

THE DOWNEASTER AND THE BULL.

A TRUE STORY.

There will be a "smart chance" of "bull" in this story.

I cannot promise that it will be a good story, or a funny story, but I am keen to swear that it is a true one.

What I am going to relate, happened in Muscatine county, Iowa, midway between Iowa City, then the capital of the State, and Muscatine City, a flourishing town on the Mississippi river, in a section of the country called the Wapsinoenoc Settlement, from a creek bearing that name which runs through the settlement.

It was in '52, (and that part of Iowa was then thinly settled), that I found myself one evening at the "Eagle Hotel," in West Liberty, a village of some five houses, about one mile east of Wapsinoenoc creek, (Wapsi—white, noe—earth, woc—creek—literally white-earth-creek), and situated on a beautiful prairie billow.

Some half dozen travelers and villagers were lounging in front of the ample fireplace in the bar-room—for, though the settlers had only a few days since finished their harvest, the evenings were somewhat cool, and a small fire was necessary to perfect comfort—talking of their prospects, and whether there was likely to be a large emigration pass through to California in the spring to buy their surplus feed and other produce, when a new character burst upon the stage. As the door was flung open, all eyes were fixed in a stare of astonishment and wonder upon the new comer.

The stranger was a tall, raw-boned, lantern-jawed individual, with flaxen locks straggling about his shoulders. His long spindle legs were encased in blue jeans, and he wore a coat of the "steel-pen cut," and in color what he would have denominated "blue-nut," with an oil-cloth cap drawn so tightly down upon his head that it had the appearance of having been pasted on.

Then what appeared most strange and unaccountable was, that he was wringing, dripping wet. His whitish-yellow ear-locks were parted down to his cheeks, and streaks of dirt marked the course of divers miniature water-courses across his forehead, and down his nose; water dripped from the claw-hammer tails of his coat and from the wristbands of the same. On his back he carried an oil-cloth carpet-bag, securely fastened by stout leather straps, which crossed upon his breast.

Marching into the middle of the room with an immense clatter of wet cowhide boots, he halted and cast an inquiring glance around the circle occupying the benches in front of the fire. Bagley, the landlord of the "Eagle," arose, nodded and said: "Good even'n, sur."

"Heow d'ye dew. Be yeou the landlord o' this house?"

"Yes-r."

"Want t'know? Reckon ye couldn't keep a feller hur, nor give him a bite o' suthin for supper, could yer?"

"Yes-r."

"Ye meant to say ye ken—bed an' breakfast?"

"Yes-r."

"Gol darn! glad to hear on't—and ef yeou kin jist mix a feller a little suthin hot an' strong, with a good deal o' rum in't an' but little water, it'll do me a mazin' site o' good."

"Yes-r."

"Strong, mind—a good deal o' lick. You've got rum?"

"Yes-r."

"A good deal o' rum in, but little water—s'iff, of the ole deacon used to say—stiff, Mr. Landlord."

"Yes-r."

While the landlord was preparing his rum the stranger stood in front of the bar with pack still on his back, evidently bent on seeing that the correct thing was done in the rum and water mingling. Then having imbibed a "regular snorter," he asked the landlord to assist in removing his pack. This being done, he was about banding his carpet-bag over to the landlord to put behind the bar, when he caught sight of an immense rent in it, and therefrom protruding the corners of articles of clothing within it. The instant he made the discovery the carpet sack fell from his hands, his jaw dropped, and for a few seconds he stood the very image of despair. At length he roused himself, and striking his clenched fist against his forehead, he howled in a voice of heartrending agony:

"Ruined, ruined, ruined! Teetotally busted to smash! One hundred and sixty acres of the best land that ever lay out'er doors ripped all to flinders! O, Sarer Ann, little knowest thou that we art a ruined, busted family! Little yeou thinkest thou art a beggar! O, Jerewasalem! How shill I ever meet yeou, sin'this destruckshon hev bin wroughted? Arfter all our skrimpin' and skrewin', an' sinchin', an' turning', an' twistin'; arfter sellin' old Barney an' the steers; arfter sellin' the two-year old heifer an' the nine shoats; an' arfter thou, O, Sarer Ann, goin' to church in caliker, we're a busted family! O, Jerewasalem! All, all lost, gone in a minnit! O, heow, little Jed, and Sarer Ann, kin I meet yeou?"

This outburst from the tall Yankee took us all by surprise. We could not imagine what had happened to cause him so much alarm and grief, for the poor man was absolutely beside himself with terror and despair, and tears were flowing plentifully down his brown, weather-beaten cheeks.

"What on earth has happened to you, sir, to cause you so much distress? You are

certainly not lamenting at this rate over that rent in your carpet-bag?" asked I, advancing to where our Yankee stood.

"Oh, no, no; holy Jerewasalem, ef 'twas nothin' elst but that! Oh, murder, murder, I dasent hardly thiak on't! There's poor, poor Sarer Ann, feelin' so proud, an' talkin' to little Jed about our fine new home in the praires, jist like me an' her us't often to do, an' here, O, Jewdas! is a hull quarter section of the neatest land in Iowa gone to eternal smash!"

The poor fellow's feelings now completely mastered him, and he hid his face in his hands and sobbed like a child. His last words, however, gave me a clue to the mystery, and taking up his carpet bag I commenced hauling out shirts, vests and handkerchiefs—all thoroughly water-soaked—till at the bottom I found a carefully-rolled bundle.

Mr. Yankee had now controlled his grief, and stood near, with his hands on his knees, bending over me in breathless suspense. Unrolling a hickory shirt, I found within a large cotton brown paper parcel, and within that a handkerchief, carefully pinned, and within it a package done up in a newspaper. On opening the newspaper I found what I had expected to find from the first, viz: a land warrant for 160 acres of government land, all snug and dry.

It is almost useless to attempt to describe the extravagant joy of the Yankee. The moment that he saw that his land warrant was safe and sound, he gave a perfect howl of delight, and, snatching it from my fingers, he pressed it to his bosom, as he might have done Sarer Ann, had she been present, and with tremendous strides commenced pacing back and forth across the room. It seemed impossible for him to be still an instant.

"Glory to God!" cried he—"glory to the most highest! Sarer Ann, all our savin' an' skimpin' ain't in vain! Go on with your talk—plan an' kalkerlate! Take little Jed on yer knee and sing! In the evenin', when you go out to milk, look to'r'd where the sun is goin' an' think—there I've a happy home! Your Peleg's there; he'll hev the land and we'll be happy yit! The steers is saved! the shoats is all right! the heifer ain't gone in, and old Barney's bound to coun! O fellers! you see in your midst a happy head of er family—you witness a joyful human—"

"If you will excuse my interrupting you, sir, and it is a fair question," said I, "how did you come to get into this sorry pickle?"

"Excuse the question? Sarting, sarting! Tell yer the hull story in er minute—give the hull partickelers—a full ackcount! Jewdas! what a narrer escape that quarter section did hev?"

"Well, but lets have the story."

"Yas, sarting, sarting! Well, gents, my name is Peleg Snodgrass, son of Deacon Eleazer Snodgrass, from down in Maine, on the—"

"Never mind that, tell us how you got so wet."

"Yass, sarting! Well, your see back hur 'bout a mild beyant the Nockernoseoff Creek. I wur walkin' along as happy as a lark, lookin' 'bout about over the prairers and thinkin' how beautiful the great All Bein' had made the world, and what awful taters this sile would raise, when I see a big drove o' cattle jist one side. I wur admirin' at hacow fat and slick they wur, an' lookin' at thare good pints, when an almighty great brindle bull jumped up out'n the tall grass and begin tew shake his all-fired great curly head an' bel'er an' switch his tail an' paw the sile over his back. I concluded it wur best to v'let on likes ef I want afeared, and so I begin tew whistle "Rake er deown Sal" an' other good chunes, thinkin' as heow I'd slip past the blasted ole cuss; but jist as I got on'er-site, he gin a snort an' begin tew walk to'r'd me, stoppin' onct in a while to fetch a rake in the sile with his fore feet. I put in a few quick steps 'bout then, but was afeared to run, cos I knowed ef I did he'd feel encouraged. Putty soon he bein to come on the trot, and then I let out in a kinder canter. Then he ris to a lope, an' seein' it wur no use a waitin' for him to quit, I jist loosened these ere legs o' mine an' come down to my best time. I looked about for suthin' to climb, but thare I wur in the cussed prairer and not a pea-stick tew be seen nigher than a mild ahead—heow I did want to stop right thare an' cuss the blasted prairers. I gin a glance over my shoulder and see the everlastin' cuss with his nose deown an' his tail up, comin' jist on the dead lay-down, and I let my legs count another notch. The chase wur nip and tuck till I got near the creek, when I see that the bull wur only 'bout a hundred yards behind me. Lord, Jehossyfah! but I felt queerish when I wur sartin he wur gainin'; it giv me sitch a skeer that my heart 'peared to dissolve in dish-water and my legs kinder lost thare feelin' so I couldn't run. But I could see a lot of trees ahead a little ways, an' ef I could hold out three minits longer I'd be to 'em. I looked back and the sufferin' Moses! ef the bull want in twenty feet o' me, his eyes all green and his nostrils looked like I mite a put my head in 'em—an' as red as a bolt of new flamin'! I got almost to the creek, when I found the timber wur on the opper-site bank from me, an' the bull so close I could almost feel his breath on my back. I thot of my famerly in that offel time; ses I—"Farewell, little Jed and you Sarer Ann, my gentle companion!" Jist at that instant I see a stump rite on the bank of the creek an' made a spring fur it, expectin' to get on top on't, but it happened to be holler and I landed inside. I jist had room to squeeze daeown in it an' git my head below the top, and not a

darn bit too soon wur I in, fur as my topknot went daeown Mr. Bull's head came up—whack again the stump till everything jingled.

"You better believe I felt thankful I wur housed at last; and the old cuss of a bull wasn't he disappointed! Lord, how he did raive round that stump, switch his tail, paw the sile, and beller! I peeped up at him, jist to see how he were gettin' on, but I kalkerlate I peeped down again offel suddent! for I hadn't mor'n got my head up till his horns come a-straddle of it, and his skull hit the stump like a maul. That little incerdent convinced me that the best thing I could do was, in the langwidge of 'Squire Wheeler, to 'lay low, watch black ducks, and chaw pokeroot.' Jist as I'd made up my mind not to put up my head again, I felt the offelst pain take me in the leg I ever see, an' at the same time somethin' commenced to whizz, whizz, down in the bottom of the holler stump. I tried to look down to see what on airth it could be, but the holler was so narrer I couldn't git a chance to look, and all at onct it popped into my head that there wur a rattlesnake in the stump. When I thot o' that I made a offel plunge to git out of the confounded den; but the cussed bull warnt mor'n six feet off, an' the minit he seed my head he come at me full chisel. The fust I knowed I had dodged back inter the stump ag'in and hadn't mor'n touched bottom 'fore I felt another offel keen bite in my leg. I made a rush to git out ag'in, but the cussed, infernal bull drove at me, an' I was 'bleeged to pop back ag'in. As I squeezed down inter my stump ag'in, I would er bet a gallon o' rum that Sarer Ann would be a widdier in less 'n tew hours. I tried to cipher out which would be the most becomin' for a christian, to be pizened to deathe by a offel, great snak, or have my inards slung to the four winds by a cussed brindle bull. I thot of the martyrs—of Amos biled in ile, Elizer smeared with honey, and Joseph tempted by Pottifer's wife, and concluded that I ort to profit by their example, and grin and bear it, no matter heow much it went ag'in the grain. But I got jist then a offel bite or tew, and to save my soul couldn't help stickin' up my head, and the bull bein' on hand let drive and filled my eyes chuck full of bark and dirt; so down I bobbed ag'in fur snaks. I now begin to git bites offel frequently, and in bad places; the whizz in' got louder, and quirmed, and twisted, and screeched at a fast rate, and in grabbin' round I ketched something, and got a bite in the hand.

"I held my holt on to it, and behold! It proved to be nothin' but a yaller-jacket! When I found I wasn't snak-bit, I felt suthin lift off my stumick like a bag o' shot—"Glory to God!" ses I, "I may live to pucture the wider and fatterless yit! I felt for a minnit as if didn't keer for all the yaller jackets between the Mississippi and the Missouri—but, the blessed Jerushah! I hadn't seen one there to where I see a thousand in another minit! The whole holler of that stump got yaller with 'em. I couldn't stand it long that way. I tried to think of some kind o' prayer suitable to the 'casion, and commenced: "Now I lay me down to sleep;" but by Jewdas, I couldn't pray for cussin'. I jist swore, bull or no bull, I was gwine to emergrate from that pertickeler spot; but every time I put my head above the stump, the bull pitched at me and hit the stump jist like a maul—he looked offel furious, with his eyes as green and blazin' as fire, and the foam droppin' from his mouth. I w s bobbin' up and down so continerally, that I was about half the time in the stump a half eout, and at last I felt the stump beginnin' to give way under the thumps the infernal old brindle heathen was givin' it, and I swar my hear riz straight on eend. I made up my mind to git eout o' that, somehow, purty quick, but jist at the minit I raised up my head to jump out and run, the ole cuss came at me, with his head daeown and tail up, at locomotive speed, and as I dodged daeown he struck the stump, tore it up at the roots and shot me eout like I was a bumshe'll clean over the bank into the creek; and arter me come stump, bull and all. The fore feet, or one on 'em, of the bull, struck me right on the back—and I reckon that's what tore the carpet-bag—knockin' me clean daeown to the muddy bottom of the creek. When I riz, the fust thing I seed wur the old feller's tail, and as I couldn't swim a lick, I made a grab for it and made him tow me ashore. When we got there, I let go and run one way, whi e the bull run the other, and that's the bull long and short on't."

A SCOTTISH MINISTER'S MAN.—A "minister's man"—one of a class of persons of whom many anecdotes are told—was following the minister from the manse to the kirk on Sabbath afternoon, when the minister, glancing back, perceived a smile on the face of his old attendant. "What makes you laugh, James? it is unseemly. What is there to amuse you?" "Oh, naething particular," says James; "I was only thinkin' o' something that happened this forenoon." "What is that? Tell me what it was." "Weel, minister, dinna be angry wi' me; but ye ken the congregation here are whiles no pleased to get auld sermons fra' you, and this morning I got the better of the kirk session any way." "And how was that, Jamie?" says the minister. "Deed, sir, when we came out o' the kirk this forenoon, I kennd what they were thinking; and says I, "Eh, but you canna ca' that an auld sermon this day, for it's no' abune six weeks since you heard it last."

—Greeley calls Bennett "a lying old braggart," and Bennett calls Greeley a "galvanized squash."

CLIPPINGS.

—The London Times publishes a report of the directors of a canal now being constructed in India for irrigation purposes. More than 14,000 laborers were, at the date of the last advices, employed thereon. The entire length of the main trunk line will extend over about 310 miles. It is estimated that between Soonkasala and Mittacondal, 60,000 acres of land will be commanded for irrigation. The Koonadir division of the project will, it has been estimated, command for irrigation, 300,000 acres of highly productive land in the valley.

—The Richmond Examiner states that a man, 80 years old, was recently married in that city to a miss of 18. When the old man saluted his bride, the whole congregation shouted, and the boys poured a perfect hail of peanut hulls on the bald scone of the aged groom.

—An editor says that when he was in prison, he was requested by the jailor "to give the prison a puff."

—The official returns of the quantity of game and wild animals killed during the sporting season of 1860-61, in Bohemia and Moravia, give the following figures: Stags, 1610; deer, 2,609; roebucks, 10,695; wild boars, 547; pheasants, 47,133; grouse, 511; partridges, 759,112; other birds, 56,625; hares, 609,215; rabbits, 7,093; otters, 146; badgers, 227; wild cats and other beasts of prey, 83,620; birds of prey, 268,078, forming a total of 1,843,021 head.

—The Chicago Tribune has "information from an unquestioned source, that five thousand acres in Illinois will be planted with cotton the coming year."

—The late Francis Jackson, of Boston, left \$100 each to Oliver Johnson, Lucy Stone, and half a dozen other "expounders of freedom." Wm. Lloyd Garrison comes in for \$5,000, and another \$5,000 is placed in the hands of Wendell Phillips and Lucy Stone, to aid in passing laws to give women the right to vote.

—The astronomer, Otto Shruve, has received from the Emperor of Russia, a sum of 155,000 francs to establish a complete observatory on Ararat.

Napoleon's Idea of Making War.

The following letter was written by Napoleon to Augereau on 21st of February, 1814:

"What! Six hours after receiving the first troops from Spain you are not in the field! Six hours of rest is quite enough for them. I conquered at Nangis with the brigade of dragoons coming from Spain, who from Bayonne had not drawn rein. Do you say that the six battalions from Nimea want clothes and equipage, and are uninstructed? Augereau, what miserable excuses! I have destroyed 80,000 enemies with battalions of conscripts, scarcely clothed and without cartridge boxes. The National Guards are pitiful! I have here 4,000 from Angers and Bretagne in round round-hats, without cartridge boxes, but with good weapons; and I have made them tell.

There is no money, do you say? But where do you expect to get money but from the pockets of the enemy? You have no magazine? Tut! tut! this is too ridiculous! I order you to put yourself in the field twelve hours after you receive this letter. If you are still the Augereau of Castiglione, keep your command. If your sixty years are too much for you, relinquish it to the oldest of your general officers. The country is menaced and in danger. It can only be saved by daring and alacrity and not by vain delays. You must have a nucleus of 6,000 picked troops. I have not so many, yet I have destroyed three armies, captured 40,000 prisoners, taken two hundred pieces of artillery and thrice saved the capital. The enemy are in full flight upon Troyes! Be before them. Act no longer as of late. Resume the method and spirit of '93. When Frenchmen see your plume waving over the van, and you first of all exposed to the enemy's fire, you will do with them whatever you will.

LIGHT IN COUNTRY HOUSES.—What shall we farmers use for lighting our dwellings? Camphene and burning fluid are considered so dangerous as to deter many from using them, and kerosene, which has been considered safe, has in several instances lately exploded, causing death. The lunar oil is good for those who wish to convert their dwellings into lamp-black manufactories, as it will throw off lamp-black equal to a small volcano throwing out cinders, injuring everything in the room. As there anything we can substitute for the old-fashioned home-made dipped candles, that would be cheaper or better than them for farmers who have their own tallow?

"The old fashioned candle, for ordinary use, and for those who are willing to be troubled with snuffing it once each five minutes, is cheapest, safest and best. Dr. Jackson says that kerosene explodes in consequence of the presence of other volatile matter, which is expelled when the kerosene is properly manufactured; and that such as is explosive may be readily detected by placing a little in a vials setting it in warm water (say 100 degree, Fah.) and placing a burning match at the mouth of the vial, after the lapse of a short time. A slight explosion will take place, if the kerosene contains unsafe ingredients."—[Country Gentleman.]