

John Quill's Farm Experience.

A GOOD STORY.

IF YOU take my advice you won't practice agriculture for a living.—This thing of being a farmer is all very nice for you to read about, you know, but if you get in the business you will wish you had been born in an orphan asylum, and died in your second summer.

I don't want to obtrude my private affairs on the public, but I'm like an awful example in a temperance lecture, you understand, and if I can save any other men from my fate, why I am going to do it. My advice to all men is, be an honorable organ grinder, or an ex-President, or a gorilla, or go into the cold victual business, or peddle matches, but don't agricult.

I bought a small farm in New Jersey, and became a husbandman. I stocked the estate with all the apparatus, and as I didn't know any more about farming than a goose does about four dollars a week, I engaged a man named Stoddles as my constitutional adviser. Stoddles professed to be up to all the heribolic dodges, but I must confess that after eighteen months I consider Stoddles a fraud. As an absolute failure he is a perfect success.

In the first place there was not a drop of water on the premises, and Stoddles said he would advise me as a friend, to dig a well. So I got a lot of tools and began. We hadn't dug more than six feet before we struck solid rock. I wanted to slant her off to one side, but Stoddles observed that that was the rock on which the State of old New Jersey was founded, and we would have to blast her.

So we blasted her and got one of the finest earthquakes you ever saw in your born days. It shook down two chimneys and a lightning rod, and Stoddles was struck on the head with a falling of a brick.

We dug in that well for a week, and we struck everything but water. I could have got coal, oil, gold, marble and marl or anything else out of that excavation, but I was looking after cold water just then, and I would not touch any thing else. Stoddles took me aside at the end of the week, and confidently advised me to stick at it; "for," said he, "you know if you can't get water at first, if you keep on you're bound to strike water on the outside, and then you have a sure thing of it; you have got it all in your own hands, you understand."

Stoddles put me in mind of a man who grew carrots so long that the Chinese pulled them through by the roots from the opposite side of the globe before he got a chance at them.

My oxen were singular oxen. They both seemed to have St. Vitus' dance in their tails, they could never keep them still.

It annoyed me, for I was afraid every minute they would work loose, and no decent farmer, you know, wants to be wandering around with bob tailed oxen. So I tied a stone to the end of each tail to keep them down, and this worked well enough until one morning when the flies were bad, and the near ox got his brush up, stone and all, and like to have brained my oldest boy. I've got the tail tied to his off hind leg now, and if he wants to switch it, he's got to lift himself off the ground. And it's the same way with the hens. I bought a lot of hens on purpose to lay eggs, but they're not on that lay. Every one I've got seems to feel that she is out of her normal sphere if she is not setting. That old speckled hen of mine has been thrown up in the air, soused in cold water, put under a barrel, and had all the inducements held out to her to knock too, but she has a good deal of firmness of character, and she is now trying to hatch a door knob and a grindstone handle, and I think she'll succeed.

I planted some onions some time ago, and I waited all summer to see them bear. But they didn't. After they had gone to seed, Mr. Stoddles said that onions grew under ground and I ought to have them dug out.

Next year I planted some tomatoes, and as soon as they came I began digging for them. Mr. Stoddles said that I had ruined all the plants, for tomatoes grow on the top. Why don't they have all things alike, anyhow? What's the use of one growing in the ground and the other out of it? Why there ain't any. I planted potatoes last year, but they didn't seem to grow. "Never your mind," said Mr. Stoddles, "them is all right." But I was naturally impatient, and so after waiting seven months, I went out and dug for one, and there it was, in

the very spot where I put it, looking so familiar and natural that I sat down and cried like a baby.

Then I dug them all up; they had kept first-rate. There don't seem to be much profit in it. Mr. Stoddles remarked that they were not a prolific variety, and I don't think they were myself.

Don't ever keep bees. I have some, but Stoddles accidentally sat on one, one day, and he made such a howl about it that the whole hive swarmed on me and scared me out of my senses. I like a sociable bee, but there is such a thing as overdoing cordiality.

How are you on parsnips? I advise you not to cultivate them. A man gave me some seeds, which he said were a good variety. I planted one to try it. It was a double rooted kind—straddled out like a fork in the road. When it got ripe I thought I would take it up, but it wouldn't come. I tackled that parsnip with a monkey wrench, a crowbar and a cross cut saw, but it never moved an inch. Stoddles said it was on account of them roots, and I had better have them extracted with gas. He said he thought "very likely them two roots ran around the globe, like the equator, and clutched on the other side."

So we got out a yoke of oxen, and hitched them on, and the old vegetable came along with half a ton of rock in his grip, and then it was so tough that you couldn't make an impression on it with a cold chisel.

I suppose you are not bothered any with crows. Well, I am. The crow is a vivacious and sagacious bird. Our crows combined the acute intelligence of human and condor. I sowed a patch of corn last spring, and went to tea at night feeling sweetly and calmly happy.

The crows held caucus that evening, and fell in for grub on my corn. There wasn't a grain left in the morning.

I sowed some more and harrowed it in; you know what a harrow is—an exaggerated curry-comb. Well, strange to relate, the crows missed just seven grains of that corn, and precisely that number of stalks came up, and probably I should have got in a crop of two or three ears to the acre, if the crows hadn't broke the fence, and ate it before it came to any thing. Mr. Stoddles says corn is a poor crop. I should think it was.

As I couldn't get water from the well, I concluded to take it from the river.—So I laid down a mile and a half of pipe and set a hydraulic ram to force the water along. It worked first rate, but the trouble is, I can't stop the ram. After I got enough of water in the tank, the ram kept on pumping, and the water overflowed and drenched the house, and flooded the kitchen, and finally arranged itself into a first class cascade out of the garret window. It is going yet, and I sleep in the barn. If you hear of anybody advertising for a magnificent water fall, let me know, will you?

And then as to horses. I know that man whose horse went so fast that when he stopped him suddenly it turned the hair the wrong way, but that is not the forte of my horse. My horse's weakness is backing. As a backer I never saw his equal. He would back from here to Kansas if you'd let him. He seems to think that is the way nature intended him to go. I always hitch him up with his head over the dash board of the wagon, and he trots along first rate. That is, he used to. For last Wednesday I tied him to a tree, and he got one of his fits on him, and backed clear out his hide, which he left hitched to the tree while he pranced his old carcass over the asparagus bed, and died. But as he had the glanders, and worried with the bots, and bothered with the blind staggers, and besides having the leaves, and being sprung in the knees, it was just as well. Mr. Stoddles says that is the best day's job he ever did. If you know a man who has a taste for farming—some regular feeble-minded, gibbering imbecile or an idiot who wants to buy a place, recommend him to me, will you? I want to sell out cheap. I'd rather have a comfortable situation in State Prison than to be gardening here in this kind of style.

Poverty does not always shorten life, if we may believe the records of the English workhouses. In one of these institutions there is one Joseph Smith, aged 101 years, who took a cab-ride on his latest birthday. In Bethnal Green Work-house there were recently 781 old men and women, of whom 428 were upwards of 70 years of age. Of these, 4 were between 90 and 100 years of age, 75 between 80 and 90, 292 between 70 and 80, and 57 were born in the year of 1800.

Let Him Squeal.

A Vermont landlord, famous for being deaf just when he wanted to be, when rallied upon his infirmity one day, told his guests the following story:

When a young man he worked on a farm for a stingy old farmer, in an adjoining town. On leaving, a balance of two dollars was due for wages. Having called repeatedly for his money, the old man had some excuse for not paying. A sow of the old man's had a litter of pigs, consisting of four, one of them, which is generally the case, being a small runt as they call them. George told the old man he would take a pig for his money; the old man said he might have the small one. George jumped in the pen, and seized the largest pig. The old man shouted:

"Take the small one!"

"Let him squeal," said George, "I can hold him."

Old man, excited:

"Take the small one!"

"Oh, I'll risk his biting," said George.

Old man desperate, and as loud as he could bellow:

"Take the small one!"

"Let him squeal, I say, I can hold him," answered George.

"Take him along, you deaf cuss; I can't make you hear anything!"

George carried off his pig in triumph.

Hard on the Dandy.

Dinner was spread in the cabin of that peerless steamer the "New World" and a splendid company were assembled about the table. Among the passengers thus preparing for a gastronomic duty was a little creature of genius top-decked daintily as an early butterfly, with kids of an irreproachable whiteness, "miraculous" neck tie, and spiderlike quizzing glass on his nose. The delicate animal turned his head affectedly aside with—

Waitah!

"Bwring me a propwollah of a female woostah."

"Yis, sah."

"And waitah, tell the steward to wub my plate with a vegetable called an onion, which will give a delicious flawaw to my dinnah."

While the refined exquisite was giving his order, a jolly western drover had listened with open mouth and protruding eyes. When the diminutive paused, he brought his fists upon the table with a force that made every dish bounce, and then thundered out:

"Look here, you gaul darned ace of spades?"

"Yis sah."

"Bring me a thundering big plate of skunk's gizzards!"

"Sah?"

And, you old ink pot, tuck a horse blanket under my chin, and rub me down while I feed!"

The poor dandy showed a pair of coat tails instanter—and the whole table joined in a tremendous roar.

Eleven Turkeys.

Friend "Jerry" is a good-natured, civil fellow, who attends to his business and provides well for his family, but has one little failing, in this, that when he goes to his home in the suburbs at night, he is usually more or less under the influence of contraband fluids. One night, a little after dark, he started for home with a nice turkey, safely done up in strong wrapping paper, under his arm. "Jerry" found the road from the station to his pretty cottage, some half mile distant, uncommonly rough that night. He several times stumbled and fell over all sorts of obstructions in the path. Each time he fell he dropped his turkey, but contrived to pick it up again. On entering his house, he steadied himself as well as he was able, and said to his wife, "Here, wifey, I've got 'leven turkeys, for you."

"Eleven turkeys, Jerry! What do you mean? There's only one!" "There must be 'leven turkeys, wifey, for I fell down 'leven times, and every time I fell down I found a turkey. There must be 'leven turkeys."

There is no better test of the habits of punctuality which people have formed than to get early to church on a Sunday morning, and notice how the congregation keep dropping in after service has commenced.

Young men usually swell while sowing their wild oats. But they always shrink fast enough when the devil steps into the field in the autumn to harvest the crop.

A Good Chance.

A MAN in New Orleans took out an accident insurance policy before starting on a journey and happened to be killed by a railroad accident. The widow armed with the newspaper report in which his name was mentioned among the killed, presented herself at the office of the company, but was informed that more definite proof would be necessary. "Why, of course he's dead," said the bereaved lady. "That is possible," said the polite official, and my dear madam, I am very sorry for it." "Ye'r sorry are you? sorry?" "Of course I am; I sincerely sympathize with you in your bereavement." "Yes," exclaimed the excited and bereaved lady, "that's always the way with you men; you're mighty polite about everything else, but whenever a poor woman gets a chance to make a little money, you're only sorry." And the indignant lady left the room in search of the additional proof.

Couldn't Do It.

An amusing incident occurred in a certain city a few days since, and one that is too good to be lost. One of our celebrated composers has written a very pretty song entitled "Kiss me." A very pretty blushing maid, having heard of the song, and thinking she would get it with some others, stepped into a music store to make a purchase. One of the clerks, a modest young man, stepped up to wait on her. The young lady threw her veil back saying:

"I want Rock Me to Sleep."

The clerk got the song and put it before her.

"Now," said the young lady, "I want Wandering Refugee."

"Yes ma'am," said the clerk bowing, and in a few minutes he produced the Refugee.

"Now, Kiss Me," said the young lady, of course meaning the song above mentioned.

The poor clerk's eyes popped fire almost as he looked at the young lady in astonishment, for he was not aware of the fact that a song by that name had been written.

"Wh—what did you say, Miss?"

"Kiss Me," said she.

"I can't do it: I never kissed a young lady in my life," said the clerk.

About that time a veil dropped, a young lady left in a hurry, clerk felt sick and dealer lost the sale of some music.

A Short Story with a Moral.

"Mother! mother!" cried a young rook, returning hurriedly from its first flight; "I'm so frightened! I've seen such a sight!"

"What sight, my son?" asked the rook.

"O, white creatures? screaming, running, and straining their necks, and holding their heads ever so high. See, mother! there they go!"

"Geese, my son, merely geese," calmly replied the parent bird, looking over the common.

"Through life, child, observe, that when you meet any one who makes a great fuss about himself, and tries to lift his head higher than the rest of the world, you may set him down at once for a goose."

UTILIZING THE OLD MAN.—An Englishman meeting a party of American settlers the other day in Texas, inquired from the conductor what the men in the first wagon were intended for?

"To clear the forests."

"Well," said he, "and what are these in the second for?"

"To build the huts," was the reply.

"And that old white-headed man in the third wagon—what is he for?" was the next question asked; to which the reply was given,

"O! that's my father; we shall open our new cemetery with him!"

He did not inquire further.

Peter C. Brooks, the opulent merchant of Boston, Mass., who died twenty years ago, had three cardinal principles in business: Never to borrow money; to take no more than the legal rate of interest; to abstain from all speculative investments.

A dying Irishman was asked by his confessor if he was ready to renounce the devil and all his works. "O," your honor," said Pat, "don't ask me that; I am going to a strange country, and I don't intend to make myself enemies."

Insanity is rapidly increasing in France, owing, physicians say, to the general-use of absinthe by the people.

A Baby's Soliloquy.

HERE I AM, and, if this is what they call the world, I don't think much of it. It's a very flannelly world, and smells of paregoric awfully. It's a dreadful light world, too, and makes me blink, I tell you. And I don't know what to do with my hands; I think I'll dig my fists in my eyes. No, I won't. I'll scabble at the corner of my blanket and chew it up, and then I'll holler; whatever happens I'll holler. And the more paregoric they give me, the louder I'll yell. That old nurse puts the spoon in the corner of my mouth in a very uneasy way, and keeps tasting my milk herself all the while. She spilled snuff in it last night, and when I hollered she trotted me. That comes of being a two days' old baby. Never mind, when I'm a man, I'll pay her back good. There's a pin sticking in me now, and if I say a word about it, I'll be trotted or fed, and I would rather have catnip tea.

I'll tell you who I am. I found out today. I heard some folks say, "Hush, don't wake up Emmeline's baby." That's me. I'm "Emmeline's baby," and I suppose that pretty, white-faced woman over on the pillows is Emmeline.

But no! that can't be so either, for there was a fellow in here a little while since, that said he came in to see Bob's baby, and looked at me, and said I "was a funny little toad, and looked just like Bob." He smelt of cigars, and I'm not used to them. I wonder who else I belong to. Yes, there's another one—that's "Gamma." Emmeline told me, and then she took me up and held me against her soft cheek and said, "It was Gamma's baby, so it was."

There comes Snuffy with catnip tea. The idea of giving babies catnip tea when they are crying for information! I'm going to sleep. I wonder if I don't look pretty red in the face? I wonder why my hands won't go where I want them to?

A Woman Marries two Wives.

A strange disclosure has been made at Etherly, near Bishop Auckland, by the death of a woman who has for the past fifty years resided in that neighborhood and married two wives. It is said that she came from Scotland fifty years ago in the guise of a young man and obtained employment at one of the collieries, at which she worked as one of the men for some time, and paid her addresses to and ultimately married, a servant girl living at the village inn. After her marriage she relinquished working at the pit and commenced to make besoms, yellow clay balls and pipe clay rubbers, which her and her partner vendied in the surrounding villages. They had lived together twenty-three years, when the wife died, and the reputed husband professed to lament her loss very much, but at length the grief wore off, and she married a second wife, with whom she lived a number of years, but not on the most affectionate terms, and eventually by mutual consent they separated. For some time the woman had lain on a bed of sickness, and been dependant upon some kind neighbors, whom, however, she always prevented coming too near her. The other day she died, and then the discovery of her sex was made.—The deceased woman gave her name as Josia Charles Stephenson, and she has been heard to speak of being heir to some property about Berwick-on-Tweed, but had no money to go and claim it. Many strange stories are told in connexion with this singular individual history.

Singular Echoes.

Colonel Powell, in a letter describing his explorations of the Colorado River, says that at a point where the Yampa River enters the Green, the river runs along a rock about seven hundred feet high and a mile long, then turns sharply around to the right, and runs back parallel to its former course for another mile, with the opposite side of this long, narrow rock for its bank. On the east side of the river, opposite the rock and below the Yampa, is a little park just large enough for a farm. The river has worn out hollow domes in this sandstone rock, and, standing opposite, words are repeated with a strange clearness, but in a softened mellow tone. Conversation in a very loud key is transformed into a magical music. One can hardly believe that it is the echo of his own voice. In some places two or three echoes come back, in others the echoes themselves are repeated, passing forth and back across the river; for there is another rock making the eastern wall of the little park. Some thought they could count ten or twelve echoes.