

THE CELEBRATED JUMPING FROG

"WELL, SMILEY KEPT THE BEAST IN A LITTLE LATTICE BOX, AND HE USED TO FETCH HIM DOWN TOWN SOMETIMES AND LAY FOR A BET. ONE DAY A FELLER-A STRANGER IN THE CAMP-COME ACROSS HIM WITH HIS BOX AND SAYS:"



WHAT MIGHT IT BE THAT YOU'VE GOT IN THE BOX?

IT MIGHT BE A PARROT OR IT MIGHT BE A CANARY, MAY BE, BUT IT AN'T-IT'S ONLY JUST A FROG.

"AND THE FELLER LOOKED AT IT CAREFUL AND SAYS..."



H'M-SO 'TIS.. WELL, WHAT'S HE GOOD FOR?

HE'S GOOD FOR ONE THING...

...HE CAN OUT JUMP ANY FROG IN CALAVERAS COUNTY.

"THE FELLER TOOK THE BOX AGAIN, AND TOOK ANOTHER LONG, PARTICULAR LOOK, AND GIVE IT BACK TO SMILEY AND SAYS VERY DELIBERATE..."



WELL, I DON'T SEE NO P'NTS ABOUT THAT FROG THAT'S ANY BETTER 'N' ANY OTHER FROG.

MAY BE YOU DON'T. MAY BE YOU UNDERSTAND FROGS, AND MAY BE YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND 'EM.

ANYWAYS I'VE GOT MY OPINION AND I'LL RISK FORTY DOLLARS THAT SAYS HE CAN OUT JUMP ANY FROG IN CALAVERAS COUNTY.

"THEN THE FELLER SAYS, KINDA SAD LIKE..."



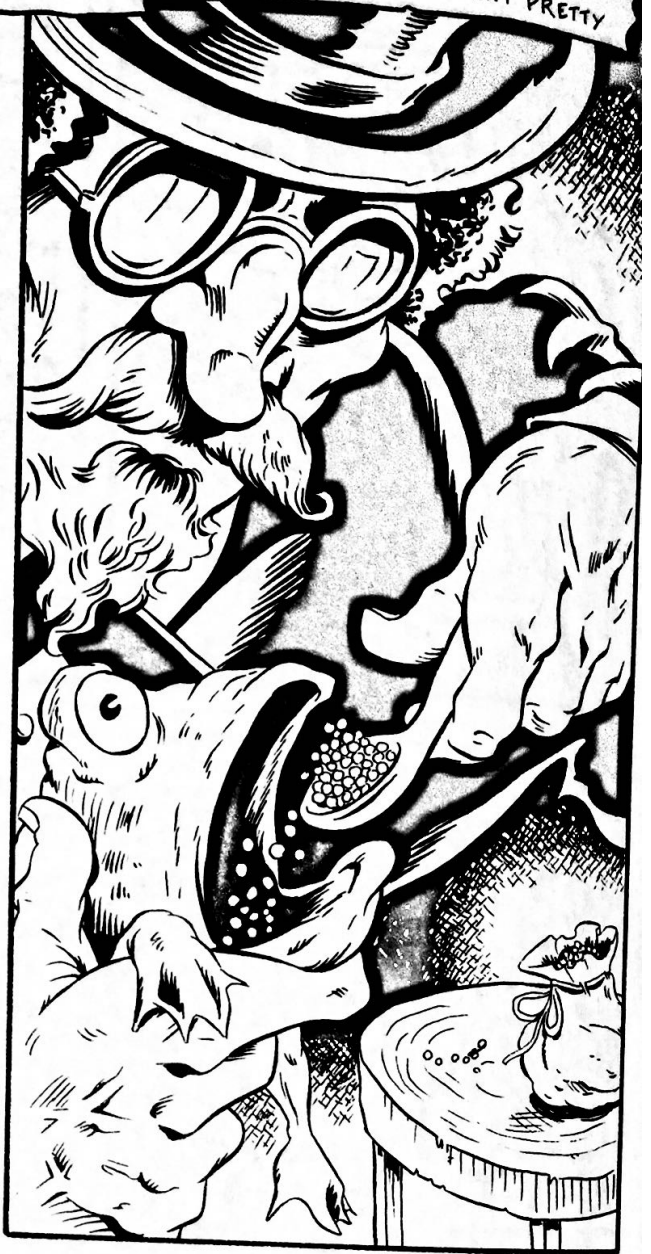
WELL, I'M ONLY A STRANGER HERE, AND I AN'T GOT NO FROG; BUT IF I HAD A FROG, I'D BET YOU.

THAT'S ALL RIGHT- THAT'S ALL RIGHT- IF YOU HOLD MY BOX A MINUTE, I'LL GO GET YOU A FROG.

"AND SO THE FELLER TOOK THE BOX AND SET DOWN TO WAIT."



"HE SAT THERE A GOOD WHILE THINKING TO HISSELF, AND THEN HE GOT THE FROG OUT AND PRIZED HIS MOUTH OPEN AND TOOK A TEASPOON AND FILLED HIM FULL OF QUAIL SHOT- FILLED HIM PRETTY NEAR UP TO HIS CHIN..."



"...AND SET HIM ON THE FLOOR."



"SMILEY HE WENT TO THE SWAMP AND SLOPPED AROUND IN THE MUD FOR A LONG TIME."



HOP

"FINALLY HE KETCHED A FROG."



"HE FETCHED HIM IN AND GIVE HIM TO THIS FELLER AND SAYS:"

NOW IF YOU'RE READY, SET HIM ALONG SIDE OF DAN'L, AND I'LL GIVE THE WORD.





"AND HIM AND THE FELLER TOUCHED UP THE FROGS FROM BEHIND, AND THE NEW FROG HOPPED OFF, BUT DAN'L GIVE A HEAVE, AND HYSTED UP HIS SHOULDERS-SO-LIKE A FRENCHMAN; BUT IT WA'NT NO USE- HE COULDN'T BUDGE."







"AND THEN HE SEE HOW IT WAS ..."



"HE TOOK OUT AFTER THAT FELLER, BUT HE NEVER KETCHED HIM. AND —"

BUT I DID NOT THINK THAT A CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF JIM SMILEY WOULD BE LIKELY TO AFFORD ME MUCH INFORMATION CONCERNING THE REV. LEONIDAS W. SMILEY, AND SO I STARTED AWAY.



WELL, THISH-YER SMILEY HAD A YALLER ONE-EYED COW THAT DIDN'T HAVE NO TAIL, ONLY JEST A SHORT STUMP LIKE A BANNANNER, AND —

"OH, HANG SMILEY AND HIS AFFLICTED COW!" I MUTTERED AND BIDDING THE OLD GENTLEMAN A GOOD DAY, I DEPARTED.

© 2004 KEVIN ATKINSON