

THE SPARROW AND THE DRAGON-FLY

I was very much amused (writes a correspondent of an English newspaper) by a comical little incident which I witnessed last spring in West street, Dorking. A very large green and black dragon-fly was flying up the centre of the street, pursued by a sparrow. The sparrow would make a dart at the dragon-fly, but before he could get near enough to strike with his beak the fly would give a quick flit with its wings, and turn either to right or left, and before the sparrow could turn again would be sailing serenely up the street. This happened several times, till I suppose the sparrow, tired of the chase, flew to one of the houses and settled on the gutter. No sooner had he settled than the dragon-fly turned, and flew full at the sparrow, who at once flew off in a fright. The dragon-fly pursued him for some little distance, but came back and took up his flight up and down the centre of the road. I have never seen anything like it before. The dragon-fly seemed to know that the sparrow could not catch him, and to show its utter contempt turned and drove him away.

HE KNEW

A teacher was telling her little boys about temptation, and showing how it sometimes came in the most attractive attire. She used as an illustration the paw of a cat.

'Now,' said she, 'you have all seen the paw of a cat. It is as soft as velvet, isn't it?'

'Yes'am,' from the class.

'And you have seen the paw of a dog?'

'Yes'am.'

'Well, although the cat's paw seems like velvet, there is, nevertheless, concealed in it something that hurts. What is it?'

No answer.

'The dog bites,' said the teacher, 'when he is in anger; but what does the cat do?'

'Scratches,' replied the boy.

'Correct,' said the teacher, nodding her head approvingly.

'Now, what has the cat got that the dog hasn't?'

'Whiskers,' said the boy on the back seat; and the titter that ran around the class brought the lesson to an end.

ODDS AND ENDS

Tommy: 'What is a retainer, pa?'

'A retainer, my son, is the money people pay to us lawyers before we can do any work.'

'Oh, I see. It's like those slot gas meters. The people have to pay their money before they get any gas.'

'Are you feeling very ill?' asked the doctor. 'Let me see your tongue, please.'

'What's the use, doctor,' replied the patient; 'no tongue can tell how bad I feel.'

FAMILY FUN

The Magic Triangle.—Here is an interesting experiment you might try:—With a wet lead pencil draw on thick paper a triangle—whether the sides are equal or not makes no difference. Lay it on the surface of a basin of water with the drawing up, and very carefully fill the space inside the dampened lines with water, so that there will be a triangular basin of water on the swimming sheet of paper. (The water will not extend beyond the wet lines of the drawing.) Now take a pin or a needle, or any thin, smooth, sharp-pointed instrument, dip its point into this triangular basin anywhere but at its centre of area—say, very nearly at one of the angles. Be careful not to touch the paper, and so prevent its free motion in any direction, and you will find that, no matter where the point is placed, the paper will move on the water until the centre of the basin is immediately underneath the point of contact with the paper.

What State reminds you of a great rainfall?—Ark.

What State can be often multiplied?—Tenn.

What State commences the domestic work?—Wash.

What State is mightier than the sword?—Penn.

What State is always sure of itself?—Kan.

What State has a medical degree?—Md.

What State is a chronic invalid?—Ill.

What State is found in bulk?—Mass.

What State suggests a sheltered spot?—Del.

All Sorts

The rest cure becomes a habit with some people.

Some of the great Atlantic liners employ 150 firemen.

Regret is something we feel for the mistakes of our friends.

A horse always gets up fore parts first and a cow directly the opposite.

'They have some china that has been in the family for years.'—'Indeed? Haven't they any servants?'

One of the most annoying things in the world is to be prepared for an emergency that doesn't keep its appointment.

Buckingham Palace cost a million pounds, and the ball-room, which is now being renovated and re-decorated, absorbed £300,000 of that amount.

When a vessel is on her trial trip she runs four times over a measured mile, twice with and twice against the tide. Her average speed is thus arrived at.

A teacher in the public school asked the children to define the word 'advice.'

'Advice,' said a little girl, 'is when other people want you to do the way they do.'

Tomato plants have been grafted on potato plants, giving a crop of tomatoes above ground and of potatoes below. Potatoes grafted on tomatoes have produced flowers and tomatoes and a few tubers.

'I am proud to say that my grandfather made his mark in the world,' observed the conceited youth.

'Well, I suppose he wasn't the only man in those days who couldn't write his name,' replied his bored companion.

While a small boy was fishing one Sunday morning he accidentally lost his foothold and tumbled into the creek. As an old man on the bank was helping him out he said: 'How did you come to fall in the river, my little man?' 'I didn't come to fall in the river, I came to fish,' replied the boy.

'Father,' said little Rollo, 'what is a speculator?'

'Anyone, my son, who goes on the Stock Exchange and loses.'

'And what is a financier?'

'Anyone who goes there and wins.'

Automatic savings banks on the principle of the penny-in-the-slot machines have been installed in all the Berlin schools. The children receive numbered counters in return for the coins dropped in. When they have collected ten of these counters they take them to the schoolmaster, who presents them with savings bank books, in which the amounts are entered.

Rufus Choate once endeavored to make a witness give an illustration of absent-mindedness. 'Wal,' said the witness, cautiously, 'I should say that a man who thought he'd left his watch at home an' took it out'n his pocket to see if he had time to go home to get it—I should say that feller was a little absent-minded.'

Two little sisters, seven and nine, who were taken to see 'Othello,' were much impressed by the death scene. 'I wonder whether they kill a lady every night?' asked Lucy.

'Why, of course not, Lucy,' said her sister, 'they just pretend to. It would be too expensive to really kill a lady every night!'

Two children stood in their kitchen watching a pot of chicken soup warming on the stove, when suddenly it began to bubble.

'Freddie,' inquired the little girl, 'what makes it bubble up?'

'There's a chicken in there,' explained the little boy, 'and it's tryin' to talk under water!'

A Scotsman and an Irishman once had a quarrel. They agreed upon a hand-to-hand encounter, to be fought to a finish, and the one who wished to acknowledge himself beaten had to shout 'Sufficient.'

After a full hour's hard pugilistic work, the Irishman at last roared out:

'Sufficient!'

'Ma conscience!' said the Scotsman, 'if I havena been tryin' to mind that word for the last half-hour, but couldna for the life o' me think o' it!'

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