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BOWSER PLAYS HORN

Undertakes to Develop What He Calls Talent For Music.

HE STARTS ON THE CORNET.

Weird Noises Soon Attract a Crowd in Front of the House That is Dispersed by His Wife—Musical Career is Cut Short.

[Copyright, 1907, by T. C. McClure.]

Mrs. Bowser happened to be upstairs the other evening when Mr. Bowser reached home, and he had five minutes in which to hide a bundle that he had brought under his arm. Throughout the dinner hour she noticed that he had a triumphant look on his face, and now and then he gave vent to a soft chuckle, but she did not seek to fathom the mystery. If he had bought and brought home an X ray plant in order to discover if the cat had swallowed the ten cent piece he had lost in the morning he would have something to say about it in due time. He hung off longer than usual, but after finishing dinner and smoking half a cigar he turned on her and blandly said:

"Mrs. Bowser, you don't begrudge me any little happiness I can take around the house, do you?"

"Why, of course not," she promptly replied.

"You know I'm not much of a hand to go out evenings."

"No, you are not."

"I think it is a husband's place to pass his evenings at home as much as possible, but of course he wants a little something to divert his mind. I don't care to read and you don't care to play cards, and as it is a bore to run into the neighbors' I am sometimes a bit lonesome. It has seemed to me that if I had a musical instrument of some

against the common people. It would just fit Mr. Bowser. He had the wind built. He could lay back in his Morris chair and blow and blow and blow and

feel ten times the satisfaction of beating Mrs. Bowser at euchre. The instrument was purchased.

"And now I'm told that I have no ear for music," said the purchaser as he lifted it up and puckered his lips for a "toot." "I am coolly and calmly and deliberately informed that I can't even whistle a tune, and I am recommended to hire a hall. By John, we'll see about it! The neighbors object to a little soft music, do they? We'll see about that too. We'll see whether the neighbors run this house or I do."

Mr. Bowser sat down and drew a long breath; then he raised the cornet to his mouth and let her go. The sound was a combination of grizzly bear growl and the shouts of a man slowly sinking to a horrible death in a quagmire. Other sounds followed. They were sounds of saws sawing against iron. They were sounds of a man with the asthma trying to hurrah for Bunker Hill on the Fourth of July. They were sounds of five or six dogs engaged in deadly conflict over a bone and five or six more joyously hastening up to take part in the scrap. The pawnbroker had told Mr. Bowser that when he got the thing to going not to stop and let it cool off, but to keep it at the red-hot pitch. The instructions were carefully followed until the wind gave out, and the noise died away like the tail end of a cyclone. By that time Mrs. Bowser had come downstairs to say:

"Do you know that you will scare the cook to death with that noise if you keep on?"

"Blast the cook!" retorted the player as he raised the horn and blew another melody of wails and screams.

"And that pedestrians are already stopping at the gate!" she continued as she looked out of the window and caught sight of four men hanging on the fence.

"Blast the pedestrians!"

"And the neighbors will be knocking at the door. The folks that moved in next door two weeks ago are from the country and not used to such noises."

"Woman, retire! Retire upstairs! Retire to stay retired! I have hired my hall and propose to play this horn as long as I want to."

Music Was Weird.

Mrs. Bowser could do nothing else. Then Mr. Bowser resumed. The revolutionists that killed the king that blew on that horn had the proper idea of things. They knew that it was either his life or theirs. It emitted groans and grunts and toots and wails. It sounded flats and it sounded sharps, and between them it sounded several other things. Mr. Bowser had been insulted by Mrs. Bowser declaring that he was no musician. The thought of that helped his wind at least 50 per cent as he blew. He had been advised to hire a hall. He rolled his eyes around the room and imagined that he was in a hall filled with 10,000 people and that he had got to toot loud enough to send the shivers up and down the spines of every listener. For ten minutes the ruction went on, the earnestness and the determination of the player increasing every second, and then came a thundering knock at the front door to interrupt a long drawn wail. Mr. Bowser answered it. There were two policemen there and a crowd behind them.

"What the devil is this?" demanded one of the officers.

"Look at the red faced murderer!" added the other.

"A rope and a limb!" shouted the crowd.

Then Mrs. Bowser came down the stairs and talked softly and sweetly to the officers. She explained that it was only Mr. Bowser and it was only one of his little ways and that if they would not club or lynch him he would soon tire of his new toy and be looking after a chicken farm or a squab ranch, and in five minutes she had worked the crowd out of the yard. Then she took the horn out of Mr. Bowser's hands and said:

"When you get ready to retire, you can come along up."

Three hours later, as he had not appeared, she slipped downstairs in a wrapper and found him asleep on the lounge, and there were undried tears on his cheeks. His musical career had been cut short. M. QUAD.



"BLAST THE COOK!"

sort to play on it would take up my time and add what you might call zest to the occasion."

"But you haven't the slightest idea of music, you know," she rejoined without weighing her words.

"What? What's that?"

"That is, you haven't what they term a musical ear—that is, you don't sing, and the time you got a harp and tried to learn to play on it pedestrians stopped at the gate to see what was going on."

"By the seven spotted bulls of Bahan, Mrs. Bowser, but do you know what you are saying and who you are saying it to!" she demanded with a face as red as fire.

"I mean that you kicked the harp outdoors after the third evening."

"Never! Never in all this world! I gave it up amply because of the cramp in my fingers. You tell me that I have no ear for music! Why, woman, I was leading a church choir while you were wearing short dresses. Is this insult intended to drive me out into the world tonight to get drunk and smash up some saloon?"

"You know it is not," replied Mrs. Bowser. "It is nothing to your discredit that you can't whistle a tune. There are lots of people that way."

"More inausult, eh?"

"I mean that you couldn't—that is, I hoped you hadn't brought home another harp. The cook is very nervous, you know, and some of our neighbors don't even like to hear my soft playing on the piano. If you wasn't to take lessons and would hire some hall—"

Was All Mixed Up.

Poor Mrs. Bowser was all mixed up and could not finish.

Mr. Bowser, who was as pale as the dead and as weak in the knees as if he had seen a bear, looked at her for a moment and then pointed to the hall and stairs and said:

"Woman, you may go to your room. I will excuse you for the rest of the evening. To-morrow morning I will endeavor to find out whether you have a brain storm or wish to drive me from my home in ignominy and humiliation."

Mrs. Bowser went. She was glad to go. Mr. Bowser looked after her for a moment with set jaw and then brought out his package from its hiding place and removed the wrappers to reveal a secondhand cornet. He had seen it in the window of a pawnshop as he was about to pass, and while he stood looking at it the pawn man came out and offered him a bargain that he couldn't resist. It was the veritable cornet that a king of France was playing on when the revolutionists called to say that he must part with his head to show that he had no hard feelings

Leap Year Laugh.



"You look worried, old man?" "Yes. Had three proposals last night and don't know which one I ought to accept."—New York World.

Boiling It Down.

"Pimmie, what is your father's objection to me?"

"He says you don't amount to anything, Percy."

"Was that all he said?"

"No; that was only a small part of it."

"Tell me the rest, Pimmie."

"The rest of it consisted of strong adjectives. You don't expect me to repeat those, do you, Percy?"—Chicago Tribune.

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NO FORESTS IN 1942.

All the timbers in the United States will be cut within the next twenty-three to thirty-three years. This, at least, is the startling statement made by Appleton's Magazine in an article on national waste which is to appear in the March number. To back up its assertion it quotes figures. The present consumption of timber is approximately 100,000,000 feet a year, and the annual growth is about 40,000,000,000 feet. The estimates of the present total supply vary from 1,400 to 2,000 billion feet. Taking the former figure, it is found that by 1932 there will be practically no merchantable timber left in the United States while, even if the larger estimate is correct, it will all be gone by 1942. The moral pointed by these statistics, of course, is the need of immediate action if the nation's not to be robbed entirely of one of its most important natural resources. The Appleton article points out that other sources of national wealth are being depleted in the same way as the forests, although in these other cases the limit of actual exhaustion is not so close at hand. The assertion is made, however, that the coal supply will last no more than another hundred years; that over a million tons of fertile soil is washed away yearly by the rivers, largely because of floods, due to the denudation of forest lands, and that the source of agricultural wealth are being undermined by improper methods of cultivation and neglect of fertilizing. The remedy proposed for this state of affairs is to arouse the interest of the club-women of America in a movement to combat national waste of all kinds and to urge the conservation of the natural resources of the country.

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DID LEE EXPECT DEFEAT?

The General's Significant Statement After Sailors Creek.

My last official intercourse with General Lee was on the retreat. I was sent to him with dispatches from President Davis and reached him near midnight of April 6 near Rice's station. I approached without being challenged by a single sentinel and found him standing near a smoldering fire with one of his hands resting on an ambulance wheel. He was dictating some order to Colonel Marshall, who sat in the ambulance with a lap desk receiving his dictation. As General Lee spoke he gazed into the bed of coals as if weighing every word. There was no staff or escort about, so far as I could see. Touching Sailors Creek, he spoke bitterly and said in answer to Mr. Davis' desire to know his proposed line of retreat that it was beyond his control; that he had intended to retreat by the line of the Danville road, but had been forced off that route by the arrival of Sheridan ahead of him at Burkeville; that he was then following the line of the Southside road to Lynchburg, but the enemy was out-marching him and might force him off; that his movements were dependent on the developments of each hour, and then he added: "How can I tell? A few more Sailors Creeks and it will all be over—just where I thought it would end from the beginning." When I first published this statement its truthfulness was questioned. Fortunately I afterward saw two of his staff, both of whom said they had heard him express himself in the same way. There may have been times when General Lee, elated by some of his surprising successes, felt hopeful about the triumph of our cause. From the probabilities based on numbers and resources his judgment may have been warped away now and then by the feeling he expressed when, after Second Manassas, Sharpsburg, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, he said, "No general ever commanded such troops as those under me." But his mind was too mathematical in its workings, and all its calculations were too habitually based upon what could be done with a given number of men and a certain amount of material to make him forget the vast disparity between the contestants or hope for ultimate triumph.—John S. Wise in Circle Magazine.

One Way.
 Husband—I don't know how much of an allowance to give you. Wife—You know how much you can afford, don't you? Husband—Why, yes. Wife—Then give me as much more as you can spare.—Illustrated Bits.

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