID.

"Why don't you raise chickens for the market?" suggested Hiram Bassett the village storekeeper, to Ben Singer. Ben was fourteen years old. His mother had died a short time before.

"I'll do it," said Ben, in response to Mr. Bassett's suggestion, and, turning about, trudged home, and all the way was planning how he might begin.

A week later the "chicken farm," as Ben called it, was a fact; at least, he had made a start. In his spare time he had constructed some coops from old barrels and a box or two.

He fed his chickens from the screenings he got at a small price from several of the farmers. The hens managed, too, to pick up a good deal of food among the bushes and in the tiny gaps back of the house.

He would have felt much happier if it hadn't been for his father's condition. Mr. Singer did not complain of the rheumatism, though it still kept him confined to his big chair.

Ben had told his father of his plan and explained that as few of the farmers raised chickens, except for their own use, he thought there ought to be a chance to make something by selling them to Waynesboro, the biggest town, five miles away.

Ben planned to sell thirty or forty in the early autumn and to keep the remainder till the next summer to stock his farm afresh.

Ben handed the money to the sheriff, who congratulated him on his purchase with an earnestness he had seldom felt on occasions of this kind.

Ben was listening to little of all this; he slipped away to his father, who could only strain the boy in white while the tears streamed down his face.

Ben handed the money to the sheriff, who congratulated him on his purchase with an earnestness he had seldom felt on occasions of this kind.

Ben had a fairly good idea now of the situation. He tried to comfort his father, but it was of little avail. Mr. Singer felt his helplessness and the dis-

grace keenly, and did not know what would become of them. Ben worried over what he had heard all night long but he could find no way out of their difficulty.

The next day he took ten of his biggest chickens to the village store. He had already arranged with Mr. Bassett to have them sent to a commission merchant at Waynesboro and sold.

"And the people at the sale," he concluded, "offer to buy what is offered, and the sheriff sells to the one who makes the highest bid."

Ben asked several questions before he left. Then he walked slowly home and all the while in his mind he was turning over a dimly defined project which had been suggested to him by what he had heard.

A week later Ben received the money for his chickens—three dollars and eighty cents. He was a proud boy, and he would have shown his satisfaction more if it had not been for the impending trouble, which made his father so miserable that he could not leave his bed.

On a Monday in the early part of the next month the sheriff, in pursuance of formal notice, arrived at the house to make a sale to satisfy Mr. Singer's creditor. Quite a crowd had gathered about the cottage, and there was not one who did not sympathize with the carpenter and his son.

It was a pitiful array, after all. A few tools, a miscellaneous assortment of cheap furniture, a kitchen stove with some cooking utensils and china, and some linen and blankets.

"Sixty dollars for this choice lot of chickens and household goods!" he cried. There was no response. He repeated the announcement, then dropped the figures to fifty dollars.

The sheriff made some further remarks about the articles for sale and tried again at forty dollars. But the crowd was dumb. No one felt inclined to buy out the crippled carpenter and his son.

The sheriff tried again and again, dropping the figures lower and lower, and all the time growing more vociferous in the explanation of the bargain which was offered.

The figures had dropped to ten dollars, but silence reigned, except for a defiant crow from one of the roosters in the pen.

"Three dollars and a half then?" Every one was silent, and the suggestion of three dollars and a quarter likewise went unanswered.

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STATE NICKNAMES.

Pennsylvania is called the Keystone State.

Kentucky is known as the Corn-cracker State, from a game bird enjoying the same name which was formerly found in most parts of the State.

Delaware has been called the Blue Hen State.

Ohio was early called the Buckeye State.

New York was long ago denominated the Empire State.

Iowa almost from the day of its admission has been called the Hawkeye State. Hawkeye was the name of a noted Indian chief.

Michigan is known as the Wolverine State.

Tennesseeans are Butternuts, from the color of the clothing worn by the Tennessee volunteers during the civil war.

Wisconsin was early dubbed the Badger State.

Texas is called the Lone Star State from the single star in the arms of the Commonwealth.

Indiana is called the Hoosier State. Maine is called the Pine Tree State.

Nevada has two nicknames—the Silver State and the Sage Brush State.

Georgians are Buzzards, from a State law protecting these birds.

North Carolinians are called Tarheels, from a leading industry.

Marylanders are Craw-Thumpers, a slang name for the lobster.

South Carolina is the Palmetto State.

Delaware people are called Musk-rats.

The people of Oregon are Webfeet. West Virginians are Panhandleites. Texans are Beefheads.

New Yorkers are Knickerbockers. Nevadans are Sage Hens.

Kansans are Jayhawkers.

THE OLDEST FAMILY.

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Of all families in the British Isles, the oldest is the Mar family of Scotland, which can trace its lines into the dim past of 1093.

Other famous old European families are the Campbells, of Argyle, 1190; the family of Talleyrand, 1199; the family of Bismarck, 1170; and the Grosvenor family, the Dukes of Westminster, 1066.

In 955 the Austrian house of Hapsburg had its beginning, and in 864 the House of Bourbon.

But in carefully preserved lines of ancestors some of the other nations of the world overshadow Europe. Far older than any European house is the line of Mahomet, dating back to 570.

Chinese old families and Jewish old families abound, all with lines of descent that even the haughtiest British peer would be willing to give his rent roll to possess.

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