

# Bowser Spends Sad Evening

The Death of His Old Friend Joe Birdsall Affects Him Very Much.

## WERE BOYS TOGETHER

Starts to Make It Unpleasant For Other Folks--Tackles a Neighbor For Playing a Banjo.

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MR. BOWSER was hiding behind the hall door when Mr. Bowser arrived home the other evening, and as he entered she gave him a start by clapping a hand on his shoulder. She laughed merrily at his surprise, but he looked at her in a solemn way and said:

"We will have no joking this evening. I do not feel in the mood."

"Has anything bad happened today?" she queried.

"Very bad, indeed."

"What is it?"

Mr. Bowser shook his head in a mournful way and heaved a long sigh, and there was a break in his voice as he said:

"Alas, my old friend Joe Birdsall is no more! I got word this afternoon that he died in Texas a month ago."

"And who in the land's name is Joe Birdsall? I don't think I ever heard you mention his name."

Mr. Bowser led the way down to the dining room without answering. He



"WE SAT ON THE SAME BENCH."

sat down with a sigh, curved the steak with a groan, and it was only after he had taken a bite of mashed potatoes that he replied:

"Joe Birdsall was the playmate of my boyhood days. We sat on the same bench together in school. We loved the same girl. We paddled in the same brook. We were like brothers. There was never a more loyal friend, and now he's--he's dead!"

"It's funny that you have never mentioned him since we were married," observed Mrs. Bowser after puzzling over it.

"Some things are too sacred to mention," was the reply, accompanied by a sorrowful shake of the head.

"I think I have heard mother mention the man's name. When he was a boy he was red headed and freckled faced, wasn't he?"

"No, ma'am, he wasn't! If your mother says he was, she ought to have her ears boxed."

"But he was cross eyed and had a wart on his chin."

Joe Was a Reader of Character.

"Not by a blamed sight! Look here, woman, I don't propose to sit here and hear a dead man insulted. About the time I proposed for your hand Joe saw you for the first time. He was a great hand to read character."

"And he read mine, I suppose."

"He did. He said you were flippant and heartless and that if I married you I would regret it to my dying day."

"I'm sorry he's dead. I should like to thank him for his words. No wonder he passed away. It was too much of a strain on him to read character."

Mr. Bowser glared across the table at her, but made no reply. The next ten minutes passed in silence, and then they rose and went up to the sitting room. He did not mean to speak to her again that evening, but after a few minutes a sigh escaped him, and he said:

"Joe's last thoughts were of me. Half an hour before he died he said he wished we were boys together again and sliding downhill."

"How did it happen that he never visited us?" asked Mrs. Bowser.

"Because he felt grieved that I married and left him alone in the world. We had pledged our solemn word to remain old bachelors."

"How romantic! I should think you would feel conscience stricken over it and bring his body up here where you could weep over his tombstone."

Mr. Bowser flushed up and was about to say something red hot in reply when the words were arrested on his lips by the sounds of a banjo next door. The player played a few bars of a topical song and shuffled his feet in time.

"By the nineteen lophorned cows of

Wisconsin, do you hear that? My friend Joe Birdsall is lying in his lonely Texas grave, and some villain next door is playing the banjo and bellowing like a hungry calf!"

"But he doesn't know that your friend is dead."

"But he ought to know. Some instinct ought to warn him, and it would if he were half human. I wouldn't have believed that such things could be in this the twentieth century. Listen to that, will you?"

The man in the next house gave the strings seventeen preparatory twangs and then sang:

"My Nancy, she says that she loves me, And she will be true unto me, And I am a-levyng my Nancy, And I will be true unto she."

Wouldn't Stand For It.

"That's got to stop!" hoarsely whispered Mr. Bowser as he shook his fist at the partition wall.

"But the man has a moral and legal right to play and sing in his own house," replied Mrs. Bowser.

"I deny it. I deny that any human being has a right to yawp around when my old schoolmate is dead. It is nothing short of sacrilege. If he doesn't stop!"

He was interrupted again by the man next door. He twanged a flourish and then sang:

"My Nancy's a red headed maiden; Her eyes are of indigo blue; Her feet they remind me of gunboats, But that's nothing to Tommy or you."

"More of it, Mrs. Bowser--more of it!" was whispered. "Think how Joe and I played together in our boyhood days, kissed the same girl, fought with the same boys, went in swimming together in the same deep hole, and then think of this! By the hobtailed rhinoceros of Jericho, there is going to be murder done!"

"Nonsense!" replied Mrs. Bowser. "I tell you that any one has a right to do as he will in his own house. Why not go up to your room? You won't hear the noise so plainly there. He'll get tired of making a noise pretty soon and go to reading."

The Outrage on Poor Joe.

"But he's got to quit right now. I tell you it's an outrage on poor Joe and I won't stand it. Send the girl in to tell him that if he doesn't dry up I'll come in and pitch him head first out doors."

"You know I can't do that. She wouldn't go on such an errand, but even if she would the man would only defy you. If you'll only have patience for a few minutes--"

The man next door began tapping his feet on the floor and singing:

"The eyes of my Nancy are squintful; The toes of my Nancy turn in; She humps up her back as she saunters, But a thousand she's got of the tin."

"Where are you going?" asked Mrs. Bowser as she made a grab at Mr. Bowser.

"In there to break his neck."

"But you mustn't."

"But I will."

He broke away from her and passed down the hall and outdoors. She ran to the front window and saw him pass into the gate of the next house and ascend the steps. Then she heard the bell ring and the man stop singing as he reached:

"So Nancy and me will be married, And Nancy will ever be true, And together we'll live!"

Then there were exclamations, then cuss words, then the sounds of scuffling and wrestling and dragging out. Then Mrs. Bowser caught sight of Mr. Bowser being flung off the steps into the snow, his arms and legs spread out frog fashion. She opened the door as he came limping up the steps. His stiff hat was caved in, his nose bleeding and his coat and vest torn open.

"Well, you did it, didn't you?" she said as she surveyed him.

"You go to thunder!" he answered as he passed her and went upstairs.

M. QUAD.

BRITISH BRIEFS.

England's first representative parliament assembled in 1265.

Caesar conquered Britain in the year 55 B. C. The Roman occupation continued nearly 500 years, or until 410 A. D.

In 1679 was passed the habeas corpus act, which, along with the right of trial by jury, is the great bulwark of Anglo-Saxon liberty.

The great plague was introduced into London in 1664 by bales of cotton imported from Holland; 100,000 persons succumbed to the disease in one year.

Cromwell's long parliament assembled in 1640; Charles I. was beheaded Jan. 30, 1649, and Cromwell became lord protector in 1653. In 1700 the Stuarts were restored to the throne.

Westminster abbey, where the kings and queens of Great Britain are crowned, was originally a Benedictine monastery. It was founded by Sebert, king of the East Saxons, about 618.

Byes on Bills.

Among the humorous memories connected with English judges is one of Justice Byes and his horse. This eminent jurist was well known in his profession for his work on "Bills," and as this gave a fine opportunity for alliteration his associates were accustomed to bestow the name on the horse, which was but a sorry steed.

"There goes Byes on Bills," they took pleasure in saying, and as the judge rode out every afternoon they indulged daily in their little joke. But the truth was that the horse had another name, known only to the master and his man, and when a too curious client inquired as to the judge's whereabouts he was told by the servant, with a clear conscience, that "master was out on Business."

## HOW THE TIGER KILLS.

Never Faces His Prey, but Attacks It on the Flank.

I have taken considerable trouble to find out how tigers kill large game. Some time ago I was asked to come and see a full grown bullock that had been killed by a tiger. On examining it I found the animal had its neck broken, and there were claw marks on the nose and shoulder, but nowhere else. There was no doubt that the tiger had jumped at the bull and landed on the shoulder, and when the bull turned his head to gore the tiger he must have put his claw out and with a sudden jerk broken the neck.

On another occasion I went to see a young buffalo which had been killed by a tiger and found the same thing had happened. There were similar marks on the nose and also on the near shoulder, which clearly indicated that this animal had been killed in the same way. Malays who have actually seen a tiger killing a buffalo told me they saw the same thing happen; also that in dragging off a heavy carcass, such as buffalo or bull, he gets most of the weight across his shoulder.

This must be fairly correct, as I have often followed a kill, and the marks left indicate that only a portion of the animal was trailing along the ground. I have known a full grown bull, which ten men could not move, dragged for two miles by a tiger in a heavy jungle, where roots of trees and swamp had to be gone through. In no case have I seen the pug marks facing the wrong way except when stopping to feed, which proves he must carry a portion of the animal over his shoulder.

The old idea of a tiger killing large game by a blow from his paw is nonsense; besides, in India a tiger never faces his prey, but attacks him on the flank unless charged. Another curious fact that may seem very like a fairy tale is that a tiger does not seem to mind a small lamp being tied over a kill about ten feet high, but will come and feed. I have known three occasions when this has been tried, and each time a tiger has come to feed upon the carcass.—London Field.

Kept His Word.

Biggs—Old Brown died last night.

Diggs—Well, he was a man of his word anyway.

Biggs—What do you mean by that?

Diggs—Forty years ago he proposed to an aunt of mine and declared he couldn't live if she refused him.

Biggs—And did she refuse him?

Diggs—Yes, and now, true to his word, Brown has ceased to live.—Chicago News.

A Doubtful Advantage.

"Do you think that sarcasm is a valuable gift?"

"Sometimes," answered Miss Cayenne.

"It occasionally enables you to politely offend people who might otherwise insist on boring you."—Washington Star.

Located.

Doctor—Now, Giles, can you tell me exactly where you feel the pain?

Giles—Well, sir, it's a hyperperiteric sort of pain. I puts me finger on it and it ain't there, and when I touches where it's gone to it's in the old place all the time.—Punch.

Her Little Scheme.

Tess—I saw Miss Vane on the avenue yesterday with a lovely new hat, but she had it cocked over so far to one side it was almost falling off her head.

Jess—Yes, she told me she pushed it over that way just as you came along so you'd be sure to notice it.—Philadelphia Press.

Goodby, Pork Sausidge Time.

Goodby, pork sausidge time, goodby. Springtime is dimpling in the silken sky. Spring work may open up now any hour, With hitching up of traces and the plow to scour.

First hens is sittin' for the "early fry." So goodby, pork sausidge time, goodby.

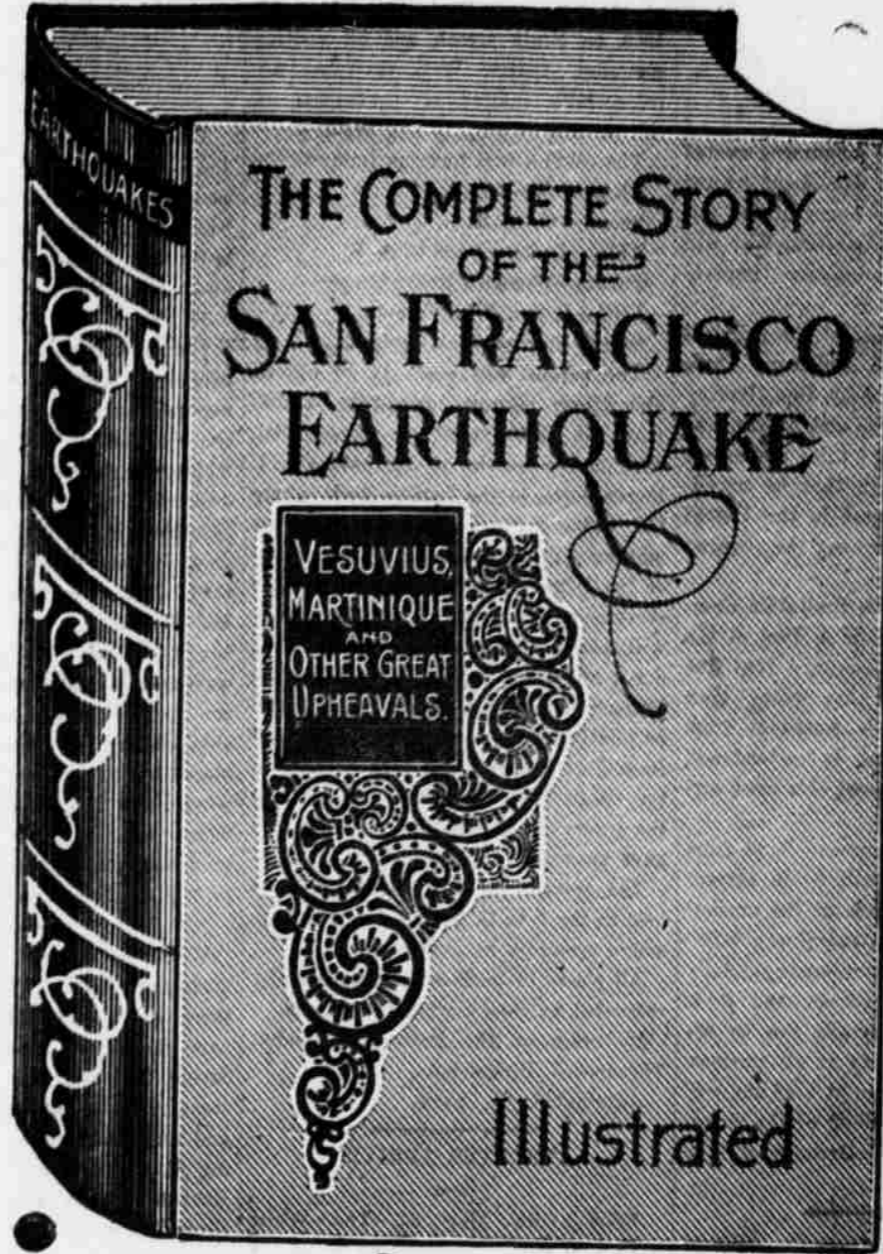
Moss on the sunny slopes, green all around, Dry on the hillsides, frost left the ground; Honkin' through the sea o' sky wild geese pass; Cattle, tired of roughness, pining fer grass. Won't be long till seed time; the days jest fly. So goodby, pork sausidge time, goodby.

Goodby, pork sausidge time, goodby. You and flapjacks draw the parting sigh. But other friends is comin'—dock greens on the way. Roastin' ears, old roastin' ears, be here some-dations, peach time, come and dry my eye! So goodby, pork sausidge time, goodby. —Kansas City Times.



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