

progeny of the prolific old mare which had then trod the furrow. Some of these were now approaching the sere and yellow leaf themselves, but they bore the stamp of power and endurance which can carry a horse through a long life. They positively gave one the impression, by the way they looked when their master approached, that they shared his pride in the home they had so materially helped to create. The shorthorns, in their turn, came in for much undisguised admiration on our part, and we listened with very pronounced interest to the circumstantial account the old fellow gave of their family histories and achievements. The odd thought would obtrude, as I listened to him, that this quaint racy style of dealing with genealogies would have immensely improved a certain chapter in Genesis. It was not exactly inspiration, perhaps, but it sounded ever so much better.

As we approached the homestead, we found it in perfect keeping with its surroundings. What the old fellow called light refreshments were on the table in view of tiding us over till the promised dinner in the evening. They served the purpose admirably. Then a stroll round the homestead, followed by a look at the game cocks. A dozen or so of these were in as many small cages.

The old man explained to us that they were all from one brood, and packed up to send as presents to friends—"fellows that are likely to buy my young bulls," there was an expressive twinkle in his merry eyes as he said this. It appeared that the bullock-dray which was to have taken them that morning could not now go for several days, so he determined to give them their liberty again. They were each addressed to their new owners, the names being written on luggage labels suspended round their necks. These the old gentleman decided not to remove, as it had taken him some time deciding which to send to each

friend, the best going to the most likely purchaser of the noblest and therefore highest-priced scion of his bovine aristocracy, and so carefully down through the respective probabilities and grades. We helped him turn them out into an empty run, having previously asked him whether they would not fight.

"Fight, not they!" he replied. "Don't I tell you they're all one brood; been together since they were chicks!"

The result astonished him—but not us. We expected it. The amiability of this happy band of brothers had certainly in the first place been somewhat disturbed by irritating confinement. But I honestly believe not one of them knew his dearest brother when he met him attired in a white luggage label.

In any case, at it they went with hearty good will, and in a moment six pairs of birds were engaged in mortal combat, changing partners rapidly and indiscriminately whenever the exigencies of space or propinquity of another foe seemed to suggest it. Such a set to I never witnessed before. Instead of trying to separate them, the old man stood entranced by the prowess shown by some of his favourite birds, and astonished at that of others which he had evidently undervalued. He seemed to be making mental notes.

"I'll have to alter some of those labels after all," he said presently, in a musing tone. "It'd never do to give Jones that plucky little fellow in the corner. I never saw him fight before. Robinson must have him. He's good for my best bull."

Though much blood was shed and the yard was strewn with feathers, there were no fatalities, and after a time the combatants mutually agreed to give the disfiguring labels the significance to which their colour clearly entitled them, and peace again reigned. Seeing which we retired, and the dinner-gong sounded.

A real old Stilton cheese, a pre-