M'QUADS SENSE AND NONSENSE

Bowser Is Game, But His Mother-in-Law Wins Every Round

I AM Mr. Bowser's mother-in-law. I am glad he married into the family. He's just the kind of a man that needs taking down a peg or two every few days, and I'm just the woman to do it.

I believe he would poison me if he safely could, and I admit that some day I may break his neck.

I packed my trunk and took a little journey the other day. I gave him no advance warning that I was to arrive, but reached his home from the depot about 6 o'clock in the evening. He happened to be in the front hall and answered my ring himself, and for a moment after catching sight of me he looked like one who was staring at a ghost.

"If you have not lost that little sense you ever possessed," I said, "you will pay the driver and get my trunk upstairs. How is Amanda?"

"She—she—she is well!" he stammered. "We didn't expect you."

"No, probably not, but it's my little way of dropping in when I'm not expected. Get a move on you!"

I was soon in the arms of my daughter, and after dinner she took me up to her bedroom and told me how glad she was that I had come. Mr. Bowser was on the rampage, and my arrival was opportune. After questioning her at length I discovered the following:

That he was planning to repaint the house, although it had two fresh coats last year.

That he was intending to plant the whole back yard to sunflowers next spring.

That the whole front yard was to be given up to hollyhocks.

That he was going to clean house and be three weeks about it.

That he was going to attend an auction sale next day and buy $500 worth of antique furniture.

That he had raised a row about the gas bill and charged his wife with having got up at midnight and turned on every burner in the house.

That when she had hunted up a dressmaker or $2 per day he had called it highway robbery and said he would stay home and do the sewing himself before he would pay any such extortion.

There were a lot more things, one of them being that he had borrowed a gun and was going off into the country next night to stay all night and shoot snipe, and of course I felt it my duty to tackle him as soon as possible. At the dinner table he was sullen and scowling, and the only time he spoke was when he said:

"I see by the papers that this has been a great year so far for the old women to die off."

"Yes, it has," I replied, "but I'm left on earth yet, and I can manage cranks as well as ever!"

Directly after dinner I heard him telling Amanda that he'd drop over to the What-Is-It Club for an hour or two and give us a chance to talk, but I crooked my finger at him and said:

"Mr. Bowser, that What Is It will wait for you in vain tonight. Your mother-in-law has arrived, and there are a few things she would like to say to you."

"But I don't care to talk," he gruffly replied.

"But you will talk just the same. If you want to talk to me here all right; if you want me to follow you to the club just put on your hat!"

He hung in the wind for a minute and then sat down and began whispering to himself to show that he was not afraid. Mrs. Bowser motioned me over his head to spare him all I could, but it did not soften my heart, Mr. Bowser is a man who cannot be spared. The only way to deal with him is to crush him. True, he will only stay crushed as long as I am in the house, but it has a moral effect afterward.

"Mr. Bowser," I presently began, "what is this I hear about the gas bill?"

"Your daughter has wasted $2 worth to spite me," he replied.

"You know better, sir! The idea of a baldheaded man weighing 200 pounds telling any such story as that looks like boy's play. Don't you want some bread and butter with sugar on it? You never go down the cellar that you don't leave a blaze of light behind you. That's where the gas has gone. You are the most careless man in the world around the house. Let me hear no more about Amanda's extravagance. Now, about this repainting?"

"The house is to have two coats, and I am going to do the work myself. I calculate it will take me two weeks."

"Well, I don't calculate it will take you two minutes! The house doesn't need it, and no painting will be done. If you were to daub around here for two weeks your own wife and half of the neighbors would commit suicide."

"What! I can't paint my own house if I want to!" he shouted as he got up and began to prance around.

"My language was plain, sir! Sit down before you get a crick in the back. There will not only be no painting done, but if you want to raise sunflowers and hollyhocks go and hire a piece of vacant ground. I do not admire them, and, as I may be here all summer, I object to having them around.

"She may be here all summer!" he groaned to himself.

"Having disposed of the hollyhocks and the sunflowers, we will take up housecleaning," I continued.

"Amanda will see to that and take about three days, and while she is doing it you can either eat off the kitchen table and sleep on the floor and behave yourself or go to some hotel."

"By thunder, woman, I—I——"

"That will do, Mr. Bowser! Don't swear at me and don't call me 'woman!' You are red in the face and your ears are twitching, but it will do no good to get mad. I am the mother-in-law; I am it!"

"Woman, this is too much, too much! I'd like to know——"

"You will know all as we go along, Mr. Bowser. If you are not very careful of your emotions you will tumble down with apoplexy some day. And now about the dressmaker. I shall go after her the first thing in the morning. Her prices are very reasonable, and if they weren't it is not up to you to kick. If you want a $7 box of cigars you order them without a qualm. It will be $2 per day for about two weeks, and she won't need your assistance with the darning needle!

"I am told that you have borrowed a gun and are going to the country to shoot snipe at night. In the first place you couldn't hit a barn at 10 rods off; in the next, snipe don't fly at night; in the third, that gun will be trotted home in the morning. If there is any running around nights you can run to the theater with Mrs. Bowser. What were you going to say?"

"I was going to say, woman!" he thickly replied as he flailed his arms about—"I was going to say that my name is Bowser."

"Yes."

"And this is my house."

"Yes."

"And I run things to suit myself. What right have you to come down here and—and"—

"The right of the mother-in-law, sir, and that's the best right in the world. One more thing this evening. You were saying you'd drop over to the What Is It club for a couple of hours. Well, you won't drop. They will miss you, and they'll be inquiring, why is it? But let 'em inquire. Your place is right here, and here you will stay!"

"I am going up to join Amanda now, who is a bit nervous, and if you go to banging doors, rattling the furnace or stamping up and down, you'll hear from me. You may think it a good time to mend the water pipes, fix a door, experiment on the gas meter or drive nails, but let me assure you to the contrary. These few words this evening are only a sort of a prologue. Tomorrow we will get down to real business and have a thorough understanding!"

I vanished upstairs, and Mr. Bowser shook his fist after me and tramped around for the next 10 minutes like an angry lion. He didn't know whether to burst out a window or break three or four chairs, but at last he flung himself down on the lounge to think it all over. An hour later his wife and I came creeping softly downstairs. We found him asleep, and a tear on his cheek, while the cat occupied a nearby chair and regarded him with looks of sorrow. Rampageous Bowser had been quieted.

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Brother Gardner

MY frens," said Brother Gardner, as he rose in his place at the Saturday night meeting after the routine business had been disposed of, "dis yere Lime-Kiln club must be up-to-date in all things, even in dreams. We am a leetle behind in de dream-book bizness, and de follerin' will be our gide 'til furder orders:

"To dream dat you am trabblin' on foot and have stopped at a wayside hotel kept by a readheaded man havin' a cross-eyed wife and a yaller-eyed dawg, and dat in de night de landlord came up to your room an' killed you wid a crow-bar, signifies dat your ole woman am thinking of runnin' away wid a cull'd man attached to a sideshow of a circus.

"If you dream dat you saw a white hoss chasin' a black crow ober a green meadow toward a blue barn, it signifies dat de sext time you go out after poultry a policeman am gwine to be dar to nab you. I have de names of a hundred persons who dreamed dis dream and been collared, 'kase dey didn't obey de warnin'.

"To dream of falling from a great height and comin' down on top of a picket fence and havin' three pickets run through your body, would seem at first sight to signify a calamity. Dat am a mistake, however. It signifies dat you meet a cull'd man from de kentry and invite him to shoot craps wid you and clean him outer $25. Try and dream dis dream as often as you kin. It will unable you to lib widout hard work.

"If you dream dat you saw a 'possum in de top limbs of a persimmon tree, and dat you couldn't climb up arter him on account of havin' two wooden laigs, it signifies dat your aunt am gwine to expire and leave you money.

"To dream dat you are trabblin' over a stony kentry in rain and darkness, and dat you suddenly ran agin de horns of a cow and was tossed up into a mulberry tree, signifies dat you will surmount your present trubbles and come out on the top.

"If you sleep wid three dogs under de bed, and de baby cryin' wid de colic, and de old woman lickin' de rest of de chill'en, and dream dat a watermilyon

If you sleep wid three dogs under de bed, and de baby cryin' wid de colic, and de oldwoman lickin' de rest of de chill'en, and dream dat a watermilyon you am bringin' home suddenly turns into a yaller cat, who spits in your face, look out for yourself. Burglars am gwine to break into your cabin lightnin' am gwine to strike de chimney, and your landlord am comin' around for de back rent, and act mighty ugly about it.

"To dream dat you am skatin' on ice in de summer signifies dat good luck am comin' to you next winter. At de very least your uncle will die and leave you a mewl.

"If you go to sleep thinkin' of angels and golden harps and dream dat you am a member of de legislature and have been offered a price to vote for a certain bill, be mighty keerful for de next two weeks. Sich a dream signifies danger. Don't sit under a dead tree or walk across a bridge.

"Brudder Calamity Jones, of dis club, dreamed one night dat he was ridin' through de darkness and rain on de shoulders of a witch woman and dat she suddenly kicked up and frowed him off into a quagmire, where he was sucked down. He came ober to my house at 3 o'clock in de mawnin' to ask me to interpret dat dream. I told him dat it signifies a change of luck, and de very next day he found a diamond ring in de road.

"If you am lyin' on your back, wid your feet outer bed, an' you dream dat de beef trus' has redooced de price ob pigs' feet one-half in order to gib pore fo' as a show, you want to wake up an' git a hussle on you as soon as possible. Dat dream means dat de price ob bacon am to go up sky-high.

"If you am lyin' on de grass in front ob your cabin on a hot day an' you dream dat a man come along wid a satchel in his hand an' stopped an' counted you out $100 as a birthday gift, prepare to be disapp'inted. De landlord will be along befo' night an' tell you dat if de back rent hain't paid up widin twenty-fo' hours he'll set you on de street.

"To dream dat while you am hidin' away in an old barn you see a farmer murder his hired man fur eatin' so much signerfies dat you am gwine to ask someone to lend you a dollar an' fail to git it.

"To dream ob standin' in an open place in de woods an' seein' woodpiles all around you, an' dat a man wid a benevolent smile comes along an' tells you to take all you want, signifies dat de coal combine will hold a meetin' next day an' raise de price ob coal anodder dollar.

"To dream dat you got a divorce from your ole woman an' married a rich widder an' took her to Niagry Falls on a bridle tower am a pleasant thing to dream about, but don't you get to chucklin' ober it. It signerfies dat your ole woman am gwine to stay right by an' make it hot fur you till you go to work.

"To dream dat seben bobtailed cats am sittin' on your chist as you sleep, an' glarin' at you wid green eyes, an' dat your fam'ly had been killed in a wreck an' your house burned to de ground, am one ob de nicest things you kin dream. It signerfies dat you am gwine to find a $10 bill in de road widin two days.

"To dream dat you have been elected to office, an' dat white men am tumblin' ober deirselves to take off der hats to you an' ax fur app'intments brings a warm glow to your heart as you dream, but you will wake up to find a policeman snookin' around de yard an' lookin' fur heads, feet an' feathers.

"If you sot down ob a winter's evenin' wid your feet in de oven ob de cook stove an' fall asleep an' dream dat you walked down a dark ravine an' saw chunks of gold lyin' all about, dat's a sign dat de butcher hain't gwine to gin you any mo' credit until you have squared up de ole account.

"Dreamin' ob angels am nebber a good dream. On de six occashums I have dreamed ob angels I have had a row wid de ole woman next day, an' on de last occashum she hit me ober de head wid a hoe handle an' left a scar dat will last fur life.

"To dream dat you am dead ob liver complaint an' floatin' about on fleecy clouds, while de sun am a red ball ob fire in de west, signerfies dat de ole woman am gwine through your pockets as you sleep, an' dat she will lie out ob it when you miss dat half dollar in de mawnin'.

"To dream dat you took a coffee sack an' set out at night fur a watermillyon patch a mile away, an' dat you got five big ones an' toted 'em home, to find a $10 gold piece in each one, is a dream so real dat you wake up pickin' de seeds outer your mouf. Beware, however, if you go arter dem millyons you'll bump up again a white man an' his dawg an' a shotgun, an' you'll not only come home widout any fruit, but it will take a surgeon two days to pick de birdshot outer your legs.

"One night, six months ago, Brudder Waydown Bebee, of his club, went to sleep doorin' a thunderstorm and dreamed dat he had turned into a spotted dawg and was about to be killed for pork. De butcher already had him by de hind laig, and de water was ready to scald de bristles off of him, when he awoke in a cold sweat. It was jest midnight, and at de same minit an owl hooted and a dawg howled. Brudder Bebee started for my house on a dead run to ask me to explain. In five minutes I figured it out dat he had sunthin' comin' to him, and, lo, only three days had passed when one of his chill'en sot de house afire wid a match, and it was burned to de ground. Brudder Bebee had about a hundred dollars' wuth of furniture. It was insured for four hundred and fifty, as might have been expected from sich a prudent man as him. He got ebery dollar of it from de insurance company, and dat's de reason his fam'ly am now wearin' diamond pins and liben on de fat o' de land."

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Paying Up.

There were two colored men talking in loud tones at the other end of the railway platform, and we walked down to hear what the row was about. One of them was a deacon in a colored church and the other was a drayman. The former was flourishing a paper in his hand and saying:

"Dar's de figgers, right dar. You owes de church 'zackly fo'teen hundred fur pew rent, and I'ze been sent to see what you'ze gwine to do about it."

"Fo'teen hundred dollars, eh?" queried the drayman.

"Yes, sah. Dar's de figgers, all figgered up by a white man. You hain't dun paid no pew rent in all your bo'n days. Does you dispute dem figgers, sah?"

"No, I reckon not."

"And am you gwine to settle?"

"Fur how much?"

"Why sah, de committee dun sot upon you last night till leben o'clock, and it finally dun decided not to settle dis case short of two hull dollars."

"Wall, I reckon I'll dun pay it. Yere's de cash."

"Yas, sah—yas sah—dat's k'rect, sah. Dat proves you was an honest man, suh. You is now all squar' wid de church, and if you wants to git up in a front pew and do shoutin' nobody hain't gwine to pint at you and say de Lord had dem fo'teen hundred dollars charge up again you on the gate-posts of heaben."

Sandy Bend Justice

Judge Hoke Upholds It Against Law

THERE were 20 miners, eight gamblers, seven Chinks and five dogs in the courtroom when Judge Hoke arrived to open court. He nodded to most everything but the dogs. There were those who whispered that he wasn't looking as well as usual and wondered whether the trouble was mental or physical.

He took his seat with a sigh, and after ordering the crier to throw Lung-Sing outdoors for spitting on the hot stove, he said:

"I wish to explain to this crowd that I am not feeling well today. I'm feeling homesick; I'm feeling lonesome; I'm feeling as if there was nuthin' more to live for on this terrestrial globe of ours. I won't deny that as I sat in the Red Dog saloon a half an hour since the (Red Dog belongs to this yere court, and is the leadin' saloon for hundred miles around) thar was tears in my eyes, and I wondered if the reputation which old Wyoming has been a hundred years in buildin' up was to go to smash in a day.

"My friends, I have seen men and women die; I have seen innocent babies have a fit and go sailin' away on angels' wings; I have seen a lightnin' bolt tear down mountains and the awful cyclone level forests; I have heard a Digger Indian who had been bit by a rattlesnake call upon heaven to save him, and I have seen a Chinyman who had taken carbolic acid writhe upon the ground like a serpint. I have held the hand of an old man as he died, and I have smoothed the brow of a woman as the death rattle sounded in her throat.

"Don't let any human hyena in this courtroom make a mistake on me. For 20 years I've been a resident of Sandy Bend, doin' my level best to uphold the honor and dignity of this sovereign commonwealth. For the last five years I've been a justice of the peace in and for the four counties of Ace High, Crippled Dog, Blind Hoss and Hell Bent, and I reckon you'll all agree that my great object has been to uphold the glorious reputation left behind by our forefathers. I've not only been keerful to mete out justice, but to let all my decisions redound to the credit of the goddess with a handkerchief over her eyes and a pair of scales in her hands.

"What happened three days ago! Gentlemen, gaze on Steve Taylor over thar and let our souls wonder if such things can be in this enlightened century; also, gaze on Bill Whiting, on the other hand, and let them same souls o' yours play tag around this courthouse and bring up all a standin' agin the front door. Steve Taylor has been among us for two years. He carries two guns, and he has given everybody to understand that the 'leven notches cut in the stock represented the 'leven men he removed from airth while dwellin' in New Mexico, and I can't say that any of us have been afraid of him, but we have gazed on those notches and been sorter keerful not to graze him with our elbows as we passed. When he asked for credit at the Red Dog I have smilingly given it to him—not because I thought he'd ever squar' up, but because I didn't want to seem to doubt his story about them 'leven men sleepin' under the sile of a distant territory.

"On one occasion, and that wasn't long ago, when Steve was in a five-handed game of poker and raked in a big pot on what he said was a straight, some of us know that he was mistaken. It wasn't that we was afraid that we didn't tell him so, but he seemed so happy that night that we concluded not to upset him.

"As to Bill Whiting, he's been hangin' around for only a few months, but he was sized up from the very first as a chump and a dub. Is thar anybody present in this courtroom who hasn't given him the boot? Is thar a Chinyman in this town that hasn't bounced him around? If your gorge rises and your souls palpitate as you look the pair over I shan't blame you.

"Three days ago, as we all know, Steve, the killer of 'leven men, sot out on his broncho for Antelope hills. He had a tent and blanket and grub along. He was goin' to search for gold in the Antelopes, and he got as many as five free drinks before he finally started. Them guns o' his were chuck-up with cartridges, and he must have had a boundin' of the heart as his gallant steed ambled along with him. Little did we think, as we stood in front of the Red Dog and saw him disappear around the first bend, that he was the one man of all who'd soon cast a slur on the name of old Wyoming so deep and broad and long that it will take a hundred years to wash it out. If I speak with emotion and with tears in my eyes, wait and see if I'm not justified.

"Yes, Steve Taylor rode away like a cavalier of old, and nobody looked around to see whether Bill Whiting was among us or not. He wasn't, however. He was sloshin' around up the Antelope trail and waitin' to do business with Steve. Bimeby Steve gets up to him. His hoss was amblin' and his guns was a-showin' them 'leven notches. Bill has a stick in his hands. Steve says it looked like a gun to him. Mebbe it did, but it wouldn't have looked that way to a man with a grain of sand in his gizzard.

"Bill gets up as Steve comes along and sings out:

"'Hello, Steve, but I want ye to do me a little favor.'

"'And what might that be?' asks Steve.

"'Git off'n yer critter and hold up yer hands!'

"'Yer can't mean it?'

"'But I do. I'll give you just five seconds.'

"With that Bill points his stick, and Steve climbs down. Oh, my soul, but think of it! A critter with 'leven notches in the butts of his guns climbin' down and makin' a fool of hisself because a dry stick is p'inted at him! Bill takes them guns away, robs him of $10 in cash and then mounts the broncho and rides off. Steve gives him a good start and then follers along, and jest as night is sittin' in he overhauls the robber. Does he jump in and try to capture him? Does he, even when he knows Bill is asleep, creep up and try to get hold of the guns?

"I'll tell you what he does. He waits till 10 o'clock and then creeps up and begs of Bill to give him back some of his property. Bill invites him into the tent to eat a cold bite and talk it over, and though the guns are lyin' scattered around, Steve didn't pick one up and turn the tables. He jest sat thar and begs and whines and coaxes until he is booted forth. Excuse these tears. Excuse this sweat on my marble brow. Excuse me that I'm alive instead of a victim of suicide!

"Steve Taylor travels the rest of the night on foot, headed for Sandy Bend. He arrives here at 8 o'clock yesterday mornin' and calls at the Red Dog saloon to wake me up and say:

"'Jedge Hoke, I want jestice.'

"'What sort of jestice?' says I, wonderin' if I'd heard aright.

"'The reg'lar sort. I've been held up by Bill Whiting and robbed of my all, and I want him punished by the law.'

"Think of it! Think of it!" groaned the Judge, as he looked around the courtroom. "A man as has been held up by a man with a stick—as has had chance after chance of getting hold of his gun again, as knowed Bill Whiting for a chump, to come to me and holler for jestice! If 10,000 of ye leave this territory tomorrer with shame and humiliation in your faces I shan't blame ye. I struggled with Steve for an hour. I made him understand what was at stake, but it was no use. He wanted jestice and nuthin' else, and I issued a warrant for Bill, and the constable brung him in last night. He's sittin' thar before us as peart as a jackass rabbit on a June mornin', and from that grin on his face I'm judgin' that he means to plead guilty. How is it, Bill?"

"I held him up and went through him right 'nuff."

"Just listen to that! Was ever sich a thing heard of on the face of this airth before?"

"He pleads guilty, your honor," mumbled the victim.

"Yes, durn his hide, he does, but he knows my feelin's in the matter. I could try, convict and send him to prison for five years, but am I goin' to do it? No, a thousand times no! I'm goin' to throw the case out of court and him on top of it, and if he don't know 'nuff to get a hundred miles away in the next three days, then we'll set him down for a fool!

"As for you, Steve Taylor—as for the man who has shamed and humiliated every squar' man west of the Mississippi and stabbed Justice herself to the heart, you will be took out doors, given the boot by every man in Sandy Bend wearin' boots, and then headed for the trail and started on the run. It hain't law, but it's what you hankered for—jestice.

"Constable, adjourn court and remove the condemned."

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The Doctor in Camp

YOU may wonder how the miners got along without a doctor in camp, and there are, indeed, times enough when the services of a skillful physician were in demand. That winter we put in at Calico Flats there was somebody on the sick list all the time, and there were days when we had three or four patients in the hospital at once.

As to medicines, our mainstay was a hot sweat. When a man began to dump around we didn't lose time by feeling his pulse or looking at his tongue. Three or four stones were put into the fire to heat, blankets borrowed for the occasion, and when we got steam on the knots and twists and kinks in that chap's case had to unravel. He'd come out as long and flat and thin and white as you please, and if anyone pointed a finger at him for the next week he'd cry like a baby.

Next to the sweat we had decoctions of herbs, barks and roots, and once or twice we tried the earth-cure. On one occasion, when a red-headed miner from Ohio was laid up with a pain in the side, a stranger came along from White Dog Bend and said he could cure him by laying on his hands. For three long hours he smoothed away at the patient as steadily as clockwork, and then there was a row. The "smoother" asserted that the cure was complete, while the patient denied that the pain was a whit easier. Of course, we stood by our comrade and gave the stranger a tumble off a cliff 28 feet high into an old snow drift 18 feet deep.

But as I said at the start, sickness became so prevalent and our plain remedies had so little effect that it was finally decided to send up to Sacremento for a doctor. The idea was to have him come down and brace us all up and leave medicines and remedies and the expense was to be borne by a shake purse.

"You see," said Judge Perdue, as we talked the matter over, we don't want a doctor that we may brag over the other camps. We want one because we are sick in the old-fashioned way."

"That's it!" chorused half a dozen voices.

"We want the old-fashioned sickness that we used to enjoy so much at home. We want a doctor that will come in and say we are going to die fur shore, and then turn to and cure us. We are jest fairly cryin' fur doses of them drugs that used to lift a feller outer bed and make him think he'd bitin' into moldy pumpkin! Lord, how I would like to come down with a case of old-fashioned bilious fever!"

A letter was sent to a dealer in the town, asking him to forward a doctor, and in about five days along he came. He was a young man of 24, just out of college in the East, and just landed on the Slope without a dollar in his pocket, and all he brought to camp with him was a lancet, some prescription blanks and a stick of salve for making sticking plasters.

There were four men in hospital that day, and after a bit the doctor entered to take a look at them. It happened that he came to Big Jim Smith first. Smith was threatened with inflammatory rheumatism and was in no mood to take nonsense.

"Run out your tongue," said the doctor, as he bent over the man.

Big Jim displayed it, but in such a begrudging way that it was plain to see that he thought it all bosh.

"Your pulse," said the doctor, as he reached over for Jim's great paw.

"Pulse? I hain't got any!" growled Jim.

"Oh, yes you have. Here it is in your wrist. Keep still a moment."

"Stranger," said Jim, after the doctor had dropped his hand, "D'ye mean to tell me that ye kin feel a man's wrist and tell what ails his insides?"

"Yes, in a measure."

"Excuse my not calling you a liar, but some of the boys will do it fur me afore you are an hour older!"

"What are your symptons?" asked the doctor.

"Never had any."

But how do you feel?"

"Sick."

"How were you taken?"

"Stranger, what are ye driving at?" demanded Jim, as he sat up in bed.

"Have you got pains?"

"In course, I have! D'ye 'spose I'd be lying flat on my back here if anything less'n a ton was holding me down?"

"Do you ache?"

"Rayther!"

"Any fever?"

"Wall, I git away with a quart of cold water at a gulp."

The doctor sat and studied the case for a few minutes, and then he came over to the shanty where the committee had assembled and said:

"Gentlemen, the case of Big Jim is a serious one. He needs a change of diet, scenery and air. My advice is that you brace him up as well as you can on chicken soup and beef tea, and then send him off for a trip to Cuba. I'll look at the other cases in the morning."

But he never did. When the boys found that he had come without even a dose of quinine, and they heard him talk about chicken soup and trips to Cuba for a man who hadn't $5 to his name, they waited upon him in a sort of hilarious body, and at midnight he went well up the trail at the rate of 12 miles an hour, with a crowd behind him aching for his ears as relics. Next day we heated half a ton of rocks, took six or eight blankets and gave Big Jim such a sweat that all his toenails shed off, and rather than be cured the same way the other men got well.

"I did have some faith in the chap," exclaimed Jim—"jest a leetle bit un'il he axed my symptoms. That floored me. The idea of sendin' 200 miles fur a doctor to walk in on ye and not be able to tell symptoms from the all-firedest backache a man ever had, topped off with chills galloping up and down the spine wall! I'm only sorry that you moved the procession on him afore I was able to head it!"

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Fireside Legends

A PEASANT took great pains to sharpen up his Knife in anticipation of an opportunity to strike down a Doe which came every day to drink at a certain spring. As he crept through the forest the Knife was accidentally thrust into his own leg. Dancing around with the pain, and angered with the sight of blood, the Peasant cried out: "Base ingrate! You have stabbed me!"

"It is true that you have been stabbed," replied the Knife, "but had you not sharpened me for the purpose of drawing blood this would not have happened."

MORAL:

Lies and scandals sent out of the kitchen may come back home through the front door.

THE WOLF AND THE GOOSE.

A goose who was prowling through the forest one day in search of prey observed a Wolf sitting on the limb of a Tree and called out:

"Good morning, my Dear. You are looking unusually well this morning."

'That's all Taffy!" replied the Wolf.

"'Pon honor, but I'd give a thousand dollars to have your complexion."

"Would you?"

"Indeed, I would. And such eyes as you have got! Yum! yum!"

"Do you really think so?" grinned the pleased Wolf.

"You bet! Why, if I had your form, I'd go on the stage and make my fortune."

The Wolf put his finger in his mouth and looked silly and felt flattered, and the Goose licked her chops and continued:

"Please come down and let me take the pattern of your coattails. Such a graceful set I never saw in my travels!"

The Wolf came down with his ears working with delight, and had only reached the earth when the Goose sprang upon him and chewed him into dishcloths.

MORAL:

Beware of the Goose.

DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

The wife of a peasant, who was in the habit of borrowing her neighbor's coffee mill, one day broke the article beyond repair, and when her husband came in she cried out in despair:

"Alas! We are financially ruined for the excursion season! I have broken Mrs. Blank's coffee mill, and it will cost us 30 cents to replace it!"

"Ah! but you are indeed a poor financier!" replied the husband. "Send the remains home by the servant girl and get mad at the lady. Then you will not be expected to pay damages, and she will not dare ask you for your flatirons!"

THE SELFISH HUNTER.

A Wolf having chased a Hunter across fields and through forests for several miles, at length had the mortification of seeing his Prey escape him by climbing a tree.

"Are you coming down?" he asked as he looked up and licked his chops.

"Not very fast!"

"I don't complain of that," panted the Wolf, but what hurts my feelings is the fact that you didn't climb a tree on the start, instead of giving me this useless chase. Pray have some respect for other peoples' feelings hereafter."

THE INJURED WOLF.

A Wolf had the Misfortune to break his leg, and, being unable to hunt for his food, was soon reduced to the verge of starvation. One day as he was uttering lamentations a Hare came along and inquired the trouble.

"I am almost at the point of death!" was the reply. "I haven't had a morsel to eat for days!"

"Indeed!" exclaimed the Hare. "I'll go at once to the Hyena about it."

When the Hyena was consulted he stroked his chin reflectively and finally said:

"Are you certain he is a Wolf of good morals?"

"No."

"Well, then, I'd better see the Lion about it before we do anything."

The Lion heard the story, winked in a wise way, and remarked:

"There ought to be a committee appointed to investigate his character. I'll see the Stork and mention the matter."

The Stork was informed that a Wolf lay dying of starvation, and she replied:

"Well, well, but that's bad. I'll see the Ox this very afternoon and have him decide whether we ought to send in tracts or chicken broth."

The Ox was duly informed, and the next day he walked over to see what should be done in the case. Arriving at the lair he found the Wolf dead, and the Owl had already been there and written on the rocks the

MORAL—

"Philanthropy is a thin tonic for an empty stomach."

THE HARE AND THE FOX.

A Fox who was gamboling about had the ill luck to fall over a cliff, and as he lay on the ground, unable to rise, and suffering great pain, along came a Hare.

"Well," said the Fox as he looked up, "the tables are turned. I am your bitter enemy and have often pursued you with intent to murder, but now I am helpless and you can take your revenge."

"Do you expect me to kill you?"

"Naturally I do, and I ask the favor that you kill me with a club, instead of slowly torturing me to death by singing Only a Pansy Blossom."

But the Hare determined to heap coals of fire on his head and prove her own forgiving spirit. She therefore brought him water and food and nursed him until he was quite able to take care of himself. The very next day after they separated the Hare was crossing a field when she found herself pursued by a Fox. After running a long distance she was overtaken, and as she was knocked over she recognized in her assailant the very Fox whose life she had saved.

"Why, you are the Fox whom I nursed!" she cried out.

"Is that so?"

"Of course it is! How could you fail to recognize me?"

"Well, fools look so much alike that it is hard to tell who from who. For fear of making a mistake I shall eat you and let the next one go!"

LOOKING FOR THE TRUTH.

A Peasant who had often heard that Truth was a Jewel lying at the bottom of a well, one day descended into his well to search for the treasure. He skinned his knees and elbows, barked his nose, run an old fork into his foot and shivered around for six long hours before his wife drew him up and asked:

"What in Goodness' name were you doing down there?"

"Looking for Truth."

"Why, I could have told you before you went down that you were the biggest Fool in America!"

MORAL:

You can get more Truth than you want around any well-curb.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED.

A Lion who had long reigned with supreme power over the Forest one day called a convention of all the beasts and announced his intention of abdicating.

"I am growing old and feeble, and I must soon pass away," he argued. "All things considered, it is better that my successor be nominated and installed while I am living to give him the benefits of my experience and advice."

There was general joy among the Beasts, for the Lion had lorded it after his own fashion. The Elephant was squinting around, the Rhinoceros was pushing his nose into the crowd, and the Giraffe was doing a heap of thinking way down in his throat, when the Lion continued:

"After serious reflection and solemn consideration, I have decided that my own son shall succeed me. The office will not only be kept in the family, but the family will be kept in office. There being no further business before the meeting, we will adjourn."

"But why the need of this convention?" protested the Rhinoceros.

"Well, there wasn't any particular need of it," replied the Lion, "but it is customary to call one in order to collect the expenses of nomination. Brother Giraffe, pass the hat!"

MORAL:

"Attend the primaries."

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Thawed Him Out.

"Oh, yes," replied the hardware drummer, "men in this profession are bound to meet up with cranks and curmudgeons, and we must do our best to smooth them down."

"Have you been smoothing anyone lately?" was asked.

"I have. On this trip I have smoothed down a retailer who has held me off for the past four years. I tried in vain to get close to him, but he wouldn't have it. He didn't like the looks of my face and the tone of my voice."

"But you got him all right, now?"

"He's as smooth as velvet."

"How did you accomplish it?"

"I found that he believed the sun moved around the earth, and so I agreed with him that all the rest of the world was mistaken."

"And how do you know you thawed him out?"

"Because he invited me to go through the state idiot asylum with him, and we spent a very pleasant half-day together."

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