

MR. AND MRS. BOWSER

They Find Country Life and Its Pleasures a Sham.

MR. BOWSER TRIES MILKING.

Why Bill Didn't Go Up in His Balloon—How Appearances Deceive—Had the Qualifications.

"Well, what do you think?" exclaimed Mr. Bowser, as he came hurrying home from the office the other afternoon.

"Have you gone and got some more hens or bought another horse?"

"Mrs. Bowser, the event of our life is about to happen."

"You don't! You don't want cool breezes—fresh eggs—fresh berries—rich milk—songs of birds—lowing of the kine and rust from care?"

"You will be disappointed if you expect any such thing."

"I will, but I don't know what the country is. You are always ready to throw cold water on any of my plans. I shall go, anyhow."

"That was the beginning, and at the end of three days I yielded, woman like. I knew we should be back in four or five days, however, and I arranged with the cook accordingly. One Monday morning we took the train and started, having engaged a farmer's daughter to take charge of the kitchen, and at the nearest railroad station we were met by a farmer and his lumber wagon. The sun poured down the hottest, the wind had covered grass and bushes, and we jogged and jolted along the farmer queried of Mr. Bowser:

"Come out for your health, I suppose?"

"No, sir. I am here for my health, I suppose?"

"Has, eh? Well, there's hope of it, and I'm thinking you'll get all you want in about a week. I think a city chap is a blamed fool to come out here."

"Do you? Why, the doctors recommended it. That boy ought to gain a pound a day, and I am sure my wife will brace right up with those pastoral scenes before her eyes."

"The doctors said the pastoral scenes he'd be cured!" growled the farmer as he turned to his horses, and those were the last words he uttered until he landed us at the gate.

It was a comfortable frame house, and I did not observe the surroundings until after dinner. It struck me that Mr. Bowser had suddenly lost his enthusiasm, but I didn't know why until I got out doors. The barn had partly fallen in, giving it a weird and lonely look; most of the fencing was down, a gust of wind had laid the smoke house on its back, and nearly every tree and bush about the house was dead or dying.

"Is this one of the pastoral scenes you referred to?" I asked of Mr. Bowser.

"There you go!" he snapped. "You can't expect things to look as nice out here as in Central park. We come for the balmy breezes and the rest."

"Didn't you say we should hear the notes of quails and whippoorwills?"

"Yes, but don't rush business. They will come around in due time."

For dinner we had some salt pork, potatoes, bread and butter and coffee. When Mr. Bowser hinted about fresh eggs the girl replied that the only hens which ever collected eggs were now engaged in the lumber business. When he asked for cream for his coffee she replied that the cow hadn't come up that morning. As for fresh vegetables, the season had been so dry that none had matured.

The cow came spluttering up about 5 o'clock, covered with flies and mosquitoes, and the girl hinted to Mr. Bowser that he was expected to milk.

"Oh, certainly," he replied. "I wouldn't give a cent for farm life unless I could milk a cow or two. I used to sing a ballad while I was milking."

The girl and I watched him as he took the pail and stool and approached the cow. The cow also watched him. Folks generally sit on the stool and milk a cow.

We saw the cow turn her head and regard him with amazement and contempt, and this increased as he worked away for four or five minutes without bringing a drop of milk.

"What are you trying to do?" I called to him from the gate.

"Mrs. Bowser, when I want to learn anything about a cow I'll ask you for the information. I think I know my business."

So did the cow. She had been fooled with long enough, and she suddenly planted a hoof against Mr. Bowser with such vigor that he tumbled over in a confused heap. Between us we got him into the house and the girl laid the milking. Mr. Bowser recovered from the shock after awhile, and I felt it my duty to inquire:

"Mr. Bowser, don't you think a week of these pastoral scenes will be enough for us?"

"No, nor six weeks!" he growled. "Nothing would do but you must get into the country, and now I'll give you enough of it!"

"Why, Mr. Bowser?"

"You needn't why Mr. Bowser me! You gave me no peace until I agreed to come, and now I'll remain here five straight years!"

trip to the clouds who had the nerve to go. A young farmer about 20 years old stepped forward as a candidate, but while the crowd was cheering him a voice called out:

"Hey, Bill! I want to speak to you a minute."

It was his father, and leading him to the outskirts of the crowd he halted and asked:

"Bill, d'ye know what ye ar' doin'?"

"I'm a-goin' up in that balloon, dad."

"Expect to git down alive?"

"I don't know."

"Well, ye never will!"

"Why?"

"When you left home this mornin' you had sixty cents in cash. I wanted ye to leave it home, but you wouldn't."

"I've got it yit, dad, a lackin' three cents gone for peanuts."

"Yes, I s'pose so, and that purfessor knows it. That's why he's encouragin' you to go. When you git up thar' among the clouds he's goin' to rob ye."

"Shool' dad! I'd have him took up when I got down."

"Not much, Bill. Arter he robs ye he'll throw ye overboard, and us who ar' lookin' up will see ye come sailin' down like an old gander skimmin' over a hess pond. Ye'll strike somebar' over in Sheppard's pasture, and ye'll go into the silo about eighteen feet afore ye bring up."

"Honest Injun, dad?"

"Bill, did I ever lie to ye? I may be able to fish up one o' yer shank bones to take home, and when I hand it to mother and tell her that's all that's left of William Ackford Moses Schenckshorn, what's she goin' to say and how she's goin' to feel?"

"Shall I back water, dad?"

"I would, Bill—I sartainly would. I know it would be sartin' to brag of if ye got down alive, but ye never would."

"If I back water kin I spend them fifty-seven cents?"

"All, mostly, but not quite all. S'posed ye buy a cokenut and a cigar, and I'll kinder help out and smoke as we jog along home, and save the rest for a rainy day. Times is goin' to be awful hard this fall, Bill."

"Yes, I guess. Well, it's a egg, dad, and you jist don't worry no more. You kin go back and watch the balloon, and I'll kinder aiger around to rids a grocery. I've bin tastin' cokenut for the last five minits."—New York Sun.

How Appearances Deceive.

A portly citizen left a Woodward avenue car at High street between showers yesterday, but was hardly on the sidewalk before he began yelling and beckoning at the car.

"It's agin orders to stop except at crossings," observed a passenger on the rear platform, as the conductor reached up to the bell rope.

"Yes, but he has probably forgotten something."

"Well, let him get it when the car comes down. I have no patience with forgetful men."

"I guess I'll stop, anyhow."

"It's a shame to do it."

The car was stopped and the man came running and puffing to call out:

"Left my \$5 silk umbrella in the car."

"Yes, and here it is. I was keeping it for you!" replied the individual who had opposed a stop.

"Thanka. You are an honest man. If there were more men like you this would be a better world to live in. Here—have a cigar."—Detroit Free Press.

He Had the Qualifications.

"I don't know what the country is. You are always ready to throw cold water on any of my plans. I shall go, anyhow."

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