

In Pastures Green

kitchen, and while he slithered off slivers with the carving knife he sang "Old Dan Tucker," for his mind was in the past. Then followed much banging of the stove-lids and rattling of coal, while he laid the fire. When the task was done to his satisfaction he returned to the sitting-room, and took up the tale.

"I tell you this life just makes a new man of me. There is nothing like having to do things for oneself once in a while. It was the self-reliance that I cultivated when a boy in the country that made me get along so well in the city that we are now in a position to retire modestly. You just mark my words, Verbena, when you have been here a year you can't be hired to go back to the city to live."

Mrs. Summersox smothered a sigh, and her husband resumed his paper.

Next morning when the alarm clock went off at six o'clock the thermometer had lost its grip on the higher register. But Mr. Summersox was not to be daunted. Flinging back the blankets with an energy that uncovered his patient wife, he bounded out on the floor as well as the chalky deposits in his joints would allow.

"You'd better put on some clothes or you'll catch your death of cold," said Mrs. Summersox in a tone as crisp as the atmosphere.

"Tut, tut," said Mr. Summersox as he groped his way towards the kitchen. Mrs. Summersox tucked the blankets into the small of her back, and awaited developments. Presently Mr. Summersox called in a restrained voice:

"Where in—in this igloo do you keep the matches?"

"Under the pantry shelf."

"Under which shelf, Bezonian?"

Mr. Summersox rarely paraphrased Shakespeare except under the stress of deep emotion.

"Under the bottom shelf."

There was some stumbling, a gratified grunt as the matches were found, and after a pause a sharp exclamation of pain.