

## MR. AND MRS. BOWSER

The Head of the House Says Things to Mrs. Bowser, But Gets the Worst of It.

Nothing in particular ailed Mr. Bowser the other evening when he started home from the office, but if the average husband doesn't make a kick ever so often he is not on good terms with himself. The time had come for Mr. Bowser to kick—and he lost no time after getting into the hall. Mrs. Bowser was there to welcome him, but he hung up his hat and turned on her with—

"Woman, why don't you gather up all the sheets and blankets and coats and hats in the house and hang them on this hall tree and make a regular Maypole of it?"

There was only one extra hat on the tree and that belonged to Mr. Bowser, and he had hung it there, but Mrs. Bowser was too politic to dispute him. She led the way to the dining-room, and he scuffed along after her, every footstep showing that he was out of sorts and meant to raise a row. Before sitting down to the table he looked around and his eye happened to notice a crack in the glass over one of the pictures, and he exclaimed:—

"Been at work with the axe again, have you? Why didn't you smash the whole of 'em while you were about it?"

Mr. Bowser had cracked the glass himself a month before, but why say so and hear him deny it? He fell into his chair at the head of the table with a growl, and as Mrs. Bowser had planned an extra good dinner she hoped the worst had passed. It hadn't even begun, however.

"What have you got here—an old boot?" he demanded, as he started to carve the chicken and stopped with knife and fork held aloft.

"It's a young and tender chicken—one of the nicest I could buy," she humbly replied.

"Chicken, eh? Well, I never should have believed it. (And I suppose these are sweet potatoes?"

"Yes."

"We will call them so, but I took them for knots from the woodpile. Did our bakery burn down during the day?"

"No, dear."

"I thought it might, as I see you have some cobblestones here in place of rolls. Nice dinner for a hungry man to sit down to! I'm so glad I didn't dine at the club!"

It was a dinner fit for any man to sit down to, but Mrs. Bowser realized that she would only make the matter worse by argument, and therefore held her peace, or rather sought to change the conversation by telling him of a street car accident she had witnessed that day.

"I see," he replied, when she had finished. "The motorman had probably been eating one of your salads, and that's the reason he bumped into the wagon! The wonder is that he did not run over half a dozen people."

Mrs. Bowser had intended to ask him to take her to the theatre that evening, but seeing how "off" he was she gave it up, and on returning to the sitting-room sat down to a book, while he picked up his newspaper. Mr. Bowser didn't mean to give it that way, however, and after glancing over the paper he suddenly demanded:—

"Mrs. Bowser, is this a house or a wigwam?"

"Why, what do you mean?"

"Just what I said. If it's a house, then we need a housekeeper. If it's a wigwam, or a hole in the ground, or an Esquimaux hut, then you are running it bang up. Last night, Mrs. Bowser, last night, when I went to put on my night shirt it was not to be found. I presume it had gone down to the cook to be used as a mop, or, perhaps, you had flung it out of the window for the children to play horse with. An Esquimaux or a Digger Indian might put up with such things, but I can't get used to 'em. Can you spare the time to tell me where that night shirt went to?"

"It was rolled up and placed under your pillow, and I found it there this morning," she replied.

He knew it as well as she did, as he saw it when he got up. The fact was he was in a hurry to get to bed and forgot to change, but he must hold some one to blame, and why not her?

"And as I looked out of the back window this morning," he went on after a bit, "I saw at least a dozen clothespins scattered about the yard. The cook doesn't care, of course, how she reduces us to poverty, as she can find another place; but if you had any care for our financial future you would have an eye for such things. I do not wish to find fault, but when I see such evidences of utter recklessness I can't help but speak about them."

"They were picked up before noon," quietly replied Mrs. Bowser, "and are now in the basket. I bought 500 of a peddler for ten cents, and the girl is not as careful of them as she might be. However, not one of them has been lost up to date."

Mr. Bowser didn't know whether he had the best or the worst of that argument, but, as his object was to pass a very pleasant evening, he searched about for something else to find fault with, and soon discovered it. Said he:—

"A few days ago I bought a garbage can, costing \$1. I observe that it is already sadly banged about. When you wish to exercise, why don't you hang up the punching bag instead of pounding the can against the wall? I am not a fault finder, but I can't see my house go to destruction without saying a word now and then."

Mrs. Bowser looked up from her book but made no reply, and feeling that he had scored a point Mr. Bow-

ser chuckled to himself, and presently observed:—

"There is another thing I wish to speak of now that I happen to think of it. Most women pride themselves on the smallness and trimness of their feet. You seem to have no pride in that direction. If your feet have splattered all over the house I am not going to blame you, but if it is only the way you wear your shoes, then I'll lend you a pair of mine to reduce the size."

"You see these shoes?" she queried, as she pushed out her feet. "Well, they cost \$2.50, and I have worn them for six months. During that time you have had three pairs of five-dollar shoes; but you can't afford better for me. While other ladies won't look at shoes at less than \$5, I must look at a price to fit a working girl. If you will kindly lend me a pair of your shoes I will be ever so much obliged."

That was another on Mr. Bowser, and he turned red and white and waited two or three minutes before saying:—

"I was looking in the directory today to see if there was such a place in town as a sock asylum—a sort of home where men can go and get their socks darned. I have a dozen pairs, but all are out at the heels. Perhaps you know of an asylum?"

Mrs. Bowser made no reply, but, going up stairs to her dresser, she brought down eight pairs of socks which were in perfect condition, and laid them before him.

"Y-e-s," said Mr. Bowser, pretending not to see "I gave you another thing I should like to mention. I gave you money only last week to buy coal, and I want to know—"

"I bought coal," she interrupted, "and it will last us three or four weeks yet."

"But about the gas bill, Mrs. Bowser? Here we have longer days and no company coming in, and yet the bill for the last month was—"

"Was two dollars less, Mr. Bowser. There it is, and you can see for yourself."

She had him on that, and he realized that he was getting the worst of it. He therefore rose up and said:—

"Mrs. Bowser, I did intend to spend a pleasant evening at home, but being as you seem bound and determined to spoil it I will go out and pass three or four hours at the club. Just go to bed whenever you wish and don't mind me. When a husband has no home, you know when his wife isn't willing to make things pleasant for him—when—"

And he put on his overcoat and hat and went out and walked up and down and shivered, and then loafed for half an hour in a drug store, and then talked politics with the butcher until his toes were frostbitten, and as he finally started for home he congratulated himself that he had taught Mrs. Bowser, a lesson she would not soon forget and upheld his authority as lord and master.

### CATCHING COLD.

The "cold spots" meaning thereby the surface areas peculiarly susceptible to cold, are principally the nape of the neck and the lower part of the back of the head, the front of the abdomen and the shins. The acute discomfort and the sense of impending disaster which results from the steady play of a current of cold air upon the neck from behind are well known. The necessity of keeping the abdomen warmly clad is also generally carried into practice. Curiously enough, few people are conscious of the danger they run by exposing the usually inadequately protected shins to currents of cold air. People who wear stockings, such as Highlanders, golfers and cyclists, invariably take precaution of turning the thick, woolen material down over the shins, the better to protect them against loss of heat, though, incidentally, the artificial embellishments of the calves may not be altogether foreign to the maneuver. It is an instance of how things work together for good. It does not, of course, follow because certain areas are peculiarly susceptible to cold that a chill may not be conveyed to the nervous system from other points. Prolonged sitting on a stone, or even on the damp grass, is well known to be a fertile source of disease; and wet, cold feet, are also, with reason, credited with paving the way to an early grave.

### NEVER NEEDS UNPACKING.

There are many useful improvements to chronicle in the way of luggage, and among them a trunk that does not need to be unpacked, but answers the purpose of a wardrobe and a chest of drawers. It can be set, on arrival at the journey's end against the wall. The lid will remain open when thus placed, and discovers separate trays for millinery, handkerchiefs, gloves, linens, laces, and boots and shoes, lined with washable waterproof, so that, if thrown in muddy, dirt can be washed off; some having one long receptacle across for umbrellas, parasols and sticks, the latter women have taken to in the country much of late. Below this upper tray the box is divided into a series of drawers, holding a few dresses each—a wonderful convenience. One of the best inventions in travelling bags has all the fittings removable as a whole and fitted on the outside—toilet requisites, writing, etc., combined; this leaves the interior of the bag free. The best have square mouths; and a new kind has all the fittings above the sides of the square, which, opening automatically, adjust themselves on top and can easily be slipped off and stood on the dressing table ready for use. For the better preservation of check books they can now be fitted into a long narrow leather locked case, with an accompanying blotting pad. Indeed, every want is forestalled; all that is needed is to discover the purveyors of such innumerable aids to comfort in traveling.

### SCIENCE AND INVENTION.

The first attempt at an estimate of bacteria in butter was made in Munich in 1891. It was found that there are about 2,000,000 in a grain. The latest attachment for opera or field glasses consists of an eye shield similar to that in a stereoscope, so steady the glass and shade the eyes. A machine that splits a hair lengthwise into 37 strips has been invented.

## HOUSEHOLD.

### WHERE'S MOTHER.

Bursting in from school or play. This is what the children say: Trooping, crowding, big and small, On the threshold in the hall, Joining in the constant cry Ever as the days go by— "Where's mother?"

From the weary bed of pain, This same question comes again; From the boy with sparkling eyes Bearing home his earliest prize; From the bronzed and bearded son, Perils past and honors won— "Where's mother?"

Burdened with a lonely task, One day we may vainly ask For the comfort of her face, For the rest of her embrace; Let us love her while we may— Well for us that we can say: "Where's mother?"

### HOUSEHOLD NOTES.

The housekeeper who does not own a farina or double boiler has to be ever watchful when cooking rice, oatmeal or anything of the sort that they will not burn, and then a kettle in which such foods have been cooked is extremely hard to get clean. All this unpleasantness is avoided where a double boiler is used. If one has not the regulation boiler it is a good plan to use two kettles, one somewhat smaller than the other, so that it may be placed inside the larger. The bottoms of the kettles should not touch, in order that the boiling water in the lower kettle may surround the lower part of the upper one. Then whatever is to be cooked needs but very little attention. It practically steams in the inner kettle, and there is no danger of it burning. It takes but very little longer to cook if well covered.

A great many steps may be avoided if housekeepers would stop to arrange things a little more conveniently for themselves. When peeling potatoes, cleaning berries or vegetables, many a housekeeper will stand bent over her work, or sit with her elbows on an uncomfortably high table where her arms soon ache from the strain. The woman in the kitchen should sit whenever she can, for it is most wearying to be on foot continually. A low, flat basket without a handle and which will hold two bowls or dishes could be comfortably held in the lap. Such an arrangement makes the shelling of peas, paring of vegetables, etc., easy, for one does not have to stand, and the arms can rest on the edge of the basket.

Pure, fresh water is one of the very best disinfectants known, and some should be placed in the sleeping room at night. It will absorb much of the hurtful vapors and soften and temper the atmosphere. Water which has stood under no conditions be used for drinking. No liquid intended as a beverage should be allowed to thus stand open to contamination.

People who have to walk up stairs frequently should step squarely upon the foot at once, and not as is usually done, with a spring and on the ball of the foot. It is also unwise to bend forward as many do, for that is very tiring, besides it does not give the lungs room to do their work properly. Walking up stairs is with many an exertion, but if one would walk as described and take it slowly it should be no different than stepping over a level floor.

To remove glass stoppers from bottles, warm their necks by drawing to and fro a cord passed twice about the neck. This process heats the outer glass and makes it swell enough to loosen the stopper. If the neck of the bottle is held for a moment in the flame of a match the same result will be secured. It may be necessary to tap the stopper lightly several times on each side with a bit of wood while the glass is still warm.

Kitchen tables should have castors and a drawer. Such a table is easily moved from place to place while cooking or washing dishes. It is a step-saving affair. The frying of cakes, croquettes or fish-balls or the preserving of fruit will be easier for the help of a small movable table.

To remove ink stains from dark, polished wood, add ten drops of nitre to a tablespoonful of water and touch the spots with a camel's hair brush or a fine quill-feather; watch the dark spot and when it has nearly disappeared, wipe off the nitre with a damp cloth. If the ink is still visible, repeat the process, but do not allow the nitre to remain until it whitens the varnish.

The woman who hasn't two or three nice, smooth, thick-lipped oyster shells about her kitchen, with which to scrape skillets and kettles and pans, is behind the times. An iron ring dishcloth is nice for this, but it costs money and is not one whit better than the oyster shells.

One of the best and quickest ways of cleaning the isinglass windows in a stove is with vinegar and water. Dip a soft cloth in the vinegar and water, and quickly rub the windows over, going well into the corners. The windows will remain clean for a long time.

Never leave vegetables, fruit or cooked meats in a tin vessel over night or any length of time, as there are poisonous substances in the tin which are highly dangerous and often poison whole families.

### THAT BOY IN YOUR HOME.

Does your boy show an inclination to read? If so, provide him with the best periodical you can procure, even though you have to strain a point on something else to obtain the necessary subscription price. He is bound to get reading somewhere, and if you do not provide it, the chances are that he will surreptitiously borrow trashy papers from some neighbor's boy. You do not want him to grow wup with a taste for stage robbing and piracy, and a periodical or two and other home attractions will

be a small price to pay for guiding him past such shoals.

Encourage your children to bring their playmates home occasionally, and give them time and assist them in having pleasant social gatherings. It may be a little bother, but it will enable you to keep on a more familiar footing with them, and to know their associates. In short, enter into their interests and convince them that home is the pleasantest spot in the world. If your place consists only of a small village lot, make the most of it in the way of flowers. Have a few choice shrubs and vines to clamber along the fence or hedge and over the unsightly places.

Cover the porches with honeysuckles or roses or wisterias, and have a good assortment of bulbs to start the procession of flowers in the spring, and anemones and chrysanthemums and violets to lengthen it out in the fall. Perhaps you think your children do not care for such things, but they do. Beauty is a prime factor in every child's life, and it goes a long way toward strengthening the home ties. If possible, have a strawberry bed, and a row or two of currant bushes, and some raspberry and blackberry vines; and, if you live on a farm, give each one of the children a plot of ground to cultivate and have the proceeds of.

By the time the boys are of age they will feel like independent, practical farmers, and may have little desire to change their calling. Do not let your mind dwell too much on banks and increasing acres. Make your home and its surroundings attractive, buy books and music for your children, and give them the best possible education your means will allow. Both you and the children will derive more pleasure from money expended in this way than if it were allowed to lie in bank vaults or broadening fields, to be bequeathed to them or somebody else in the very indefinite future.

### CHOOSING A BRIDE.

About this season of the year there are matrimonial festivities in the principal towns throughout the land of the Czar, and partners for life are chosen by a curious method. Some person of importance in the district announces that the annual fete will be held at his house. Thither at the appointed time, hasten the young men of the country side; thither come no less eagerly, but with decorous tardiness, the maidens of the place. There are dances and songs, games and feasting, but all else is but the prelude to the great event, when chance is made the hand-maid of love. At the arrival of the proper hour the hostess gives a signal, and withdraws into an apartment, accompanied by all the girls. The lasses are ranged upon long benches where they pose, with poignancy in their smiling affability to suggest that their days of coquetry are at an end.

The hostess is supplied with long strips of broadcloth, and with this she straightway muffles each and every maiden. She twists it deftly over and about the head until hair and features are hopelessly veiled; she winds it about the neck the shoulders, the waist and on until the sprightly and lissome figure is merged in the rude outlines of a papoose. This is the preparation. The action follows, when one by one, in an order determined by lot, the young men of the party enter the room. Each in turn approaches the veiled row of loveliness and examines it. Eyes and ears are useless; touch is everything. The puzzled suitor seeks to penetrate the baffling folds and locate the personality of his idol. When at last he has made his choice he is privileged to remove the swaddling clothes and behold the identity of his prize.

Then is the consummation—the moment of rapture or despair when soul answers soul in the love light of the eyes, or when disappointment speaks in the stifled sigh, or shows in the averted eye. It is the law of custom that this twain should become man and wife. If the custom is broken, a heavy forfeit must be paid by the unwilling person. This matrimonial lottery is said to result in as many happy marriages as those instances where protracted courtships are considered necessary to congeniality in this contract for life.

### JAPANESE CEDARS.

They May Become Popular in America for House Decoration.

In a shop window on Fifth avenue, New York, are some remarkable specimens of house decoration which are unfamiliar in this country and very rare. They are Japanese cedars, which, by a long course of treatment, are so stunted that after years of growth they are not more than 12 or 18 inches high. One of the tiny trees is said to be nearly a century old. Their particular beauty, apart from their rich dark color, is the perfect manner in which they preserve the form of a large tree. Their proportions are the same, and they are microscopic reproductions of a perfect tree. They grow in pots, and are said to be highly appreciated decorations in the country from which they come. There is not any great likelihood that they will ever be in great demand here, as the price of them are so high that they are obtainable only by persons who are not required to consider anything beyond their own taste when it comes to making a purchase of this kind. One of the recommendations urged in their favor is their hardihood, which is said to make them, in view of the time they last, an investment that is really economical. But most of them would have to endure for another century or two to make that argument convincing to the average person who can buy something green that will grow for a very small fraction of the price of these little trees, even if the plant may not be guaranteed to last a century.

### EXHAUSTED RESOURCES.

What are you bothering your father about? asked the boy's mother. I want him to tell me a story, and he says he doesn't know any. Perhaps he will make up one as he goes along. I asked him to. But he said he had been testifying before an investigating committee all day and had used up all his material.

## JEWELS HID IN A CHAIR

MRS. HURD CONCEALED HER VALUABLES IN ITS SPRINGS.

Then Sent It Away to Be Repaired—The Gems Finally Recovered at An Upholsterer's.

Nobody outside of the members of Hiram Hurd's family would have suspected that the big arm chair in Mrs. Hurd's bedroom contained anything but solid comfort.

But for some months past Buffalo has been the scene of many burglaries. Homes, whether occupied or not, have been entered and the premises ransacked for valuables. So it was that Mrs. Hurd, fearful of being robbed and searching for a safe place to conceal her jewels, found an empty space beneath the springs in the armchair and placed therein her jewel case, the contents of which she values at \$5,000.

For several days she congratulated herself that no safer place for the concealment of her gems could have been found, and having no occasion to wear them, she left them in their hiding place.

It was on Friday that Mr. Hurd noticed that the big armchair looked a trifle worn and that it needed re-covering. He therefore ordered Jabez Loton, an upholsterer, to remove the chair to his shop. Accordingly the chair was delivered to an expressman, who carelessly loaded it upon an uncovered truck and drove away.

### ON ITS ARRIVAL

at the upholstering shop the chair was rolled into a back room to await its turn to be repaired.

In the meantime Mrs. Hurd was blissfully unmindful of the whereabouts of the family jewels. She had seen the chair taken from the house, but it never occurred to her that within it she had hidden brooches, sunbursts, rings, and watches containing diamonds, rubies, pearls and emeralds. The night following, however, Mrs. Hurd suddenly remembered. The next moment she had awakened her husband and shortly afterwards the two were being driven towards the upholsterer's. Mr. Loton was at home.

Accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Hurd, he unlocked his shop and brought out the armchair. The upper part of the old upholstering had been torn off by a workman. As Mr. Loton turned his hand under the hanging that concealed the springs, the silence of the anxious little group was almost painful. The upholsterer's hand brought out a small, square, plush-covered case. Yes, there was the case! Were the jewels still in it. An examination of each article in the case showed that none of its contents were missing.

Then Mrs. Hurd thought of her hand-some little gold watch, studded with diamonds, which she had put in a fold of the upholstering. A search for this revealed that it was gone.

But the next morning a workman in the shop handed the watch to its owner, saying that he had found it in the chair and taken it for safe-keeping.

### ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Ten is gathered from the plant four times a year.

In three years the progeny of a pair of rats, under favorable conditions, will number 1,000.

Every prudent young man in Chicago, when he takes a lady to a theatre, carries \$3 in his inside pocket. This is to pay her fine in case she refuses to remove her high hat.

A snowdrift near Dodge City, Kan., delayed a railroad train for ten hours. The passengers could get nothing to eat but oysters and eggs, which they found in abundance in the express car.

In six months wheat will shrink in bulk two quarts to the bushel, or six per cent. It therefore follows that 91 cents a bushel in August, just after the wheat is threshed, is equal to \$1 in the following February.

Just before his death C. Jerome Cary, of Milwaukee, directed that his body be cremated and the ashes used to nourish a certain rose bush. He further directed that the roses be distributed among his friends.

An electric mouse trap is something new. A bit of cheese is attached to an electric wire. The mouse or rat to get at the bait must stand on a metal plate, and the moment he touches the cheese he is shocked to death.

A shorthand typewriter is in use in Boston. The size is eight inches by seven, and it is supplied with a roll of paper. The reporter listens to a speaker, fingers the keys, and the speech is taken down on the endless roll.

A Scotch minister in Melbourne has his male choristers arrayed in Highland garb, and the females in the costume of the "Lady of the Lake." The hymns are sung to the music of the bagpipes and the church is crowded.

Dr. Calot, an Italian physician, practicing at the Rothschild Hospital in Berk-sur-Mer, France, has succeeded in straightening thirty-seven hunchbacks. All those operated upon were children, and in no case has he failed to remedy the deformity.

It is against the law to erect in Providence, R. I., a frame building covering more than 2,000 square feet. A builder is about to construct a bowling alley there, 40 by 80 feet, and will have 14 feet of it, with the entrance, in Providence and the rest of the building in the adjoining town of Johnston.

### NOBS UNDER ARREST.

The Marchioness of Donegal, a peeress of Great Britain, has very often been sent to jail for short periods after being arrested on the streets of London for drunken and disorderly conduct. The Baroness von Gleissenberg and her pretty daughter, the Countess Waldeck, the two Sicilian Dukes of Villorosa and Prince Caraciolo are all in jail, and the sins charged up to them are larceny and fraud, perjury and forgery, assassination and wife murder.