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Elk River Lodge No. 35 A.F. & A.M.



Regular Meeting held first Friday in each month. Visiting brethren cordially invited. C. W. Boston, Secretary

Mt. Fernie Lodge, No. 47 I.O.O.F.

Meets every Wednesday evening at 8 p.m. in I.O.O.F. Hall. Robert Dudley, Secretary.

KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS

Fernie Lodge, No. 31 Meets in I.O.O.F. Hall every Tuesday evening at 8 o'clock. Visiting brethren cordially invited. Wm. H. K.R.E.S. H. G. Lockhart, C.C.

COURT FERNIE 3172 I.C.F.

Meets in I.O.O.F. Hall last Monday in each month. Visiting brethren cordially invited. C.F. Willis, C.R. Louis Carosella, R.S.

W. R. Ross, K.C. J. S. T. Alexander

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BOWSER PITIES THEM

His Theories About Tramps, However, Are Not Well Founded.

HEARS THE STORY OF ONE.

Attempt to Act the Part of a Philanthropist Again a Failure, Just as His Good Wife Predicted—An Exciting Chase.

[Copyright, 1907, by Homer Sprague.] Mr. and Mrs. Bowser had finished dinner and taken a seat on the front steps to enjoy the evening air when a tramp passed along the walk and looked hard at the house. Both noticed him and Mrs. Bowser said: "There's a tramp who ought to be arrested. He was at the door three different times today, and the last time he was very impudent. If there had been a policeman around I should have given him in charge."



"I should have been very much displeased with you," replied Mr. Bowser. "You can see for yourself that he looks quite ill. He limps. He has a wan and discouraged look. No doubt he feels that every man's hand is against him. He is doubtless hungry and tired, and he must make his bed in the street tonight. I can't understand why you are so hard hearted about your fellow mortals."

"I offered to pay him for cutting the grass, but he refused to work." "Then I should say that he was not able to. He may have a rupture or be a victim of consumption." "I should sooner think he was a victim of laziness."

Nettled by Remark. Mr. Bowser had no particular interest in the tramp, but this remark nettled him. He became a champion at once. Turning on Mrs. Bowser, he said: "I tell you I don't like it at all your turning these friendless men from my door. Not one time in a thousand is it their fault that they have to ask for charity. They are the playthings of misfortune. If you could hear the story of that poor man you would be ready to shed tears. He may have been a rich man once—an eminent citizen and an honor to his town. Misfortune overtakes him and he is brought low. Then he begins to meet stony hearted people of your mold. When you turned him from the door today you stabbed him. When a man gets down it's folks like you that keep him down."

"He's coming back now," said Mrs. Bowser, "and if you feel so sorry for him you'd better call him in. He's looking for an easy mark." "By thunder, woman, but don't you talk that way to me! If the poor man is coming back it is because he saw mercy and pity in my face. Yes, I will call him in. I will call him in and ask him to relate his story, and I'll bet a dollar you'll shed tears over it."

"Excuse me. If he's coming in I'll run across the street and see Mrs. Green for a few minutes. When it comes to the point where I ought to shed tears please call me over." Mr. Bowser got as red as paint in the face and would have ordered her to remain, but just then the tramp turned in at the gate, and she passed him. He stood for a moment at the foot of the steps to see what sort of a reception he was to meet, and Mr. Bowser worked up a smile and said: "Come up here, my man, and sit down. I want to have a talk with you."

"I thought maybe the old gal had queered my case," whispered the tramp as he slowly ascended the steps. "You hadn't putting up any job to have me arrested?" "Not at all, sir. Have a smoke? I am simply a man who believes that other men have a right to live. You are a tramp. I want to know why you are. There must be a story connected with it. You wouldn't go around this way if you were not obliged to."

"Right you are, old man," replied the tramp as he got his cigar alight. "There was a time when I had my own home and family and was one of the best of 'em. If any man had told me then that I would go tramping I should have considered him a lunatic. Never was there a more happy home than mine when I opened a grocery and made a specialty of New Orleans molasses. I cut the price from 75 to 50 cents a gallon to make a draw of it. Do you tumble?"

I put in a hot air engine to help me do the blowing. Greatest success you ever saw, sir. Blew the molasses out of seven barrels a week right along for a year. Blew right along for twelve hours a day and cleaned the most skeptic, and I had the trade of the town all copped when my competitors induced my wife to elope with a minister and break me up. I fainted away when I heard the news and did not come to for a week. During this interval the hot air engine blew itself up and the grocery as well. No insurance. When I told my darling and only child that her dear mamma had taken a skate the little thing fell over dead. I had orders ahead for eleven different jugs of molasses, and when I could not fill them I had eleven suits for damages. I was dashed from the pinnacle of hope to the depths of despair in a fortnight."

"Um, um, um!" granted Mr. Bowser as the tramp paused. "Then my house took fire and burned to the ground. No insurance. Then I went insane and had to be taken to an asylum for a year. When I got out I had just 50 cents and a blasted name in my pocket. I was down, sir, but not discouraged. I bought an elephant on trust and started in to raise young elephants and train them to draw baby carriages. I had ten of them all ready for the market when the niggers came along, and every last one of the beasts kicked over. Wasn't it heart-breaking, sir?"

"Um, um!" "But ambition was not yet dead. I ran across a man who had confidence in me, and he set me up in the squab business. I had a thousand young doves ready for the market and had been promised 50 cents apiece for them when they suddenly changed into woodpeckers and were a dead loss on my hands. Scientific men and naturalists couldn't understand it, but I was ruined again just the same. When I found that this was a fact I threw myself down on the ground with so much force that I ruptured myself in three different places. I lay there until I caught a heavy cold and became the victim of consumption. At the present time my ailments consist of three ruptures, one case of consumption, one enlarged liver, one spine out of plumb and one case of asthma. Yes, sir, but there is still one more fight left in me, and I am here this evening to appeal to you."

"Um, um!" "The crying need of the age is an icebox that can be used for other purposes as well. It can be a piano, a folding bed, a potato bin, a family medicine chest, a clothes closet, an aquarium and a savings bank all in one. I have got it on the market. What do you say to a partnership? You furnish the cash, and I'll furnish the brains."

Orders Tramp to Leave. Mr. Bowser had realized from the first that the tramp had been "stringing" him and had been gradually getting madder and madder. If it hadn't been for Mrs. Bowser sitting on the steps across the street he would have done something the almost at once. As it was, he waited, but when the story was finished he rose up and said to the man: "Get off the steps and out of the yard!"

"Why, Billy, what's the row with you?" was asked. "You are a liar and a deadbeat, sir!" "Oh, come, now, old party, but don't get your back up. If you've got the cash I've got the brains, and we'll make a big thing of that icebox. Suppose you handed me half a dollar now and—"

Then events happened. Mr. Bowser reached for the tramp's collar, and the man started down the steps and began to call names and use swear words. Then there was a whoop and a rush, and a hundred people sprang to their feet in alarm. Out of the open gate like a wild horse running for his life went the downtrodden whose hot air engine had ruined him, and close behind him followed Samuel Bowser, who had been his companion. The evening air was rent with whoops and a clatter and shouts of inquiry and alarm, and pursued and pursued passed on and on and on and left only an eddy of dust behind them to show that human beings had been there.

M. QUAD. "Only a Substitute. "I should think you would be ashamed to grind a hand organ," said the citizen. "That's no work for a strong man." "But my wife she grind been da mosta time," explained the alien, "and she no vera strong." —Philadelphia Ledger.

Not Quite the Same. "It is a wonder we ever got out of that crowd unharmed." "We were something like the fly in the amber, weren't we?" "How do you make that out?" "Why, weren't we, so to speak, preserved in the jam?" —Baltimore American.



Exactly. Waiter—Well, sir, how did you find the beefsteak? Doctor—With great difficulty.

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