

a chance remark which he let drop, and which attracted the notice of Mrs. Townsford, the pleasant little wife of the newly arrived Englishman.

"Bob, dear, don't you think that we had better take it, if there is a chance for a store?" she asked anxiously. "Just think what a good chance it would be for Elgar and me to have a store to run, to bring in a little money, if you happened to be away."

"Well, I don't mind saying that I will go down and have a look at it to-morrow, but further than that I will not go at this time of night," said Bob Townsford, who was a nervous-looking man of middle-age.

"Very good, but don't blame me, stranger, if you find that when you ring for your shaving water to-morrow morning your chance has gone, and Lot 926, Yokohama Street, has passed beyond your power of purchase for ever. We don't let the grass grow under our feet in this city," said Simon Bulkley, unable to repress this bit of bluff, although in the main he was well satisfied with having got so far on the way towards finding a purchaser for the land which he so much wanted to see sold.

Bob Townsford grinned at the mention of ringing for shaving water, for he, his wife, their three children, and a nephew, had as a lodging a miserable shack, which in England would be regarded as a fourth rate pigstye, but he only answered in the jerky fashion natural to him, "All right, if the deal is off I dare say that I shall manage to stand up under the disappointment. But we folks out from England are not always quite so green as we look, and we are not in the habit of purchasing land, without going through the trifling formality of inspecting it first."