

From the Long Island Farmer.

No one of correct taste can read the lines which follow, without feeling that a charming picture of rustic happiness and humble life, is sketched in a manner which Goldsmith or Burns would have been forward to praise, and proud to imitate:

Bob Fletcher.

I once knew a ploughman, Bob Fletcher his name,
Who was old and was ugly, and so was his dame;
Yet they lived quite contented, and free from
all strife,
Bob Fletcher the ploughman, and Judy his wife.

As the morn streaked the east, and the night fled away,
They would rise up for labor, refreshed for
the day;

The song of the lark as it rose on the gale,
Found Bob at the plough, and his wife at the pail.

A neat little cottage in front of a grove,
Where in youth they first gave their young hearts up to love,

Was the solace of age, and to them doubly dear,

As it called up the past with a smile or a tear.

Each tree had its thought, and the vow could impart,
That mingled in youth the warm wish of the heart;

The thorn was still there, and the blossoms it bore,

And the song from its top seemed the same as before.

When the curtain of night over nature was spread,

And Bob had returned from his plough to his shed,

Like the dove on her nest, he reposed from all care,

If his wife and his youngsters contented were there.

I have passed by his door when the evening was grey,

And the hill and the landscape were fading away,

And have heard from the cottage, with grateful surprise,

The voice of thanksgiving, like incense arise.

And I thought on the proud, who would look down with scorn,

On the neat little cottage, the grove and the thorn,

And felt that the riches and follies of life,

Were dross, to contentment like Bob and his wife.

BY PLATT R. SPENSER.

Away with your lassies pinched up in the middle,
Drawn rearward the shoulders, and cramped every rib,
Whose cheeks like the lily that fades in the valley,
Ashamed of the labors their grandmothers did.

But give me the fat bonny lassie o' nature,
As round as a melon, as plump as a seal;
Whose cheeks are as red as a sun-burnt potato,

Whose fingers can ply both the rake and the reel.

Our grandmothers surely had been broken hearted,
Had they had at the future a glance of the eye:
To see how their impious daughters have parted
With stout linsey-woolsey, exoticks to buy.

And hung up their distaffs, and burned up their tredles,
Their petticoat and loose-gown they've long since laid by;

Politely dissevering peas in the middle,
Instead of devouring a whole pumpkin pie.

O! we dwindle away every strange generation,
Our race are all sickly, and I've now told the why;

There'll not be a man in the whole generation
In a few years more, that's bigger than I.

I'll tell you my height, it's five feet eleven,
I'm haunted with hypo, spasmodic and spleen;

A poor weakly creature, inheriting evil,

Because that my mother in fashion has been.

O! had the tall Alps been the plan of my mother,
My mother a Moor, without sweet-cake or plum,

I then might have died with sleek McDonald,

And looked down with pity on little Tom Thumb.

From the *Cincinnati Gazette*, July 4.

THE HOOSHEROON.

In another column, the reader will find chapter from an unfinished work, the scene of which is laid in Indiana. It is not published as a feaver for approbation, but as a correct representation of the class of persons described. In this it is successful, if I know, 'A chapter from "Hoosierland," an unpublished Novel.'

THE YOUNG HOOSHEROON.

Shortly after the catastrophe recorded in the preceding chapter, I had occasion to pass through one or two of the more sparsely populated counties of Indiana. A flying visit to any section, I know, gives but poor opportunities for studying character, or any thing else. Still enough may be seen, heard and felt, to enable one to form a pretty correct opinion on many particulars. Judging from my own experience, I should say the citizens of Indiana yield to those of no other portion of the Union, in kindness of heart, generous feeling, and hospitality to strangers; and the lower in society we go, in the greater perfection do we find these qualities. I have never found any where, those who endeavored more assiduously to please, or who were more fearful that every thing might not be done exactly as one would wish. During my equestrian jaunt, I several times gave offence by offering a trifle in return for a most excellent dinner for myself, and a 'sugar trough' full of 'providence' for my 'kitter.' And many a time did I tie my horse by a hay stack, take 'mush-and-milk' with the family, pass the night very comfortably on a sweet pallet, breakfast next morning on delicious cornpone, pumpkin pie and rye coffee, and depart amid a dozen wishes for my welfare,

and with probably a pound or more of 'molasses-cake' in my pocket, and only twelve and a half cents lower in my finances, than when I dismounted and asked a night's lodging, and received the brief but frank reply, 'Well, I reckon we can make you comfortable.'

It being most generally thought, that the term 'Hoosher,' or 'Hoosheroon,' commonly applied to the inhabitants of this state, is a mere nickname, as it was intended to be, the writer of this veritable history of occurrences in 'Hoosierland,' feeleth himself called upon, as he knoweth this belief to be erroneous, to set the world right in this particular. The more especially doth he feel himself so called upon, as he knoweth that those who are thus designated, think the term by no means appertaineth unto them; whereas, he feeleth convinced, from his knowledge of the facts, that unto a portion of them at least, the term is correctly applied.

It is well known by those who are acquainted with the history of the Western country, the oldest towns in Indiana, date back upon one hundred years. These early settlements were made by French emigrants from Canada, who intermarried with the native Indians. Vincennes and Ouiatanon were their principal towns. From these intermarriages, sprung a race of men, probably without a likeness in all mankind. They were a complete union of the characters of two distinct people, whose natures differ more widely than those of any other people under the sun—the Frenchmen being all vivacity and loquaciousness, the Indian all sullenness and reserve. They inherited with their Indian blood, a power to endure the severest hardships with unshaking fortitude, great bravery, and uncommon inflexibility of character; and with their French blood, all the vivacity, and that disposition to be ever on the stir, which are characteristic of the French people, find them where we will.

It appeareth obvious now, that this race was neither French nor Indian; but that it was a new coinage from the great mint of creation. And why should it not have a new name? And if a new name, is not 'Hoosher' as good a one as could be found? It containeth more letters than the word 'Roman,' and to our ear hath quite as full and harmonious a sound. Besides, so favorable to the American cause were the manifestations of these people, during the war of the revolution, that at its close, government ceded to them a handsome tract of land about Vincennes. The descendants of this new race, though somewhat scattered, are numerous. To them, and to them alone, according to our hypothesis, can the appellative 'Hoosher' be applied. To the multitudinous emigrants, who have settled among them, it belongeth not. But this is all by the way, however, if we have established, from history, the origin of a new race of beings, our digression is not without its value.

One day, as I was leisurely riding along through a heavily timbered district, I came suddenly upon a lad apparently between ten and twelve years old. I had passed no house for many miles, and could see no 'clearing' in any direction around me. I was surprised to find so mere a child alone in such a wilderness. I dismounted, and approached him. He stood at the foot of a dead tree, from a hole among the roots of which every now and then issued a tremendous growl. He turned his eyes upon me for a moment, as I neared him; and I was struck with the intelligence of his countenance, and his apparent indifference at the approach of a stranger. He had a certain waggon look, and on the whole I was satisfied that he had seen travelers before, and that, notwithstanding his youth, he knew perfectly well what he was about. He was armed with a long stick, or pole sharpened at one end, which he was very dexterously, but most unceremoniously, thrusting into the hole, whence proceeded the terrible growling, that had at first arrested my attention.

'What have you, my boy?' inquired I, after surveying him for a few moments.

'A stick, if I know,' replied the urchin, turning up as quizzical on eye as can be found in a thousand, and then giving the occupant of the hole a tremendous punch, which brot forth a growl that made the woods reverberate.

'And a pretty sharp one too, if I know,' responded I, smiling. 'But what have you there?' I have a 'possum haled,' replied the boy, giving a second arch look, and another tremendous punch.

'I should rather think you had him haled,' said I, stooping down, and peeping into the burrow.

'Do you belong in these here parts?' asked he, eyeing me attentively, though with something of a leer, as before.

'I do not.'

'You're a traveller, looken at the land, specten to purchase, if I know,' continued the boy.

'I specten to purchase! It cannot be the imp of a band of robbers,' thought I, 'wishing to sound my purse.' But I almost immediately replied, 'A traveller, though not on a land speculating tour, if I know.'

'You never lived in the woods, I 'low,' said he.

'I never did. But how do you know that?' I think so. And you never hunted possums?'

'No—never.'

'I thought that too. Why,' he continued, dropping his pole, and assuming a look of some importance, 'when you've been as long in these here back woods as me, you won't talk of halving a possum in its hole. They have more lives nor a cat, and I might stand here till harvest and punch, and be no better off.' Wait a minute or two, and I'll show you how to hole a possum, a little the slickest.'

Saying this, he took a large jackknife from his pockets, and an arrow-head flint from another, and heaving together a few pieces of spunk, or dry rotten wood, he struck, and in the course of ten minutes had a 'pretty smart' fire kindled at the mouth of the possum's hole. This, he said, was for the purpose of 'smoking him out.' Pleased with the boy's activity, and the almost manliness of his every action, I seated myself at a short distance, to watch his movements.

'The tree may burn, and your horse may get scared, and break away, if I know,' said he, 'and you had better look out.'

But, before I had time to look around, a large possum galloped past me. The young 'Hoosheroon,' however, was close in the rear, and the animal's flight was soon stopped; for no sooner did it feel the weight of the boy's stick, now that it had emerged to the light, where its movements could be seen,

than it dropped down, and keeled over on its side, to all appearance dead.

'That was a well-aimed blow, my boy,' said I.

'But I hain't done much, though, if I know,' said he, with a knowing shake of the head.

'Why, you have killed the animal,' said I, 'and what more do you want?'

'I want to have it,' replied he, not yet forgetting my witicism, and with an arch smile, which I did not exactly comprehend.

'And if you'll hold it up by the hind legs for a moment, I'll show you how we do things back here.'

I assented, though not without some fears of his waggon, and he again whipped out his jack-knife. But the blade had hardly found its ways through the animal's skin, when I flung the possum over my head to the distance of twenty feet, and jumped nearly as far in an opposite direction. The truth was, I soon felt the animal's cold tail against my wrist, and looking down, saw its eyes glaring, its jaws extended, and its back curving to a degree that would soon have brought its mouth in very close neighborhood with my hands. I thought it best to get rid of such a dead charge as soon as possible; and 'in less than no time,' as the young Hoosheroon would say, I and the possum were something like a distance of forty feet apart.

The boy had anticipated the result; and seizing a club, he bounded after his enemy, and soon brought it to its back again, 'as dead as ever.'

'He then turned round, and enjoyed a hearty laugh, at my expense; apologizing, however, by saying I'd pardon him, as it might have been dead.'

'And, though I was not ignorant of the character of the animal, dead I certainly thought it was, after receiving such an unmerciful punching, and such a blow as the young Hercules had given it when it emerged from its hole.'

'I presume it is dead now,' said I, again approaching.

'As dead as it was afore, if I know,' answered the boy. 'Why, these here things has fifty lives, and will sometimes run after their heads is off—I understand managing 'em well though, and if you ain't in too big a hurry, and'll wait a little bit longer, I'll show you how to kill 'em.'

'But this is certainly dead,' said I, turning it over two or three times with my foot.

'As dead as it was afore, and I'll show you, if I know,' replied the boy as he moved off in the direction of the fire he had kindled to 'smoke out' the possum. He soon returned with a live coal stuck in a split stick; and opening the jaws of the animal he forced the fire into its mouth and held it there till the dead came to life, and began to scamper away again. I now expressed myself satisfied it was not dead, and he quickly pursued and overtook his victim. Again it was stretched upon the ground, and the young Hoosheroon began his preparations for its execution. He cut a forked limb from a sapling, and sharpened the prongs. This he placed over the possum, one of the prongs on each side, and driving them into the earth, thus confined the animal so that it could not possibly escape. He then took his jack-knife, and proceeded with great deliberation, to sever the animal's head from its body: Its struggles were great, but availed it nothing; and in a few minutes it was not only halved but quartered too, and its different parts were scattered over the ground.

It was near night, and I accompanied the youth to his home, which was about a mile distant from the scene of the preceding exploit, where I was made 'comfortable' till the next morning. I thought the little fellow had performed quite a heroic action, worthy of being recorded, as illustrative of the character and habits of the backwoods youth. His parents, however, seemed to look upon it as a common affair; and his mother chid him that he had not taken an axe with him instead of going, and butchering the animal so unmercifully.

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