

BOWSER'S FROG FARM

Plans to Become a Millionaire by Supplying Croakers.

CARP AND TURTLES TOO.

Wants to Trade His Home For Some Desolate Land on Which There is a Small Pond—in Anger He Tells Wife to Pack Trunk For Mother's.

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Mr. Bowser was an hour late in coming home from the office, and Mrs. Bowser was almost prepared for the worst when he arrived.

He had a look of importance on his face. Even before he had entered the gate it was evident that something good had happened.

"Don't ask for explanations now," he said in response to her inquiries.

"But has something good happened?" "Something has, Mrs. Bowser. Fortune has at last— But wait a little."

"Can't you give me an inkling of what it is?"

"Just one little inkling. We shall be worth millions of dollars in the course of the next five years. Not another word now."

During the rest of the dinner hour Mr. Bowser sat and grinned and smiled and chuckled, but no further information could be extracted.

He had bought a cow. He had invested in a balloon. He had invented something.

He had bought hens. He had bought a hog. He had hit a new hair dye.

He was going to raise cattle. He was going to Africa. It was a burglar alarm.

It was a fire escape. Explains His Scheme.

When the meal was at length finished and the sitting room reached Mr.

bowser made a dramatic entrance and said:

"Now, then, for explanations, and I hope that you will see things just as I do and there will be nothing to argue about.

I will own up that you have prevented me from entering into some very foolish speculations, but in this case I know I shall find all encouragement. You know that the times have been hard for the last few months."

"Of course."

"Men with even a good thing on their hands have had hard work to save it, and they are not out of the woods yet."

"Well?"

"Well, a man was in the office today with a good thing. He wanted to raise a thousand dollars to save it; but, being unable to do so, he offered me the most colossal bargain of the century. It's gigantic. It's tremendous. It's something to take your breath away."

"I'm listening."

"Mrs. Bowser, where do frogs' legs come from?"

"They are cut from the bodies of frogs."

"And where do we get turtle soup?" "From turtles unless the cook uses mutton."

"And did you ever hear of a fish called the German carp?"

"I have. It is said to be excellent eating."

"And now, Mrs. Bowser, frogs' legs sell at 50 cents a dozen pair, and there's always a demand. A turtle as big as the bottom of a quart dish sells for \$1. German carp sell for 30 cents a pound, and the hotels can't get half enough of them. You see all this, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, suppose we had our own private lake and in that lake we had a million frogs, half a million turtles and three or four million German carp. Would there be anything to prevent us from becoming millionaires?"

"Not a thing."

"Ah, but that's the way I like to hear you talk! Now you are taking a wife's interest in your husband's business affairs. You can see as well as I do that we would have something better than a gold mine. Then you will consent to the exchange?"

"But what exchange?"

"We are going to exchange our house and lot for a little farm twenty miles out, with a private lake on it. There's a fairly decent house and four acres of land besides the lake. There's an orchard, a garden, and the rest is lawn. In that lake are the frogs, turtles and carp I spoke of, and all I have to do is to haul them out and send them to

market and get my money. Hurrah for us!"

"The turtles, frogs and carp have been counted, have they?" asked Mrs. Bowser after he had got through dancing around.

"Why, no, of course not. The man estimates the number, and he says he has made a low estimate. In a month from now, or by the time we get out there, the increase will be 10 per cent. We may catch and sell all we can, and the increase will make up for it. I can write him that we will exchange, can't I?"

"Don't rush things, Mr. Bowser. Don't write at all. Take the train in the morning and go out there and see things for yourself."

"But that would look like doubting his word."

"You want to doubt until you are satisfied. You go right out there and see the situation of things, and if they are all right we will go into the frog, turtle and carp business. I have noticed lately that you are growing old and have a harassed look on your face, and I think it will be a great thing for you to get out in the country among the frogs."

Mr. Bowser looked at her for a long minute to see if she was sarcastic or in earnest and then adopted her suggestion of seeing the other property on the morning. During the remainder of the evening he was busy with figures.

He figured 5,000,000 pairs of frogs' legs at 50 cents a pair.

He figured 3,000,000 turtles at a dollar apiece.

He figured 4,000,000 pounds of carp at 30 cents a pound.

Arrives at Turtle Villa.

It was a Cripple Creek. It was a Monte Cristo. It was a Golconda. It was Standard Oil and the steel trust combined.

After an almost sleepless night and a bite of breakfast he was on his way, and by 10 o'clock in the forenoon he had reached Turtle Villa.

The place was a mile from the railroad station. It was a poor old frame house which had never been painted and never quite finished.

The orchard consisted of two dead apple trees and one cherry tree which was trying to live for spite. The lawn was a mass of burdocks and weeds.

The lake could be seen from the front gate. It was a pond off at one side and at the foot of the hill. It was half an acre in extent and at least two feet deep, and on a log sat a solitary bullfrog with closed eyes and a resigned air.

"Ah, I hardly expected you today," said the owner of the place as he came out and shook hands.

"No? I thought I would come and push things along. You call this house a villa, do you?"

"Well, it will be when it's finished. There will be four towers to it."

"Um! And this is the orchard?"

"Yes, sir. We had nearly a bushel of cherries off that tree last summer."

"And this is the lawn?"

"It is."

"Um! And down there is the lake?"

"Yes, sir—Lake Crystal. From that lake you are to draw your riches."

Mr. Bowser stood and took a long look around, and the longer he looked the madder he got. He finally turned to the map and said:

"Sir, you are an infernal liar and swindler, and I can lick you in two minutes by the clock!"

Then he turned away and walked down the path and down the highway and took the train for home. Mrs. Bowser and the cat were on the front steps to greet him, and as he ascended the steps he was asked:

"Well, what about Turtle Villa?"

"No remarks, woman!" he replied, with a glare. "You can pack your trunks and be ready to start for your mother's at 6 o'clock this evening. You have made a fool of me for the last time on this earth." M. QUAD.

Those Scientific Names.



The Insect—Well, of all the insults! He says I belong to the antitriologividal family! Why, we've been beetles ever since the flood!—New York American.

A Strange Proceeding.

Infant Terrible (watching Uncle Jack's fiancée dressing her hair)—How queerly you do your hair!

"How so?"

"Why, Aunt Jane pins hers to her lap, mummy holds hers in her teeth, but you leave yours sticking to your head."—New York Life.

Cute Little Game.

Eva—He is so considerate of your chaperone. He buys her such interesting books.

Edna—Oh, I call that strategy. It knows if the books are interesting he won't look up too often when we are together.—Detroit Tribune.

Precedence.

"Yes, your reverence, our Johnnie is a wonder. He can play cards, bow and cuss like a trooper."

"Can he say his prayers?" "No; he's too little for that."—Fleegende Blatter.

A DISPLAY OF QUICK WIT.

The American Saved His Pride and Observed Russian Etiquette.

The Yankee and the Russian story is again on its grand rounds, but as all attempts to name the original Yankee have failed, says London M. A. P., it is safe to pin the anecdote to any prominent American who may have visited St. Petersburg.

The Russian has been identified as the Grand Duke Constantine, younger brother of the Czar Alexander I., and the incident occurred about 1810.

The Yankee went out for a walk in March, when the snow was melting after sudden rain. The street was a maze of puddles, divided into sections by narrow ledges of snow at the crossings, over which pedestrians carefully felt their way.

The Yankee was just in the middle of such a snow bridge when he recognized the Grand Duke Constantine approaching in the opposite direction. The path being too narrow for two persons to pass, the grand duke being accustomed to every one getting out of his way, the Yankee being too courteous to turn his back on a brother of the czar to return whence he came and too proud to step servilely into the slush for a mere prince of the royal blood—such was the contretemps.

Quick as a flash our American whipped out his purse, presented it to Constantine and asked, "Even or odd?"

"Even," replied the astonished prince.

"You win!" said the Yankee and stepped off into a puddle half a leg deep.

Constantine, highly pleased by this peculiarly American proceeding, mentioned it to the czar, and our Yankee was invited to dine at the palace next day.

HE LACKED TACT.

Bad Breaks of the Man Who Was Trying to Sell Spectacles.

"The meanest job of my lean days," said a millionaire, "was spectacle peddling. I still see the sad and scornful looks, I still hear the reproachful oaths, which that work brought down on me."

"It was at the seashore. I had a case of spectacles for every age from forty-five up. I paced the beach and the board walk.

"Once I walked up to a lady and gentleman seated close together on the sand.

"Sir and madam, I said, 'would these interest you? The best and cheapest brand of old age spectacles on the market. This pair would be your size, sir—forty-nine years. Lady, will you try these fifty-four year ones?'

"They reddened, and the man told me, with an oath, to move on. I remembered as I moved that he had been holding her hand. A seaside flirtation. Of course they hadn't liked their thoughts brought down from love to old age spectacles.

"On the board walk I accosted a pretty girl leading an old man by the arm.

"Would your grandpa be interested in these, miss? I said. 'Best glass, warranted, eighty year size, price—'

"Tell him to go, Billy," said the girl. "And as I went a hot corn man chuckled:

"That, you dub, was Gobsa Golde and his young bride."—Los Angeles Times.

A Curious Army Toast.

Of all the British regiments the Welsh fusiliers have the most curious army toast. It forms part of the ceremony of the grand dinner given annually on St. David's day. After the dinner the drum major, accompanied by the goat, the mascot of the fusiliers, bedecked with rosettes of red and blue ribbon, marches around the table, carrying a plate of leeks. Every officer or guest who has never eaten one before is obliged to do so, standing on his chair with one foot on the table, while the drummers beat a roll behind his chair. He is then considered a true Welshman. All the toasts are coupled with the name of St. David. It is in much this way that the toast with highland honors is drunk. Each guest stands with one foot on his chair and one on the table, and the pipers, a-piping, parade the room.

No Place For Dogs.

Is it impossible in Japan to keep a good dog? I have twice had my dogs disappear in a seemingly miraculous way. As I am well aware that there is a great demand for dogskins, especially those of young dogs, we have been careful in having our dog watched. Nevertheless he disappeared this morning. Almost every foreigner has lost a dog or dogs, and even a sea captain who was three days on shore had his dog poisoned the first day he put his feet on land.—Japan Chronicle.

The World is Learning.

Briggs—Do you believe that the world is divided into two classes, those who borrow and those who lend? Griggs—No, sir. My experience is that two other classes are much more prevalent—those who want to borrow and those who won't lend.—Life.

The Difference.

"Pa, what's the difference between a rhyme and a poem?"

"The person who makes a rhyme stands some chance of seeing it printed, even if it is merely put on a card to be stuck up in an 'L' car."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Candor.

"Pa, what's friendly candor?" "It is generally the first aid to matrimony."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Not Quite the Thing.

Matrimonial Agent—I have found for you, my friend, a veritable pearl—a wealthy widow of seventy-five. The Count—I like the pearl, but I'm afraid I shan't care for the shell.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Flattering.

Very Stout Farmer's Wife (to little rustic, her protégé)—Well, Sam, your master and I are going to the cattle show. Cowboy—Oh, I'm sure I hope you'll take the first prize. "m—that I do.—London Tit-Bits.

Criminals at Large.

Gibbs (visiting)—What sort of neighbors have you here? Dibbe—A bad lot. There's a blacksmith who's engaged in forging, a carpenter who's done some counter fitting and a couple of fellows next door who sell iron and steel for a living.—Boston Transcript.

The Armenian Alphabet.

An Armenian girl goes to school at four or five years old, but before that she has probably learned her "letters," which is almost an education in itself, as the Armenian alphabet contains thirty-nine. She learns these letters from a small slab of wood on which they are printed. This slab is fastened to a handle, making it something like a hairbrush in shape. The Armenians boast that their formidable alphabet is so perfect as to give every sound known to any other nation.

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NEEDED AFTER ALL.

A Chance For the Book Agent After He Got in Trim.

"Madam," said the book canvasser as the door was opened by a very comely maid, "I am selling a new book on etiquette and deportment."

"Oh, you are," she responded. "Go down there on the grass and clean the mud off your feet."

"Yes'm," and he went. "As I was saying, ma'am," he continued as he again came to the door, "I am sell—"

"Take off your hat! Never address a strange lady at her door without removing your hat."

"Yes'm." And off went the hat.

"Now, then, as I was saying—"

"Take your hands out of your pockets. No gentleman ever carries his hands there."

"Yes'm," and his hands clutched his coat lapels. "Now, ma'am, this work on et—"

"Throw away your cigarette. If a gentleman uses tobacco he is careful not to disgust others by the habit."

"Yes'm," and the tobacco disappeared. "Now, ma'am," as he wiped his brow, "in calling your attention to this valuable—"

"Wait. Put that dirty handkerchief out of sight. I don't want your book. I am only the hired girl. You can come in, however, and talk with the lady of the house. She called me a liar this morning, and I think she needs something of the kind."—Sketch Bits.

LITERARY HERESY?

Are Chaucer, Spenser, Milton, Byron and Shakespeare Bored?

"We had the notion of doing something of the kind," the Easy Chair confessed when requested to furnish a list of the hundred best authors, "but we could not think of more than ten or a dozen really first rate authors, and if we had begun to compile a list of the best authors we should have had to leave out most of their works. Nearly all the classics would have gone by the board. What havoc we should have made with the British poets! The Elizabethan dramatists would mostly have fallen under the ban of our chauvinism to a play if not to a man. Chaucer, but for a few poems, is impossible; Spenser's poetry is generally duller than presidential messages; Milton is a trial of the spirit in three-fourths of his verse; Wadsworth is only not so bad as Byron, who thought him so much worse; Shakespeare himself when he is reverently supposed not to be Shakespeare is reading the martyrs; Dante's science and politics outweigh his poetry a thousandfold, and so on through the whole catalogue."—William Dean Howells in Harper's Magazine.

A Picture of Your Voice.

To take a picture of your voice it is only necessary to tie a sheet of thin, strong paper over the wide end of a tin trumpet. Hold it with the sheet of paper upward, take a thin pinch of fine sand and place it in the center of the paper, hold the trumpet vertically above your face and sing a note into the lower end. Do not blow, but sing the note. Lower the trumpet carefully and look at the sand. You will find that the vibrations of your voice have scattered the pinch of sand into a beautiful sound picture. Every note in the musical scale will produce a different picture, so you may produce a great variety of them. Some of these pictures look like pansies, roses and other flowers; some look like snakes and others like flying birds. In fact, there is no limit to the variation.

The Gila Monster.

The Gila monster is a large, clumsy lizard from one to two feet long. He is generally too lazy to be pugnacious, but if his anger is once aroused he will grip you with a clutch of a bulldog, turning over as he bites so that the venom—which is secreted in a gland in the lower jaw instead of the upper, like the rattlesnake—is pretty sure to mix well with his saliva and so make his attack fatally effective. His five toed hands and feet render him adept at bush climbing. In his wild estate he lives on young rabbits and birds' eggs. When captured, he eats only eggs or a little chopped meat mixed with them.—Los Angeles Times.

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