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THE METROPOLITAN MAGAZINE,
116 NASSAU ST., NEW YORK.

THE HAPPY, HAPPY FARMER.

[From the Chicago Record-Herald.]

Oh, the happy, happy farmer, who lives seven miles from town,
Has no furnace in the basement that must now be shaken down;
He doesn't have to hurry out to catch the train and then
Work behind a desk and worry as the slave of other men;
No superior berates him for the small mistakes he makes,
He is not denied employment for the little rule he breaks,
And he needn't, when he's weary from the duties of the day,
Hurry to some distant station, dodging footpads on the way.

Oh, the happy, happy farmer, he just hustles out of bed
And goes shivering for the kindling, which he chops out in the shed;
Then, while maw is getting breakfast, he runs out to milk the cows
And to pry the frozen hay up from dusty, musty mows;
Oh, he milks away at Bossy and his hands are cracked and sore,
But he thinks with kindly pity of the pale clerk in the store,
And he curries down the horses and at last, all hairy, goes
In to breakfast, with the odor of the stable in his nose.

Oh, the happy, happy farmer doesn't have to pay a cent
To a landlord who is heartless when he comes to claim his rent;
The luckless clerk is worried when some other man than he
Is promoted to a station where he knows he ought to be,
And his wife—his poor wife—nags him just because she cannot fly
To a perch beside some neighbor who is roosting rather high;
He must walk an aisle from morning till they close the doors at night,
And goes home to find the water in the laundry frozen tight.

Oh, the happy, happy farmer wades in snow up to his knees
Out to where the wintry demons have been overturning trees,
And he chops and nearly freezes while the mad winds howl away,
And the echoes of his mauling ring among the trees all day;
The snow gets in his boot-tops and the frost bites at his ears,
While the noises he produces are the only sounds he hears,
And at night he thaws the pump loose and goes out to do the chores,
Where the snow, in long, thin ridges, flitters through the stable doors.

Oh, the happy, happy farmer, what a careless life he leads!
Instead of always buying, he just raises what he needs;
His neighbors don't ignore him if he's not as rich as they—
All he has to do is work to keep the old gray wolves away;
The coal man and the plumber never crowd him to the wall,
He just keeps forever paying for farm implements, that's all;
And at night he needn't dress and blow three dollars for the treat
Of beholding a performance that's worth fifty cents a seat.

—S. E. KISER.

'SQUIRE MILLER'S FISH STORY.

Adventures of Ike Puterbaugh's Educated Gar Fish.

There's been a heap o' talk around these parts," said Squire Miller one night while the crowd was sitting around the front porch of the hotel, "about eddicated animules. Some o' you fellers hev told some pretty tall stories about eels what became as gentle as dogs, an' rats that to all intents an' purposes was cats, an' a lot o' stuff like that. Now, as ye'r all through, I jes' want to tell you a true story about a fish, a common, eveyday old gar pike, what become the scourge o'Gidder's pond.

"Yes, sir, that's jest what this old gar got te be. A regular scourge. He became the best fisherman that ever went nosing around Gidder's pond, and I want to say that there's been a lot of right good fishermen in them parts. But this old gar pike fish beat 'em all.

"You all remember old Ike Puterbaugh thet used to do a little farmin' and a little blacksmithin' and a little fishin' and a little fishin' over at Gidder's pond? Well, the ole man was a industrous 'nough feller, but I guess he deversified too much. He wuz never able to git much money ahead fer his famly and they lived most of the time jest about from hand to mouth, and sometimes they wuz purty near next to starting. Then thet summer hotel started down at Waynesville, and there wuz a great demand fer fish ter feed the hungry boarders with. The proprietor of the hotel allowed thet he would buy all the fish that wus brought to him, and a lot of fellers commenced fishing over at Gidder's pond to supply the hotel. This was ole man Puterbaugh's chance, and he went fishin' more'n ever, but he was a poor sort of fisherman some way er other. Seemed to have best sort of poles and good lines, and had the best kind of bait, too, an' patience enough to put on er monument. But somehow er other he didn't have fisherman's luck, and he didn't catch any fish.

"Well, one day the old man ketched a little baby gar fish. O' course, every fisherman jest natchally hates gar fishes. They hain't no earthly good but ter eat bait up, an' break lines an' everything, an generally when a man catches a gar fish he don't throw it back in the water, but tosses it out on the shore an' lets it die. Ole man Puterbaugh he was a-goin' ter let the little gar fish perish the same way, but somehow when he took a good look at it he didn't have the heart.

"So he put it in a bucket an' took it home an' put it in the horse trough, an' two or three times a day he us ter go and throw it some crumbs er some fish worms. The gar fish grew like the mischief, an' he got so he would wait fer the old man's coming an' bob rite up out of the water as soon as the ole man would begin to wistle when comin' down the hill toward the tank. The gar would swim rite up to Puterbaugh, an' the ole man would pat him on the head an' talk to him an' the gar would wag his tail jest like a dog.

"Well, one day it rained like the mischief an' made a reg'lar lake all around the horse trough, which was down in a holler. The tank overflowed and the gar fish he got out an' swam in the flood to the creek an' disappeared.

"When the gar pike made his escape the ole man was dreadfully lonely so he took to fishin' agin with about the same kind of luck.

"One day while he was sittin down by the pond a-fishin' in a sort o' disconsolate way, an' a-wonderin' why he didn't git a bite, he suddenly saw a big gar pike stick its long nose out of the water an' kinder wink at him.

"'By jing,' ole man Puterbaugh said, 'if thet hain't my ole gar pike, I don't want er cent!

"Sure enough, that's jest who it was. The fish swum right up to ole man Puterbaugh, and the old man rubbed his head and fed him a handful of worms. After the gar pike hed eat a lot o' worms he turned aroun' an' swum away, and ole man Puterbaugh begin ter weep, an' he says ter himself: 'Even a ole gar pike likes me fer jest what he can git out o' me. After he's done been fed he hain't got no further use fer me until he's hungry again.'

"But just then the ole man see a lot of ripples in the water, and the ole man says: 'Gee whiz, here's a lot of black base a-headin' this way!' Sure enough, pretty soon the ole man lookin' down, saw the water full o' bass. They waz all swimmin' as hard as they could an tryin' ter get away from somethin'.

"'They'er scart half to death,' says the ole man; 'somethings a-chasin' 'em.' The bass all swum one way an' then another, as though tryin' to escape back to the middle of the lake, but try as hard as they could they wuz made to keep right ahead, an' they swum into a little creek which got shaller awful quick.

"When they got in there ole man Puterbaugh jest jumped in behind 'em and pulled some brushwood in so they couldn't git out an' then he jest natchally got inter the shaller part of the creek an' pulled black bass out by the tail for 10 minutes, an', by jings, if he didn't get 25 of 'em, every one of 'em weighing over five pounds and four of 'em weighten er 'leven pounds apiece.

"When the ole man hed got through he looked back at the pond and see the ole gar pike a-winkin' at him, an' he realized thet that thar ole gar pike hed been a-roundin' up the black bass an' hed driven 'em on purpose into ther shaller creek, whare the ole man jest hed to pull 'em out by the tail.

"Inside o' two weeks thet gar pike hed jest natchally rounded up every eatin' fish in Gidder's pond, an' the ole man waz making money hand over fist. Then th' ole man took the gar out an' went up to Red Bear lake an' made a killin' up there, an' the ole man cleaned thet lake out an' then went to Injun lake and cleaned thet out, an' all this time he waz jest a natchally coinin' money, an' finally he hed enough tew pay off the morgidge on the house an' put a thousan' er so in the bank. He'd be fishin' with thet ole gar pike yet, but the gar pike got tew ambitious en made a mistake er something.

"Ole Tom Lewis, the guide, waz swimmin' in Injun lake one day an' the gar thought Tom wuz a new kind o' black bass er somethin', an' he jest went fer him an' tried to drive him in shore, an' Tom out with his knife, him having his clothes an' his belt on, an' he jest natchally slew the ole gar pike. Ole man Puterbaugh wuz awful sorry an' he brought the deceased gar pike home an' planted it with honors in the peach orchard an' erected a nice tombstone tew his memory.

"Thet wuz certainly a most remarkable gar pike."—*Chicago Tribune.*

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The fool makes his living with his hands and feet, the wise man with his head. Sit down, smoke a cigar and think about your business—you,ll make money by it.—Brains.

Attorney (to witness): You were born in Anno Domino 1880, I believe, Mr. O'Brien?

O'Brien—The yare is right, yer Anner, but Oi wus borren in Oircland, sorr.

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