

THE BOWSERS' TROUBLES.

"Well, by George!" exclaimed Mr. Bowser, as he sat reading his paper the other evening, "but they served that man just right!"

"What is it, dear?" asked Mrs. Bowser.

"Man and wife in Indiana sat down to a game of poker at their own fire-side, and because she won a dollar of him, he broke her neck. The people gathered and pulled him up to a limb, and the coroner wouldn't even hold an inquest on the body. Isn't it queer how some husbands act?"

"Y-es," replied Mrs. Bowser, looking anxiously around for an excuse to leave the room.

"The idea that he should break her neck because she held the best hand! Hanging was too good for him. I was wishing only this afternoon that you knew how to play poker."

"I-I do," replied Mrs. Bowser, though she bit her tongue the next instant for her foolishness.

"You do! Why, I didn't suppose you ever saw a poker chip. Been learning to gamble without dropping me a hint, eh? Just saying low to give me a surprise party?"

Mrs. Bowser should never have admitted that she had even heard of the game of poker. There had been a family row because she beat Mr. Bowser at fox and geese—another because she got the best of him at chechers—a regular riot because she laid him out at euchre. She should have gone upstairs or downstairs for ten minutes and let the matter pass out of his mind. While she was lamenting her bad diplomacy, Mr. Bowser got up, with a beaming smile on his face, and exclaimed:—

"Well, what luck! I've got a pack of cards and a box of poker chips on the hall tree. I thought I might drop over and beat Taylor out of \$15 or \$20, but as I came in he said he wouldn't be home this evening. We'll just have a little game all by ourselves."

"I—don't feel well this evening!" stammered Mrs. Bowser.

"O-ho! I see! Afraid to play against me, eh? That little excuse won't go down, however. You said you knew how to play poker, and so we will have a game. Clear off the table and get ready."

"Really, Mr. Bowser, but my head—"

"Your head is all right, and pretty near level. I don't expect you can play for shucks, but we'll have a little fun out of it."

It was now too late for Mrs. Bowser to get out of it, unless the house caught fire, and they drew up to the table, each took a dollar's worth of chips, and, as Mr. Bowser dealt the cards, he asked:—

"Shall we have any limit on this game?"

"I don't care," she replied.

"Very well. We can bet the extent of our pile. Ante up a blue chip, and we'll make 'em all jack-pots. You must have jacks or better to open on. Can you open?"

"I can," she said.

"You can, eh? That's rather curious. Want three cards, eh? And I'll take one. What do you bet?"

"It's the game, of course. Let's see your hand."

"Never, Mrs. Bowser—never! You have no right to call a full house!"

"But I've got four aces!"

"Four aces! Four aces! Mrs. Bowser, you hooked at least three of 'em out of the pack when I turned my head to look at the cat!"

"How foolish, Mr. Bowser! I simply had luck. Perhaps luck will come to you this time. What's the matter?"

"There is nothing the matter, Mrs. Bowser," he said as he pushed back and rose up, "nothing at all! I simply sit down in my own house to play poker with my own wife. She resorts to gambling tactics to beat me. It remains for me to put on my hat and—"

"Don't be foolish, Mr. Bowser!"

"And go down to the club and finish the game. I may not return home until near morning, and—"

"How like a boy!"

"And I wish you good evening, Mrs. Bowser, and you can call the cook upstairs and cheat and lie and deceive and beat her out of a month's wages!"

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HANGING UP THE STOCKINGS.

And best of all there grow'd right up
A great big Xmas tree,
From out a great big candy cup,
With suthin' on for me.

And soon an angel holler'd out,
"Come forward, William Grieg!"
But though I pull'd and yank't about,
I couldn't move a peg.

That made the angel rippin' mad,
And in this book he wrote,
That bein' as I was so bad,
I'd have to ride the goat.

Then all at once the dear old swan,
Stopp'd toastin' at my toes;
And like a bullet from a gun
Up in the air I goes.

And down I comes soon afterwards
A straddle of a goat;
It was the same old piece of goods,
That chas'd us in the boat.

He jolted suthin' horrible,
And, though it was a dream,
It got so hang'd unbearable
I waken'd with a scream.

But, even then, I didn't feel
As if I was right wise;
For granny sat so cold and still,
And star'd with both her eyes.

And I hates to see her bothur'd,
Its more'n I can bear;
For I loves her wrinkly for'ud
And what's her left of her hair.

Now, doctor, do please come and see,
This merry Xmas day,
Why granny stares so still at me,
And haint a word to say!

LONG OR SHORT LIFE.

Physicians Sometimes Able to Decide One's Fate at a Glance.

Dr. W. F. Warner says that every person carries with him the physical indications of his probable term of life. A long-lived person may be distinguished from a short-lived person at sight. In many instances a physician can look at the hand of a patient and tell whether he will live or die. There are always two main points to be considered, the inherited potentiality and the reactionary influence of environment. Under favorable conditions and environment, the individual should live out the potential longevity. With unfavorable conditions this longevity may be greatly decreased, with a favorable environment the longevity of the person, the family or the race may be increased. The primary conditions of longevity are that heart, lungs and digestive organs, as well as the brain, should be large. If these organs are large, the trunk will be long and the limbs comparatively short. The person will appear tall in sitting and short in standing. The hand will have a long and somewhat heavy palm and short fingers. The brain will be deeply seated, as shown by the orifice of the ear being low. The blue hazel or brown hazel eye, as showing intermission of temperament, is a favorable indication. The large, open and free nostril indicates large lungs, a pinched and half-closed nostril being indicative of small or weak lungs. In the case of persons who have short-lived parents on one side and long-lived on the other, the question becomes more involved. Ordinary care does much in such cases, inasmuch as nature always seems to make a supreme effort to pass the period of the shorter longevity and extend the life to the longer period.

SELF-RESPECT.

Mistress from the parlor.—Bridget, the front door bell has rung three times. Why don't you answer it?

Bridget, from the kitchen.—Sure mum, if Oi opened it the first ring, pap'e wud say Oi did nothing but tind the dure, an' Oi wudn't have any wan think me that lazy.

THE LIONESS AND PUPPY

STRANGE FRIENDSHIPS EXHIBITED BETWEEN ANIMALS.

They Became Close Allies, Though the Lioness Would Have Nothing to Do With the Other Puppies.

Among the tales of strange friendship existing between different animals there is none more strange than a recent one which seems to indicate that before long the animals which are supposed to have no affinity for each other will be on the best of terms.

As a case in point, an instance is cited where the lioness adopted a bull terrier. This is said to have occurred in Somaliland, where the lioness is kept in captivity. There were a number of bull terrier puppies kept near where the lioness was confined. The puppies got into the habit of going up to the cage. The lioness watched them narrowly while they were about. When they came close to her cage she snarled in a way that frightened the little fellows off.

LIKED THE PUPPY.

It was noticed, however, that to one of the puppies she showed no displeasure whatever, but on the contrary, seemed to fancy having him about. The puppy approached the cage one day, and, after blinking at the lioness for awhile, as if trying to determine if it would be safe for him to venture further, walked boldly in.

The big lioness, instead of growling, manifested her pleasure at the visit of the youngster. She put out her huge paw and gently drew the puppy in to her. The puppy was so delighted with the warmth of her reception that he had remained with her ever since.

The lioness treats the bull terrier puppy just as if he were a cub of her own, but she will have nothing to do with his brothers and sisters. They wander about the cage occasionally to see how he is getting along. She invariably growls at them in such a suggestive manner that they keep at a respectful distance from the cage.

A COMICAL CAT.

Another instance of the same general character is told of a Maltese cat that conceived a great fondness for a brood of chickens. The chicks were not over a couple of days old when the mother hen was killed. In some way the Maltese ascertained that fact and adopted the chickens forthwith. She established herself in the nest, and the little chicks smuggled into her warm fur with the utmost confidence.

When the chicks ventured out during the day the Maltese foster-mother accompanied them. It is told of her that if a chick strayed off she would "mew" for it, and that it returned as quickly as for the chick of a hen.

Still another instance is related of a strange friendship among animals, as shown in the case of a terrier and a cat. They were kept in the same stable and both became the mothers of families about the same time. The terrier evinced a fondness for kittens, and the cat displayed a liking for puppies. Within a few days they had exchanged families, the dog taking care of the kittens, and the cat adopting the puppies.

JUST WHAT HE NEEDED.

Miss Manyseason.—No, Mr. Bloom, I cannot be your wife, but I will be a sister to you.

Mr. Bloom, youthful adorer.—You are very kind, and I know my mother will like that arrangement. She has often said I would have been a better man if I had had an elder sister to look after me.

FOUND IN OLD SHIPS.

Valuable and Ghastly Relics Discovered Beneath the Planks of Hulls.

The utilization of apparent waste is well exemplified in the breaking up of ships of various kinds, for every nail and every chip are put aside for sale; but in the case of vessels of considerable tonnage, and especially of very old craft, finds both curious and valuable are by no means rare. An old wooden vessel that was broken up near Greenwich only a few months back revealed a very curious sight when some old planking in the fore-castle had been torn down. Here, nailed up, were the two mummified hands of a negro, and in the palm of each hand, and transfixed by the same nails that held the hands, were two counterfeit silver dollars. The hands had been hacked off roughly.

A year or two ago the breaking up of an old schooner near Sheerness brought to light beneath the inner "skin" of the hull quite an elaborate armament of a very old-fashioned kind, including a splendidly made bell-mouthed flint-lock musket, the stock being marked with a representation of arm and leg fetters, and the name "Philip Steyne, Boston, Lincolnshire." The most curious part of this find was a set of books—a privateer's books evidently—showing the capture of various French vessels.

Tied up in a canvas bag 190 guineas in gold were found a year or two back during the breaking up of an old vessel lying between Birkenhead and New Brighton. With the money were found too, a most curious and unique set of foreign playing cards, some loaded dice, and three magnificent pieces of amber. All these were found in the false bottom of a wooden bunk.

MURDER AND ROBBERY.

But even during the breaking up of quite modern vessels which have become wrecks, remarkable finds, particularly relating to smuggling contrivances, are by no means rare. In a portion of a considerable wreck on the south-east coast only the winter before last the ship breakers found, hidden in a part of the engine room, a quantity of valuable jewellery and a number of newspaper clippings and published portraits relating to a murder and robbery at St. Louis, in the United States. The jewellery found was that described in the reports as missing. Two of the men employed in the engine room were drowned in the wreck, but there was no clue to attach either the drowned man or the other engine room hands with the published descriptions and portraits of the murderer. The mystery was never cleared up.

TREASURES EVERYWHERE.

The manager of a ship breaker, a man who has been for forty years in the business, could cite hundreds of cases where hiding places for small articles smuggled by officers and men have been found, these being in connection with nearly every part of the hulls broken up, and he produced several articles that has been found by himself or his men.

Many of these were false or duplicate bills of lading, and there were counterfeit foreign coins, a pair of heavy gold earrings with a turquoise in each—probably stolen by one foreign seaman from another—a hand grenade with a cap to it, an old wig with three small gold nuggets wrapped in it, and many other small trifles.

"At Rotherhithe, some years ago," said he, "in the forepeak of a very old wooden merchantman, we found the skeleton of a lad jammed behind the skin of the vessel. The lad had been a stowaway in all probability."

BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Some Statistics from the Trail Creek Districts.

Mr. R. F. Mendenhall, the representative of the Rand Drill Company at Rossland, is authority for the following statistics, showing the extent of the mining machinery, which has been shipped into the Trail Creek camp, during the past year:

Le Roi 40drill plant; War Eagle, 20 drills; White Bear, 4; Cliff, 4; O.K., 10-stamp mill, 4 drills; City of Spokane, 4 drills; Red Mountain, 7; Crown Point, 7; Commander, 4; Columbia and Kootenay, 30. In addition to these are many hoisting works and mine machinery.

If the Slocan country be included, or the entire district of West Kootenay be considered in the estimate, these figures will be about doubled, as there are in the Slocan country fully 45 shipping mines, 3 smelters and 6 concentrators.

The value of the machinery placed in the Trail Creek division, Mr. Mendenhall estimates at \$1,250,000.

The men at work in the east shaft of the California struck the first regular ore vein on October 24th. It is pyritic iron with indications of copper. The vein is not large. This has been obtained at a distance of 40ft. The shaft where this strike was made is about 1,000 ft., east of the shaft, which has been sunk on the iron hat, near the west line.—The Engineering and Mining Journal.

FASTS IN THE RUSSIAN ARMY.

In the Russian army two days a week are observed as fasts—Wednesdays and Fridays—on which days all the soldier gets in the way of food is lentil soup and black bread, and a drink consisting of water in which rye bread has been absorbed.

IN THE SAME CLASS.

I'm a plain, blunt man, Margaret and can't frame no honeyed speeches. Will you marry me?

I'm a little on the plain, blunt order myself. No!