

Select Cuts.

GRANDFATHER'S OLD FARM, AND WHAT WAS DONE WITH IT.

I was on a trip in the cars lately and found myself upon a seat, with a gentlemanly man advanced in years, to whom (as I honor old age) I endeavored to make myself agreeable, en route.

After the interchange of a few commonplace remarks, our conversation turned upon the subject of agriculture, the old and new modes of farming, &c. I subsequently ascertained that my venerable acquaintance was a most intelligent farmer, who had retired in his old age upon a competency. As we dashed along in the cars he entertained me with the substance of the following narrative, the details of which he assured me had transpired within his knowledge.

Speaking of the exciting progress and improvements in agriculture, said he, reminds me of an instance that occurred within my remembrance, which I will relate to you, if you are disposed to hear it. I thanked him and he proceeded on as follows:

Some fifty years or more ago, a neighbor of mine in C, a Mr. Smith occupied an immense tract of land, which he called a farm. It was about thirty rods in width, and upwards of two miles in length; upon which he had been brought up a "farmer," and where his father and grandfather had lived before him.

Each generation of the Smiths that had dwelt upon this strip of land, had contrived to farm it, each in the same old way, year in and year out, from father to son. This place had never known a dollar's inebriation; scores of Smiths had been reared upon it, generation after generation came and passed away there, and the same cart paths, and the same dilapidated walls and shanties, and decayed trees, were still visible—almost the same furrows had been tilled for a hundred years and more when, as it had been the custom of the Smith families on previous occasions, it finally came the turn of the occupant to resign grandfather's old place to his only son, Ben Smith, now come to thirty.

For five and thirty years at least Ben's father had carried on his farm. In all that long period, and regular as the year rolled round, as regular had Mr. Smith plowed up his eight acres, mowed all the grass that Providence would grow for him, pastured his ten sheep, reared his four head of cattle, fat tened his three hogs, and wintered as many cows. But this was not all.

True Mr. Smith had a great farm. He tilled like a trooper, from daylight till dark. He raised his own pork and corn, such as it was, his cattle and fodder; from his own forest the wood he burned; never owed any man a farthing. He contrived even to pay his own town and county tax. But he was literally "even with the world," for he owed no one, and no one owed him a dollar. And so he lived up to seventy.

"Ben," said the old man to his son, one evening, as they sat before the fire, "I am getting old. I have worked pretty hard here, for a good many years, and I have concluded to give it up. It is your turn now."

"My turn for what?" asked Ben.

"To take charge of the farm, Ben. You are young, stout and healthy. I am going to give up the homestead to you; and if you continue to labor constantly as I've done, and your grandfather did before us—you can get a good livin' off on't as we have done. We can't take nothing out of this world with us, Ben. Naked we came into it and so we must go out. But the old place is free from incumbrance, there never was a dollar mortgage on it; and I hope there never will be. I shall give you the farm free and clear to-morrow."

Ben slept on this, and the next day he was master of the farm thirty rods wide and two and a half miles long.

"I shall take the place, father," he said, "and carry it on; but not as you and grandfather, and his father did."

And though the old gentleman shook his head and looked earnestly over the bridge of his spectacles at his son, Ben was as good as his word; for with he went to work in earnest.

Spring came. Ben went into the old eight acre field and ploughed up the one half of it. Upon this he had deposited the whole of the season's manure, that hiderto for years been sparsely spread upon double the surface. He harrowed these four acres, and harrowed them well. Hoing time came and Ben had only one half the space to go over. Though the corn and potatoes looked finely, and the beets, the cabbages, and carrots grew marvellously, and the old man grew crusty, and declared it wouldn't do, there wouldn't be roots enough. But Ben went right along his own way.

At the second hoing Ben went into his four acres; but not with a hand hoe. He got some sort of a jimmercock, (as the old man termed it,) hitched to the old mare's heels, instead of hoing his potatoes man fashion, he'd begun with his improvement; but that

cultivator, as Ben called it, "wouldn't work no how." Ben continued to use the cultivator, however; the old gentleman continued to grumble, and the corn and potatoes continued to flourish.

Ben Smith had gone over to a neighboring town early in the spring and run in debt (he was the first Smith that ever did this thing) for two hundred bushels of "nasty ashes," which he tugged the cattle to draw to the barn and with which he top dressed the meadow. Here was an innovation sure. And he had subscribed for a paper too; what was his jimmercock of a "cultivator," his ashes, and "book farming," the old gentleman nearly crazed. "It would never do to go on at this rate," said the old gentleman.

But the four acres of corn and potatoes and vegetables still grew finely. Never had the Smiths seen such corn, such potatoes and carrots.

The grass came up thick and strong and thrifty, and the harvest time came around at last.

The cattle had plenty of good feed, and they were fat and sleek, the pigs were fat, the poultry was fat, the old horse was fat, and Ben grew fat and jolly as he garnered his corn, his big potatoes, his generous sized beets, and his great big yellow carrots. Ben had found time during his evenings to read the agricultural articles in his paper, and to post himself in regard to the markets.

Winter came, and the good old father entered the barn. It was crammed with hay and cornstalks and wheat and rye. The granary was loaded with corn; and John who had been carefully taught to shell the cobs across the edge of a novel, new steel beside another stupid machine, throwing in a bushel of ears at the top, whilst the big golden kernels rumbled out in a constant shower at the bottom, Ben Smith had "squandered" six dollars in cash upon a corn sheller! "What is the silly boy coming to," exclaimed the venerable progenitor, as he sighed and turned to the barn again.

The old man examined the harvesting; there was here in the mow than ever before. The corn had turned out grandly. There was every thing in profusion, and only one half of the ground had been tilled. Ben pointed to the gratifying result, and his father only shook his head, and said, "Ben, you have been very lucky; we've had a remarkable season. Things have grown finely."

Ben Smith Jr. only smiled at this. He continued to read his agricultural works, subscribed for another paper, and paid for them both, (ah, what extravagance!) and winter passed glibly away.

He killed off the old razor backed grunts that had been bred upon the ancient farm from time immemorial, and brought six improved Suffolks—instead of the three niggers that had previously been annually tolerated on the Smith farm.

The superannuated cows, "with the crumpled horns," were turned into beef, and a brace of shining Durhams in their places. A subsoil plow found its way into the yard one morning early in the spring, and a new "mangled harrow" followed this. Then came a new patent churn, then a capital straw cutter, then more "nasty ashes," then a seed drill—and "there was no end," (said Ben senior) to the infernal machines that Ben, Jr., cluttered up the old place with.

Ben had been no idler meantime. He had drawn into the cow yard two hundred loads of pond muck the previous fall. He got plaster and crushed bones and mixed with it, and when February came, it was heaped out generously upon the four acres again. Everything went on smilingly, and at harvest time the cap sheaf of machinery arrived.

"What on earth is that?" asked the old gentleman, as Ben put his team before a new horse rake. Ben laughed outright, and asked of his respected progenitor why he did not read the papers! But his father said "he knew enough already."

Again the old barns creaked under their generous harvest of hay and grain and vegetables, and again the old man looked and sighed, and declared that the season had been remarkable, very.

Ben had't room to store away two thirds of the year's produce. But his hay was excellent; his potatoes were noble ones; his carrots, beets, and onions were splendid; he had surplus rata bagas by the cord, and turnips and squashes and cabbages by the ton, all of which readily found good market, seven miles distant. Nobody believed, at first that these fine products really came from Smith's farm.

When the snow and sleet rattled around that ancient mansion that winter, Ben bowed no man a dollar; his barn and cellars were well filled, and he had three hundred dollars in cash on hand! Here was a fortune.

"Verily, Ben," said his parent, "you have been very lucky and the seasons have been favorable."

The elder Smith has been gathered to his fathers. Benjamin Smith, Esq., is now a man of solid substance, a justice of the peace, and a farmer of forty years in good standing. He

knows the difference between partial and thorough cultivation; he can tell you the benefits of subsoil plowing and shallow furrow. He can tell you whether and wherefor a piece of Suffolk pork or Durham beef is preferable to that of the grey bound hog or the shaggy backed ox; he knows how to use the horse rake and the potatoe dropper; he will inform you of the advantage to be derived from irrigation, from draining, from the use of phosphate of lime, and the like; he will show you on his farm big hay stacks, generous squashes, huge potatoes, twelve rowed corn, fat hogs, improved poultry, sleek velvety cattle, and all the jimmercocks of a modern agricultural progress—and you will find, in a snug corner of Ben's ample sleeping room, at old Smith's house, the choicest Agricultural Library in the State; while he is a constant reader and paying subscriber to all the leading Book farm publications in the whole country.

No one that knew the old Smith farm five and twenty years ago, would recognize it now. Esq. Ben is worth a pretty fortune, has a buxom wife and half a dozen children, and though a little corpulent, (for he will live well,) he is as lively and thrifty a "book farmer," as you or I would wish to meet with. I beg your pardon, concluded my traveler friend, at this point, but here we are! and the train halted in the depot.

Historical Sketch.

Ferocious Animal Combats.

Several works have recently been published on the wild beasts of the forests and jungles, and from the attention they have commanded, we are still more satisfied of the interest that is generally taken in this sort of information. A book lately put out, called the "Private Life of an Eastern King," gives us some matters in regard to the use that is made of the two kinds of the beasts in India. In referring to the amusements of the "King of Oude," we have the following description of

AN ELEPHANT FIGHT.

"At a signal given by the king, the two elephants advanced from opposite sides, each with his mahout on his neck; Malleer, with his own task, looking by no means so formidable as the huge black antagonist whom he was to fight, and who was well furnished with ivory. At the moment they caught sight of each other, the two elephants, as if with an instinctive perception of what was expected of them, put their trunks and tails aloft, and shuffled up to each other with considerable speed, after their unwieldy fashion, trumpeting out loudly mutual defiance. This is the ordinary attitude of attack of the elephant. He puts his trunk up perpendicularly, in order to be out of harm's way. His tail is similarly raised from excitement. His trumpeting consists of a series of quick blasts, between roars and grunting."

Malleer and his foe rushed at each other impetuously. The sound of their huge heads coming into violent collision might have been heard at the distance of half a mile. This noisy sound like an exaggeration. It is not so. When the reader only thinks of the bulk of the elephant, the great weight, the momentum acquired by the rapid motion, and then the concussion of two such bodies coming full tilt against each other, he will not be surprised at it. More than once on such occasions, have I seen the tusks snapped short off, and thrown up into the air with the terrible force of the collision.

The first blow struck, both elephants set themselves vigorously to push against each other, with their broad foreheads. Head to head, both trunks still elevated into the air perpendicularly, their tusks interlaced; their feet set firmly in massive solidity upon the ground, did they push and push, and shove and shove, not with one resolute, long continued effort, but with repeated short strokes of their unwieldy forms. Their heads were not separate for a moment; but the backs were curving slightly and then becoming straight again in regular succession, as each shove and push was administered. * * * It was a spectacle to make the blood come fast thumping through the veins—as the two huge combats pushed and shoved with all their might vehemently, and as the two mahouts exerted all their powers to encourage them.

It is evident in such a contest, as generally happens with these wild animals, that the stronger combatants gains the victory. In stances do occur in which superior agility the weaker to beat off the honors of success; but such instances are rare—in the case of two opposing elephants, rarer, perhaps than with other animals. But what is the end of this pushing? you ask. If the stronger succeeded in overthrowing his adversary, the death of the vanquished is the probable result. This sometimes occurs when great violence is used, and the weaker can hardly retreat quick enough. He loses hope and strength together, turns awkwardly to fly, is pushed as he turns, and falls. The end is then soon seen. The victor plunges his tusks without mercy into the side of his foe, as he lies helplessly on the

ground, and death follows. If the weaker, by great agility, succeed in turning and running away a chase is the result, which ends either in the escape of the fugitive, or in his being sorely belabored by the trunk and galled by the tusks of his antagonists.

The contest—too long to quote in full—ended in the flight of Malleer's opponent, and his escape across a river, and resulted, besides in a shocking tragedy. Of course the human look with indignation horror on a battle of animals made up by men; it is well for many reasons apparent in this book, that the King of Oude is abolished. But, in these garden combats, we have a glimpse of the wild scenes of jungle and desert. A taste of rampant nature is all we seek. Many encounters are narrated, such as those of the antelopes, rhinoceroses with each other, and with tigers and elephants. We select parts of

A TIGER COMBAT.

"There was a famous tiger—a monster of a tiger—named Kagra, who had triumphed at Lucknow on several occasions. He was certainly one of the largest I have ever seen; and beautifully streaked was his glossy coat, as it moved freely over his muscular limbs and long back. The connoisseurs in sport had despaired of finding a fitting adversary for Kagra, when news arrived that a tiger of enormous size and strength had been taken, uninjured, in the Terai—the long strip of jungle land between Oude and Nepal, just at the foot of the Himalayas. It was anticipated that there would be glorious sport when this new monster was brought face to face with the redoubted Kagra.

The cages of Kagra and Terai-wallah (the name given to the new monster) were brought to opposite sides of the court yard, both commanded by our position in the gallery. We could see the long, shining backs of the tigers as they ramed around their cages in great excitement; occasionally there was a snarl and a display of teeth alarming to witness, as some attendant approached the cages. It was intended that the animals should become aware of the presence of each other, and hence the previous delay; for, ferocious as the tiger is he is a cowardly animal, and, if brought unexpectedly into the presence of danger, may cower and retreat from the contest."

"The signal was given—the bamboo railing in front of the cages rose simultaneously on either side—the doors of the cages opened. Terai-wallah sprang, with a single bound, out of his cage, opened his huge jaws widely, and shaking from side to side his long tail in an excited way. Kagra advanced more leisurely into the arena, but with similar demonstrations. They might have been fifty feet apart, as they stood surveying each other, open-mouthed, the tails playing all the time. At length Kagra advanced a few paces; his adversary laid himself down forthwith upon the court yard, just where he stood, facing him, but with his feet well under him, not extended, evidently quite prepared for a spring. Kagra watched his foe intently, and still advanced slowly and cautiously, but not in a straight line, rather toward the side, describing an arc of a circle as he drew near."

"The Terai-wallah soon rose to his feet and likewise advanced, describing a similar arc on the opposite side; both gradually, approaching each other however. It was a moment of breathless suspense in the gallery. Every eye was fixed on the two combatants as they thus tried to circumvent each other; it was enough to arrest attention, for the tigers were unusually large; both were in beautiful condition, plump and muscular; the color of the Terai-wallah was somewhat lighter than that of Kagra—a more yellowish hue shone between the black stripes. Both were very beautiful, and very courageous, and very formidable."

"At length, as they thus advanced, step by step, very slowly, Kagra made a spring. His former victories had probably made him a little self-confident. He sprang, not as if he were a voluntary effort of his own, but as if he were suddenly impelled aloft by some uncontrollable galvanic force which he could not resist. The spring was so sudden, so rapid, so impetuous, that it had quite the appearance of being involuntary. The Terai-wallah was not unprepared. As rapidly as Kagra hurled himself up into the air, so rapidly did he jump aside; both movements seemed to be simultaneous, so admirably were they executed. Kagra alighted, foiled; but before he could recover himself, before he could have well-assured himself that he was foiled, the Terai-wallah was upon him. The claws of his adversary were fixed firmly in his neck, and the horrid jaws were already grating near his throat. It was the work of a moment. We could scarcely see that the Terai-wallah had gained the advantage—we could scarcely distinguish his huge fore-paws grasping the neck, and his open mouth plunged at the throat—when Kagra made another spring, a bound in which he evidently concentrated all his energy. The Terai-wallah was dragged with him a little; the claws that had been dug into his neck were torn gratingly through it; the open mouth snapped fiercely but harmlessly at the advancing shoulder, and Kagra was free."

"It was but an instant that the two tigers stood surveying each other, open-mouthed, after Kagra had shaken off the grip of his antagonist. With distended jaws—the ample mouths opened to their utmost limit, their beautifully streaked skins starting from their forms in excitement, their eyes distended as they watched each other, the ends of their tails moving once or twice, as if with convulsive twitches—they stood. Kagra was the first to attack again. This time his opponent was too near to try his former stratagem of slipping to one side. He met him boldly. They stood, at this moment, near the centre of the arena; and, as the sharp claws moved incessantly, and the huge mouths tried to grasp the neck on either side, it was impossible to distinguish the attack from the defence; all was so rapid.

"Drawing gradually nearer, as they thus fought with claws and mouths ferociously, uttering fierce snarls as they did so, each seemed to have succeeded in gripping his antagonist. With their mouths buried in each other's throats, and their claws dug deeply into the neck, they rose, at length to the contest, on their hind legs—straining and tugging, and wrestling, as it were, with each other, each with his utmost force and skill. It was a spectacle of startling interest that; and however you may turn away, good madam, and exclaim horrible! or savage! believe me, there were many elements of the sublime in that contest; and doubtless, such contests of ferocity take place in the jungle. They stood more than six feet high as they thus grappled with each other, elevated on their hind legs in a sort of death-struggle; their round heads and glaring eyes surmounting the muscular pillars of their long bodies beautifully. * * *

"As the tiger sublime is all we value, these extracts for, we merely sum up the remaining details. Kagra threw his antagonist, who then turned him and got a deadly advantage from which he was forced off, with hot iron rods, while poor Kagra escaped into his cage."

"We were complaining, a short time since, to a friend, of the tedious prolixity of counsel in a case we happened to be interested in, and queried whether it would not save time and answer the ends of justice equally well to do away with all argument to the jury."

"That might do sometimes," said my legal friend; "but I'll give you an instance to show that it is not always safe. I once had a case against a man in the country, which was as clear as daylight in my favor—the fellow had not even a shadow of defence for refusing to pay his debt—but, by the cunning of his lawyer, he had contrived to avoid coming to trial for about two years, in hopes that he might worry me into a compromise. At last the case was called, late in the term and late in a hot day, the court and jury tired and impatient. I stated the facts, produced the evidence, which was all on my side; the judge asked the counsel whether they wished to argue the case, stating that he thought it hardly necessary in so plain a matter. The lawyers agreed to submit it without argument; the jury went out, and immediately returned with a verdict for the defendant! I prayed the judge to overrule the verdict as contrary to law and evidence, and after some time this was done, and I got judgment. But as soon as the court adjourned I sought the foreman of the jury, a worthy but not very brilliant man, and asked him how, in the name of common sense, they came to render such a verdict."

"Why, you see," said he, "we didn't think much of the lawyer again you, and it wasn't strange he didn't have nothing to say; but Squire, the fact is, we thought you was about one of the smartest lawyers in this county, and if you couldn't find anything to say on your side, it must be a purty hard case, and so we had to go agin you!"

IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT IN ENGLAND.—According to the official returns just issued, on the 1st of August last there was no less than one thousand and ninety-eight persons confined in the various prisons of England for debt. In the prison of Bedford, one man, whose original debt was nine shillings, was incarcerated for twenty days, because he could not pay the expenses of the suit brought against him. These amounted to £7 9s., or more than three times the original debt. In another case a man was in prison for ten days because he could not pay ten shillings and four pence, the expenses of a debt of three shillings and sixpence. In a third the debt amounted to £1 7s. 8d. and the costs to £2 8s. 7d. These, and many similar cases, have attracted much attention, and the policy of abolishing imprisonment for debt is now openly discussed.

A LUCKY FELLOW.—The Rogersville (Tennessee) Times has the following: "A short time since a fellow from Buffalo Creek, Carter county, was imprisoned in Elizabethtown jail for burning a barn. The citizens of the place learning that he was from the neighborhood where the small-pox was raging, broke open the jail and turned him out, and then told him if he didn't leave town in fifteen minutes the would tar and feather him."