

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.

Copyright, 1906, by McClure, Phillips & Co. J. B. 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, carved 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—his 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 fellow next

show my gratitude. Will a little check for \$500 win back your good opinion?" Mrs. Pillsbury indulged in a hearty laugh.

Has the Laugh on Him. "But stay. Instead of a check for \$500, suppose I give you the secretaryship of a new company I have just promoted. It is called the Great American Folding Bed company and starts out with a capital of \$3,000,000 and orders from the czar of Russia and half a dozen kings and emperors. The old fashioned folding bed had a trick of folding up at night and catching the sleeper and breaking his back. Our bed never folds up except in the daytime, and human life is therefore safe. The secretaryship will pay you \$500 a year, and you will have so little to do at the office that you can run your boarding house as well. When I was hard up and could not see my way clear you trusted me. Instead of bounding me for my board and making things worse all around you let my indebtedness drift along and showed that you felt for me. I never can forget it. Take the secretaryship, Mrs. Pillsbury, in payment of the bread you eat on the waters."

Mrs. Pillsbury simply grinned as she worked away at her knitting. "My dear woman, what's the matter?" She grinned a little harder. "You can't possibly distrust my intentions, my dear woman? Since I came into my patrimony I have taken the greatest pleasure in paying off my little indebtedness in other days. If you are not satisfied with \$500 in place of \$17, why?" "We shall want some more coal pretty soon, major," observed the caller. "What do you mean by that?" "It isn't 11 o'clock yet. I expect to be here all day and perhaps for two or three days." "Good Lord!" "That is, I shall stay until I get my money."

"But I have offered you the secretaryship of the Great American Folding Bed company, positively guaranteed not to fold up and break any one's back between sunset and sunrise." Mrs. Pillsbury grinned several grins. He comes to Time. "But as you don't seem inclined to take it," continued the major, "and as I want to get the debt off my hands at once I will go out and borrow the money." He walked to the door, but it would not open. The woman had locked it and put the key in her pocket. He looked around at her, and she smiled benevolently. "I can't raise \$17 to save my neck," he finally said. "I know it," she replied, "and so I am going to offer to take \$7 and call it square."

The major sat down and counted up. He had 40 cents over the amount, but not another cent in sight for two weeks. He looked appealingly at Mrs. Pillsbury. "Seven or I sit right here for a week," she said. "My dear, dear old landlady, whom I thought dead—" "Cut it out, major!" He did. He handed over the \$7, and she put on her hat and cloak, bundled up her knitting and unlocked the door and grinned a farewell. "By thunder!" gasped the promoter as he stood and surveyed the open door. Then he rushed to the stove and threw open the door to save all the heat he could and sat down in his office chair and once more exclaimed: "By thunder!" M. QUAD.

Why It's So. Simkins—Windham seems to think he knows it all. Timkins—Well, he's not to blame. Simkins—Not to blame! Timkins—No; he has no children old enough to ask questions.—Detroit Tribune.

The Wedding Present. The Bride (in one breath)—This is from that horrid, contemptible Edith Welsh, who is so—er—why, dear, I do believe it's real china—now wasn't that sweet of the darling?—Woman's Home Companion. The Betrothal. We rode in silent rapture, she and I. While a row of merry milestones flitted by. And it seemed the night grew darker With each sputter of the sparkler, But the lovelight in my heart was burning high. We sat behind the headlight's golden glare, And the scent of fragrant naphtha filled the air. While my arm, like Cupid's tether, Stole around her waist of leather To the music of the horn's inspiring blare. Long I gazed into her goggles, and I said, "Oh, promise me that some day we will wed!" In a chap who'd lost his hearing t entangled in our gear, she answered, "Yes; I promise—on the dead." —Puck.

MEADOW ROAD WORK

DETAILS OF A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENT IN NEW JERSEY.

How an Engineer Built a Highway That Was Topped Several Times by Storm Tides, but Withstood Them Splendidly.

Stillwell H. Townsend, the engineer who was asked by the board of freeholders of Cape May county, N. J., to prepare plans for the building of a state aid road across the meadow from Rio Grande to Holly Beach, thus tells in the Good Roads Magazine how the new road was constructed: As we had no thought of elevating above storm tides, the prominent idea to be kept in view was the use of materials that would stand the wash. The route to be followed had been abandoned about fifteen years. Previous to that time it had been used for a few years as a means of travel to and from the Five Mile beach. When this was built about one half of the distance was laid crosswise with cedar slabs, the other half with small poles and then a light coat of upland soil. As a means of securing a foundation large gum trees, with two opposite sides flattened, were laid lengthwise. One was placed in the center, the other two about under the wheel ruts. Across these were laid poles about three inches in diameter at the small end, the space between the stringers having first been filled with mud. Over the ends of the poles at each side were placed curb planks 2 by 6 inches. These planks were securely fastened, edge up, to cedar piles driven six feet into the meadow and projecting four feet above the planks. These same planks were placed eight feet from the center line, thus giving us a sixteen foot driveway. A mud bank was carefully thrown upon each side against the outside of the planks and thoroughly compacted. The meadow grass grows through this, making it more secure. A line of mud about two feet wide was placed on the inside of the planks and compacted, thus making an almost water tight trough. The remaining space between the curb planks was filled with upland soil to a level with the outside planks. Over this soil we used oyster shells, three bushels to the square yard, 27,000 bushels in all. Over the shells before they were ground up was spread a coat of good gravel. This gave us an elevation of about fourteen inches above the highest meadow passed over and above tides except very severe northeast storms. It has been topped several times since it was completed by storm tides, but it has withstood them beyond all expectations.

One mistake was made in not giving the road more crown before the shells were spread. I consider shells one of the best materials that can be used on meadow roads, with just enough gravel to bind them together. They will thus withstand any amount of wash. A year ago last October we began the rebuilding of the Beesley's Point and Ocean City turnpike, 1.75 miles across salt meadow. There had been a road on this same route for about twenty years. During that time all but 1,000 feet of it had been poled three times. Large trees had been cut and laid lengthwise and poles nine feet long laid across them, butting in the middle. In some places this construction had settled four feet.

In constructing this road only 1,875 feet were repoled. This was done by placing six pine stringers lengthwise over them, butting in the middle. We placed a double curb plank on each side the entire length of the meadow road in the following manner: Curb planks 2 by 6 inches were placed eight feet each side of the center line, securely fastened to cedar posts driven four feet into the old roadway. Four feet beyond this curb (outside the old roadway) were placed 2 by 18 inch curb planks, securely fastened to cedar piles, driven eight feet into the meadow and projecting four feet above the top of the planks. The inner posts and outer piles were securely tied together; the four foot space between the curb plank was filled with mud and thoroughly compacted by ramming and after settling again filled and rammed. Before the road was finished these mud banks were covered with gravel, thus making a splendid bicycle path on each side. The space between the inner curb was filled with upland soil and after being thoroughly compacted stood four inches in the center above the top of the inner curb planks. These were set to grade. The road was then covered with 36,000 bushels of oyster shells, spread when the bed was not too soft from rain or any other cause. As soon as the shells were spread a thin coat of Buck Hill gravel was spread over them. This was followed by a 1,500 pound roller, making the shells and gravel into one compacted mass. After the entire length had been covered in this manner it was again gone over with a second coat, making in all about five inches of loose gravel used on the shells.

One inch above the top of the inner curb plank was placed a cedar plank 2 by 6 inches and fastened to the top of the posts holding the lower curb. When the heavy storm tides sweep over the road some of the crown is in danger of being carried off. These planks were placed there as a protection to the exposed side and to catch what might otherwise go entirely off the road. So far this protecting curb has answered the purpose.

In building meadow roads where it is not intended to elevate above the tides by filling it until all settling has been overcome the chief aim should be to use materials that will make a solid foundation, stand the wash and at the same time not overload the meadow and cause it to settle.

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History of Mount Vesuvius.

The San Francisco Chronicle published the following history of Mount Vesuvius:

Although the Italian volcano Vesuvius has at no time been totally quiescent since the great convulsion of December 16, 1631, the eruption which is now in progress is assuming proportions which threaten to rival that of 275 years ago and the one which buried the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum in the year 79. For centuries before the Christian era no eruption had been known to take place. It is assumed that the inhabitants had not even suspected its volcanic nature, for populous villages clustered around its base, and its slopes, to the summit of the cone, were planted with vineyards. Strabo, the geographer, is credited with first noting the mountain's volcanic origin. In the year 63 the first recorded quieting manifestations took place, and for sixteen years thereafter violent earthquakes followed one another at brief intervals, some of which destroyed much property. During one of these convulsions the temple of Isis in Pompeii was ruined. On the 21 of August, 79 these earthquakes suddenly culminated in a tremendous explosion of the mountain. Pompeii, which stood on the southeast side, was buried in a shower of ashes. Herculaneum, which was located at the western base of the mountain, was overwhelmed by torrents of pasty mud or "lava water," produced by the condensation of the steam emitted from the crater into copious rain, which mixed with the light volcanic dust. For nearly fifteen hundred years after the destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum, Vesuvius again remained quiescent. The sudden outburst of December 16, 1631, was preceded, however, by a series of earthquakes for a period of six months. When it occurred the contents of the crater and the funnel of the volcano were projected into the air and carried for hundreds of miles. Fine particles of volcanic dust fell at Constantinople. Streams of lava issued from the flanks of the mountain and flowed west and south, reaching the sea at twelve or thirteen different points. At various periods since the mountain has been specially active; but the present eruption exceeds all of them in magnitude and violence.

One notable feature about the present outbreak is that the lava streams are flowing in various directions from numerous openings on all sides of the volcano. One commune lying on the south side of the mountain has been buried completely. The suburbs of other villages in the same neighborhood were reached by the stream before the flow stopped. The country bordering on the southeast shores of the Gulf of Naples is apparently suffering most from the lava flood, and the site of Pompeii is again threatened. A stream of lava is also flowing toward a populous village on the northeast side, and Naples, which lies ten miles or so to the northwest, is covered with ashes.

A Mountain of Gold

could not bring as much happiness to Mrs. Lucia Wilke, of Caroline, Wis., as did one 25c box of Bucklin's Arnica Salve, when it completely cured a running sore on her leg, which had tortured her for 23 long years. Greatest antiseptic healer of Piles, Wounds, and Sores. 25c at Lee Beall's Drug store.

The Educational Association.

The National Educational Association will hold its annual convention in San Francisco from July 7 to 14 of this year. The people of San Francisco and, in fact, the people of the whole Pacific Coast are preparing a welcome and reception to the teachers the equal of which has never been given to any organization. The educational value of these meetings is well known and those interested in education throughout the state are anxious to have our teachers participate, first, because it will be many years before another National Educational Association will be so accessible and, second, because our standing educationally will be judged largely by the attendance of Oregon teachers at this convention. The railroad lines have granted very liberal rates and the local committee at San Francisco assures us that there will be no advance in the regular rates at hotels, rooming-houses and restaurants in San Francisco during the convention week. Any data or information in any way relating to the meeting can be obtained by addressing the California Committee, N. E. A. No. 25, New Montgomery St., San Francisco, California or J. H. Ackerman, Salem, Oregon.

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