

MODERN DEFINITIONS

Poverty—The lack of occupation, not of goods.

Environment—The mould in which experience is cast.

Automobile—A machine for the ruining of dispositions.

Perfect Gentleman—Any politician just before election day.

Old Bachelor—A man who worries lest some woman will marry him.

Duty—A still, small, inward voice that leads to the Custom House.

Garden—A place where your neighbors' hens scratch up your vegetables.

Happiness—Something which fools regard as lacking in a present tense.

ODDS AND ENDS

The four millions of Australians have seven Parliaments, whilst Switzerland, with 3,420,000 people has 22 Parliaments; the United States with 76,000,000 has 60; Canada with 5,324,000 has nine legislatures; and even the Channel Islands with only 96,000 people, have more than one Parliament.

A patient in a hospital had to be fed on a daily diet of egg and port wine. His physician asked him how he liked it. 'It would be all right, doctor,' he said, 'if the egg was as new as the port, and the port as old as the egg.'

Customer (lifting something out with his spoon)—What have you been putting in this chicken broth?

Waiter (closely inspecting it)—That seems to be a piece of chicken, sir. Accidents will happen now and again.

A Scotsman was being shown over a man-o'-war for the first time in his life, and being keenly interested in all he saw, plied his guide with all sorts of questions. The marines seemed particularly to interest him, and, going up to one, he pointed to the 'grenade' in the marine's cap, and asked what it was. The marine looked at him in surprise. 'Don't you know what that is?' he asked. 'Why, that's a turnip, of course.' 'Ach, mon,' replied the Scot impatiently, 'I was no axin' aboot yer head.'

FAMILY FUN

Among the recreations (says the 'Ave Maria') to which earlier generations gave more time and attention than does the present one, the literary puzzle deserves notice. The following, familiar perhaps to our older readers, may interest the young folk.

A complete sentence, hidden in the following formula, has frequently proved a poser even for clever people:—

C C
S I.

Noting that S I spells 'is' backward, and that the C C's are above, or on, the S I, we get: 'The season is backward.'

This plan of substituting actual position for such words as 'once,' 'over,' 'under,' etc., is often followed in the literary puzzle. An old-time instance is—

Stand take to taking.
I you throw my,

which is read: 'I understand you undertake to overthrow my undertaking.'

There is a story to the effect that the clerks in the New York Post Office were once at a loss to discover the proper destination of a letter addressed simply—

Wood.

John.

Mass.

Finally, an exceptionally bright employee solved the riddle, and forwarded the letter to John Underwood, Andover, Massachusetts.

A simple kaleidoscope may be made by any boy or girl by taking a straight lamp chimney—an argand one is best—and painting the outside of it black. If you make a pinhole in a piece of paper and hold it at one end and look at it through the other, it will appear as a number of circles of light. It is the cylindrical surface that reflects and causes this. If now you fasten two pieces of glass at one end of the chimney, placing between them beads and bright colored bits of glass so that they may move as you turn the chimney, you will have as good a kaleidoscope as you would care to buy.

All Sorts

Japan has the monopoly of camphor productions, for it is only in that country and Formosa that the camphor tree flourishes commercially.

The oldest working clock in England is that of Peterborough Cathedral. It was made by a monk in 1320.

Flowers of any species never show more than two of the three colors, red, yellow, and blue. Roses, for instance, are found red and yellow, but never blue; verbenas are red and blue, but not yellow; pansies are yellow and blue, but never red.

Experiments show that wheat has the same nutrition, no matter where it is raised. Even though the plant itself gets very poor, it turns out a grain of uniformly high nutrition. The amount of wheat alone varies.

Mr. Augustus Squire, for sixty-six years a member of the London Cutlers' Company, whose death in his ninety-third year is announced, always burned candles in his house, for he would never have gas or electricity laid on. He never sent a telegram in his life, never used the telephone, and hardly ever rode in a train, travelling by bus, carriage, cab, or boat.

Little five-year-old Annie, who was suffering from a bad cold, went to pay a visit to her auntie. During the day she related various successes at school, and ended by declaring that she could read a great deal better than Sabida, who was eight years old.

'Well,' said auntie, 'wouldn't it sound better if some one else said it?'

'Yes,' answered Annie, with a serious countenance, 'I think it would. I have such a bad cold I can't say it very well.'

Uncle James went to spend a few days with his married sister lately. His sister had five daughters, and Uncle James remarked to the eldest young lady: 'Ah, my dear, what a comfort it must be to your mother to have five daughters—to help her. You see in my family there were five sons and only one daughter, and how hard my mother had to work. I see you are busy with your painting.' 'Yes,' replied the girl, 'I am so fond of it.' 'And that is your sister Jane at the piano, isn't it?' 'Yes.' 'And Ethel and Marjory playing tennis?' 'Yes.' 'And where is Dorothy?' 'Oh, she's out paying visits.' 'And where is your mother?' 'Oh, she's in the kitchen; there's such a lot to do, you see.' 'I understand,' said Uncle James.

The statement—which seems to have been generally accepted—that the United States is at present more prosperous than England, has been challenged by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the Prime Minister of Canada. He points out that Great Britain's trade to-day works out at £20 a head of the population, Canada's at £18, Germany's at £10, while that of the Great Republic is only £8. Commenting on these figures, the 'Westminster Gazette' remarks that 'it is absurd to compare the trade of a country of forty millions with that of a country of one hundred millions'—the population of the United States, by the way, is not much over eighty millions—and be despondent if the total for the smaller country is not greater than that of the larger.' It is equally absurd, surely, to compare the trade of a densely populated country whose population is not increasing as rapidly as its business with that of a sparsely populated one whose population is increasing more rapidly than its business.

An exchange is responsible for the statement that every day there are delivered at the Vatican palace from 22,000 to 25,000 letters and papers, which require the constant work of thirty-five employees in order that the contents be properly brought to the notice of the Pope and the Vatican officials. Comparing the Pope's voluminous correspondence with that of sovereigns and chiefs of States, it is said that the President of the United States receives about 1500 letters every day, and perhaps 4000 papers and books. King Edward of England is the regular recipient of 4000 parcels a day, of which at least 1000 are letters. The same amount of missives burden the daily routine of the German Emperor, who opens the registered letters himself. The Czar's postal burden amounts to 600 letters a day, while 300 are the daily average of missives received by the King of Italy. Queen Wilhelmina of Holland averages only 100 letters every day.