

## UNCLE BEN AND HIS MORGAN MARE.

As Told by His Pastor.

Uncle Ben, I met him early in my pastoral pursuits, Typical Vermonter standing straight, and six feet out of boots. I was thirty, he was eighty, but this single sign appeared Of Time's wasting work—the whiteness of his locks and flowing beard, At the close of my first sermon, with a friendly hand and smile, By the altar rail he met me, led me down the middle aisle, Introduced me to the people, praised the pastors gone before, Told me how and where to find him, as we parted at the door.

Right before you stands a farm-house; I live there; I'm "Uncle Ben." Going out I met my brother half way through the shady lane, Leading at his side a Morgan with his hand thrust in her mane. "Handsome horse she's been," I ventured, after greeting, to remark, And his clear blue eye responded in a moment with a spark Of electric fire, and smiling, he said, "Parson, walk with me To the pasture just beyond us, then go home and stop to tea." I assented. Then he gossiped: "This old creature's name is Fan; Morgan horses come the nearest in intelligence to man. I must tell you something, parson, since you kind of like the mare, What occurred one fall as I was driving out to our State Fair. Fan was trotting gently onward, I was taking in the scene, Nature never looked so lovely, never seemed so sweet and clean; Round the hills a purple splendor like an ocean seemed to float, And the maple groves stood wearing Joseph's many colored coat. Presently a team o'ertook us, and I heard the driver cry In a rude, sarcastic manner, 'Now, old man, let us go by!' Looking round I saw two dudish, pert young fellows with a black High-stepping, stylish, showy creature; they could hardly hold him back. I was just about to give them all they wanted of the way When, 'old fossil,' said the other, 'we can't take your dust to-day.' "May be not," I said. He answered, 'We don't ride behind the heels Of your old Green Mountain creepers; turn out, or off come your wheels.' I looked back at those two dandies, and said meekly, 'Is that so?' Turned to Fan, took up the ribbons, uttered one short message, 'Go.' As the tiger bounds elated in the forest on his prey, As the floods rush through the meadows when the mill dam breaks away, So this Morgan, bless her, straightened at one bound and struck a pace That had heaps of business in it, and we settled down to race. Road was full of teams and people, but they heard the noise and drew Up against the wayside fences, making room to let us through. How they cheered as we shot past them, women cheered as well as men, I could hear their voices shouting, 'Let her out; 'Go, Uncle Ben.' And I went. Fan understood it, took the bit right in her teeth, While the trees and fences round us, and the firm ground underneath Flew behind us. Dogs were barking, geese ran cackling, fowls flew High above the barnyard fences, dust in clouds behind us, too. That was traveling, parson, traveling; every buckle, girth and strap Seemed alive. Fan's neck extended and her tail laid in my lap. Over hilltops, down through hollows, crossing bridges with a bound,

And the wheels went so like lightning that they hardly touched the ground. Well, I'm most ashamed to tell it, but Fan went at such a rate That I thought it best to head her for the race course through the gate, And so calm her down and cool her, get her sobered well in hand; But the horses were just starting as we reached the judges' stand, And the folks that tend the races had the biggest kind of show, For the instant that the starter shouted out the message 'Go!' Fan was in it; couldn't stop her; and the jockeys in their gigs, With their whips adorned with ribbon, in their regular racing rigs, Whipped and shouted; but, no matter, I was leading with a mare That had never struck a hoof on a race course at a fair. Don't believe in races, parson, never did, but this was one Of the purest of surprises, and the people had the fun. There I was, old-fashioned buggy, old straw hat, without a whip, Leading round the whole procession at a clean two twenty clip. How the people cheered and shouted, 'Go it, hayseed! You will win!' And I went in; couldn't help it; Fan was going then like sin With that old Green Mountain Morgan, little cyclone sort of pace, It's superlative abandon and its fascinating grace, But the jockeys entered protest for they saw that they were beat; I was not a regular entry and could run no other heat. I was glad of the conclusion and proceeded to explain, But the crowd broke into cheering and the band struck up a strain, So we left the course with honor, Fan and I, but, parson, just Beyond the gates were those dandies with a horse all foam and dust Just beside us, so I raised my hat and said, in my cool way, 'How is business, boys, progressing, taking wheels off this fine day?' But they didn't seem to hear me; their attention had been led To some interesting object; they were looking straight ahead. When they pass Green Mountain Morgans, with our sort of hills to climb, They must get up pretty early and be busy all the time. Here's the pasture, parson; kindly drop the bars down, two or three; Thanks, 'Go, Fan.' Just see her, parson. Now, come home and stay to tea." —From "Our Dumb Animals."

Professor Willitson, head of the department of paleontology in the University, "predicted before a class of girls that five or six centuries hence women would have mustaches and beards." Happily by the time woman has completed the conquest of the hair, man will have made the conquest of the air and found a way of escape.

An Englishman traveling in the north of Scotland arrived at a small town, and entered into conversation with one of the prominent residents, who assured him that the place was noteworthy, inasmuch as it was one of the old royal burghs of Scotland. "How very interesting," said the tourist. "Yes," replied the resident, "it's charter was granted by King David." "Dear me, you don't tell me so?" responded the interested Englishman. "Was that the—er—gentleman who wrote the Psalms?"

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