

Mrs. Bowser Denies Report

She Contradicts the Story That Mr. B.'s Skating Trip Finished Him.

MERELY HAD A BAD FALL

His Ambition to Cut Pigeon Wings With the Young People Came to a Sudden End.

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MAKE this communication to the newspapers to correct a report that my husband, Mr. Bowser, met with a fatal accident a few days ago and will be heard of no more. While I very much dislike to bring our family troubles before the public, I feel that I ought to set myself right in certain matters.

One evening a week ago Mr. Bowser came home from the office with a package under his arm. With natural feminine curiosity I wanted to know the contents at once, but with one excuse and another he put me off until after dinner. When we had reached the sitting room he opened the package and showed me a pair of new ice skates. "Did you find them?" I asked. "I should say not." "Are you going to make a present to some one?" "Certainly not." "But they are not for yourself?" "To be sure they are. Why not?" "But you can't skate, and you are too old and too heavy to learn. You tried it two years ago and had such a fall that your back was lame for three months."

Inscrutable, as Usual. "Woman, what are you talking about?" he demanded as he flushed up. "Every time you get a chance you ring in that I am too old or too heavy for this or that, as if I was some supernan-



HE HAD ON A KNICKERBOCKER SUIT.

ated behemoth. Is a man in his dotage at forty-eight? Is a man weighing 150 pounds a haystack?"

Mr. Bowser is fifty-four years old and weighs 185 pounds, but as the matter is a painful one to him I never mention it. I did not correct him in this case, and after a glare at me he continued:

"Yes, two years ago I went up to the park and did a little ice skating. Crowds congregated to see me cut pigeon wings. I carried off all the honors, and instead of having a fall and a lame back I got rid of my rheumatism for three or four months. Why can't you stick to the truth in making your statements?"

"But you weren't thinking of trying it again?" I queried.

"And why not?" "Because you will be sure to--"

Would Cut Pigeon Wings.

"Now, just leave it right there. I bought these skates to skate with. There is skating at the park. I shall go up there this evening; I shall cut pigeon wings; I shall perform curly-cues; I shall make every other fancy skater take a back seat."

"And you will come down with a crash and probably put both hips out of joint."

"If I do I won't ask you to nurse me through it. By the seven spotted bulls of Indians, you are gradually driving me to the dead line. I don't wonder that husbands who have been nagged for years and years finally turn and chop their wives up with an ax."

"I'm not nagging," I answered. "I'm just saying that it is curious that you should go and buy a pair of skates when you can hardly stand up on them. You will only give the papers another chance to dig at you."

He looked around the room for the cat and a crowbar to strike her dead with, but, not finding either, he turned and walked upstairs to change his clothes. When he came down I saw that he must have smuggled a parcel into the house the night before. He had on a knickerbocker suit, leather leggings and cap, and to save my life I couldn't help smiling as he stood before me. He looked like a fat boy in the circus.

"Still on the grin, I see!" he thundered at me, but as I didn't answer he went down the hall for his overcoat and banged the door after him as he went out.

"A woman can be two hours or ten minutes getting ready to go somewhere. I was only ten minutes in getting ready to follow Mr. Bowser. I caught the next car behind him. I knew what entrance he would take to reach the lake in the park, and he hadn't got his skates on when I found him. He didn't seem to be in any hurry either. He sat around like a boy with the toothache, and once or twice he seemed to be on the point of going home. A policeman finally sauntered up and said:

"These benches are for the use of skaters."

"Well, ain't I a skater?" replied Mr. Bowser.

"You don't look like it to me. You look more like a man who'd roll around. However, if you are a skater get busy."

The conversation was overheard by half a dozen people, and, being put on his mettle, Mr. Bowser began to fasten on his skates. He had had them on for five minutes, looking distrustfully at the ice all the time, when the policeman came along again and said: "What! Loafing around yet? If you can't skate you'd better give that rig to some cross eyed orphan boy. (Shall I get a ten-year-old girl to take your arm and tell you which foot goes first?)"

He is Grieved. "You can mind your own business, sir!" replied Mr. Bowser as he got the boiled lobster color in his face.

"Don't sass me!"

"And don't you be guying me!"

The officer walked on, and a score of skaters gathered around Mr. Bowser and indulged in such remarks as:

"I'll bet he'll show us a few tricks when he does get started."

"I'll bet so too. He's got the right sort of legs for a skater."

"What are you guys talking about! Can a clder bar'l skate?"

"If he's going to smash the ice I'm going home to play with my rag doll," said a girl of sixteen.

Mr. Bowser had to get a move on him. I could read his thoughts as plain as print. He was saying to himself that he'd give a thousand dollars if he was safe home with me and the cat. It was too late for that. He got up and wobbled around and finally reached the ice and grabbed hold of a bush to steady himself. He was standing there, with his eyes as big as saucers and his chin quivering, when there were some more remarks. They were to the following effect:

"Some one get him a pair of crutches!"

"If you can't skate get down and roll over!"

"By George, he thinks he sees a ghost!"

"Hang to the limb, old coon! If you move you are a goner!"

"Oh, shut up, and give the old gent a show! He'll start off pretty quick and make us'all look silly."

Then the girl who had spoken before chipped in with:

"My ma told me that if the baby elephant broke loose and got on the ice I was to come right home and study my spelling lesson."

His Usual Finish. Poor Mr. Bowser had to draw a long breath, commend his soul to a higher power and get a hump on him. He hadn't scrambled along over ten feet when one of his legs went up in the air, he spun around two or three times and then came down with a jar that Don Castro would have paid a thousand dollars for to present to the French cable company. My shriek was echoed by fifty others, and the policeman came running up and grabbed the poor victim by the collar and drew him to land and said:

"It's the same old coon that was sitting around here ten minutes ago. I told him then that he was no skater."

"Is he dead?" asked one of the crowd.

"No, but he's got a lesson. That jar has sort of driven him together, and he won't be more than five feet high after this. Does any one here know him?"

"I went forward and gave his identity and address, and the ambulance was summoned, and he was conveyed home. They told me he was very quiet on the trip. As he was carried into the house he simply sighed. As I got out plasters and liniments and cared for him he looked at me in a puzzled way and muttered something about pigeon wings. I have had the doctor for him, but the M. D. says that no bones are actually broken. It is a case of telescope. The victim is still lying in a lethargic state, opening his eyes and looking around now and then, and it will probably be another week before he can shout "Woman!" at me and announce that I can go home to mother while he is arranging about the divorce. Meanwhile all reports of his untimely demise may be contradicted by the press. SARAH BOWSER, Wife of Mr. Bowser.

Per M. Quad.

The Mississippi. Mississippi was originally Mecht Sebe, "Father of Waters." It was first spelled Misissippi by Tabott, a Jesuit explorer, and one consonant after another has been since added until it is now loaded down. The Choctaws called it the "Long river;" the Illinois Indians knew it as the "Great Fish river;" on old maps it is designated as La Grande riviere, Riviere Conception, Riviere Baude, Fleuve St. Louis, Rio del Esperito Santo, Rio Escondido and many other names. The Indian tribes that lived on its banks named different sections to please themselves, and it is said that from its source to its mouth it was originally called by more than 100 names. Some philologists doubt the correctness of the translations given above and commonly received and think the original word means "all the rivers of the earth."



"I'm dreadfully sorry to learn that you will be at the foot of your class this spring, Gladys."

"Oh, it is all for the best! My graduating dress will have a train, and so no one will step on it when we are marching on and off the stage at commencement." Chicago Tribune.

Following the Flag. When our soldiers went to Cuba and the Philippines, health was the most important consideration. Willis T. Morgan, retired Commissary Sergeant U. S. A. of Rural Route 1, Concord, N. H., says "I was two years in Cuba and two years in the Philippines, and being subject to colds, I took Dr. King's New Discovery for Consumption, which kept me in perfect health. And now, in New Hampshire, we find it the best medicine in the world for coughs, colds, bronchial troubles and all lung diseases. Guaranteed at Charles Rogers, druggist. Price 50c and \$1.00. Trial bottle free.

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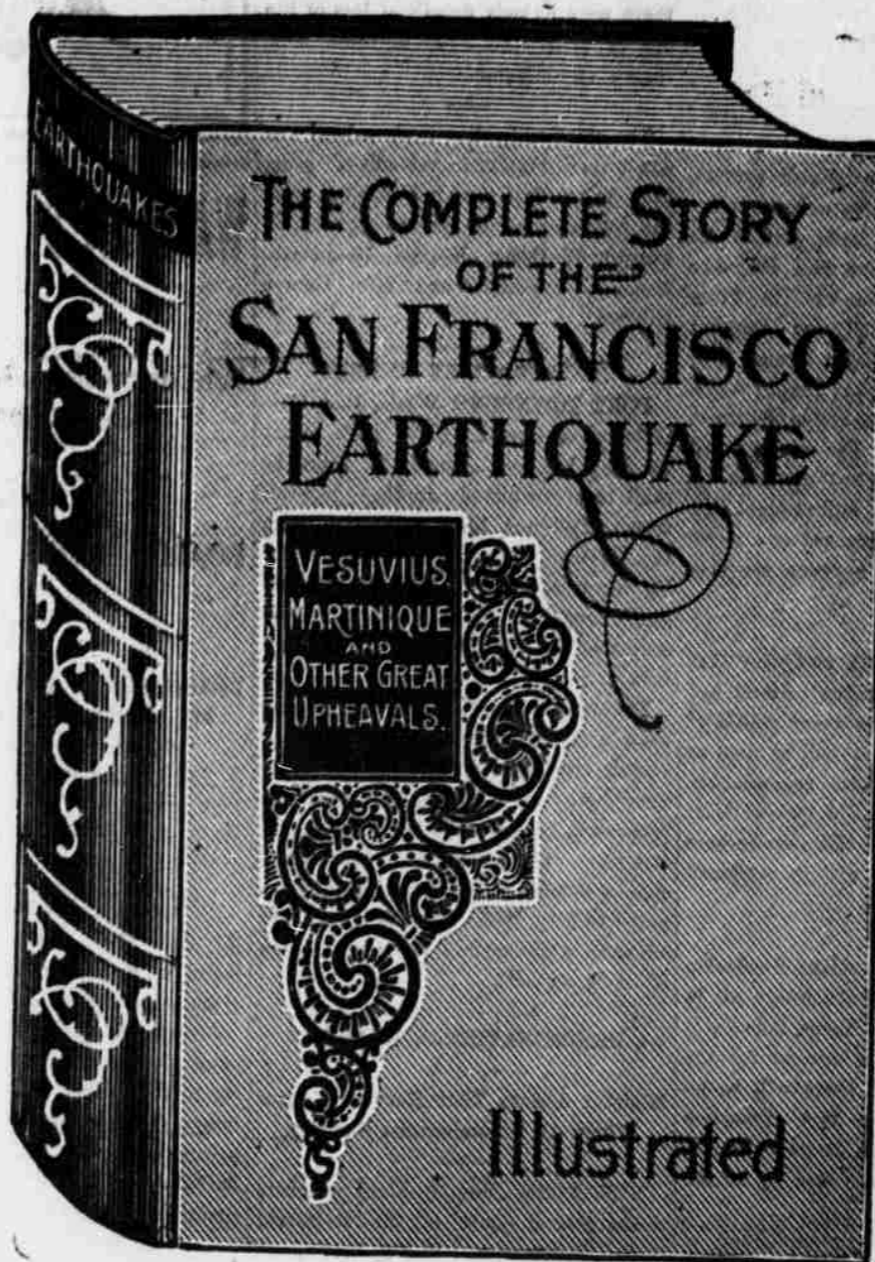
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