

THE SPICE OF LIFE.

THE HIGHWAY COW.

Some time ago Peter McArthur, in his "Donald Ban" series of correspondence, quoted a few lines from an old poem, entitled, "The Highway Cow," at the same time hinting, if we are not mistaken, that he would like to be favored with a copy of the verses complete. Half a dozen willing readers came forward with the information, which, however, was not acknowledged in print; and still they come. The last to hand is from a correspondent in Simcoe County, Ont., whose version we have concluded to quote, seeing the stanzas appear to be so popular.

The hue of her hide was a dusky brown,
Her body was lean and her neck was slim,
One horn turned up and the other
turned down,
She was keen of vision and long of
limb,
With a Roman nose and a short-stump
tail,
And ribs like the hoops of a homemade
pail.

Many a mark did her body bear,
She had been a target for all things
known;
On many a scar the dusky hair
Would grow no more where it once had
grown;
Many a parting sporting shot
Had left on her a lasting spot.

Many and many a well-aimed stone,
Many a brick-bat of goodly size,
Many a cudgel swiftly thrown
Had brought the tears to her lovely
eyes,
Or had bounded off from her bony back
With a noise like the sound of a rifle
crack.

Many a day she had passed in the pound
For helping herself to her neighbor's
corn,
Many a cowardly cur and hound
Had been transfixed on her crumpled
horn,
Many a teapot and old tin pail
Had the boys tied to her time-worn tail.

Old Deacon Gray was a good old man,
Though sometimes tempted to be pro-
fane,
When many a weary mile he ran
To drive her out of his growing grain.
Sharp were the pranks she used to play
To get her fill and to get away.

She knew when the Deacon went to
town,
She watched him wisely as he went by,
He never passed her without a frown,
And an angry gleam in each angry eye.
He would crack his whip in a surly way
And would drive along in his one-hoss
shay.

Then at his homestead she loved to call,
Lifting his bars with crumpled horn,
Nimbly scaling his garden wall,
Helping herself to his standing corn,
Eating his cabbages one by one,
Hurrying home when her work was done.

His human passions were quick to rise,
And striding forth with a savage cry,
The fury gleaming from both his eyes,
Like the lightning flash from a sum-
mer's sky,
Redder and redder his face would grow,
And after the creature he would go.

Over the garden, 'round and around,
Breaking his pear and apple trees,
Trampling his melons into the ground,
Overturning his hives of bees,
Leaving him angry and badly stung,
Wishing the old cow's neck was wrung.

The mosses grew on the garden wall,
The years went by with their work and
play,

The boys in the village grew strong and
tall,
And the gray-haired farmers passed
away
One by one, as the red leaves fall,
But the highway cow outlived them all.

"Mamma, mamma has a great surprise
for me."

"I know what it is—big bruvver is
back from his vacation."
"Did you know?"
"Donk won't rattle any more."



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