

USEFULNESS OF SHARKS.

A Word of Praise For the Scavengers of the Ocean.

The shark is undoubtedly a "dog with a bad name." He is called upon to do the "dirty work" of the sea, or the "sailor's foe" or any other scurrilous name which happens to be handy. Much mud is thrown at him, and as he seldom finds a defender most of it sticks. Hard lines this! Because in reality this blue water bogy is a humble and useful public servant, who performs uncomplainingly the duties connected with the sanitation of the seas.

The shark is the common scavenger and general undertaker of the ocean. He is not and, for reasons connected with his very moderate speed limit, never can be primarily a fish of prey. Open any captured shark and you will find clear proof that this is so. A few tangled bits of rope yarn, a battered corned beef tin, a corked bottle containing an insulting message to the finder (thrown overboard by some nautical wag) or a sailor's cap which has been lost in a gale, all tend to show that the shark is a fish of businesslike habits, with a keen eye to any chance windfalls which may come in his way. But the more digestible contents of his stomach, consisting mainly of carrion of every kind, all give the clearest of factory evidence that the original owners of them were not alive—in fact, were very much dead—when this marine sanitary inspector came along and, condemning them as nuisances, removed them into his own internal refuse bin.

A large accumulation of carefully collected evidence on this point proves conclusively that there are, as a matter of fact, only two articles of his ordinary menu which the shark is able to capture alive—namely, an occasional unwary sea fowl which he may happen to surprise asleep on the surface of the water, and the ugly, octopuslike squid, whose limited powers of locomotion give a chance to our hungry four-knot prowler.

The shark, then, so far from being the gore dyed pirate which the novelist paints him, is a mere hardworking, commonplace drudge, and as such deserves, if not kindness, at any rate, toleration.—Pearson's Magazine.

POINTED PARAGRAPHS.

Jealousy is like enmity. The less said about it the better.

The club all through life seems to be in the wrong hands.

The meanest father that ever lived isn't half as mean as the meanest husband.

Occasionally love affairs drag on so that Cupid disappears and Father Time takes his place.

When there is sickness and trouble and mother is sent for that is one occasion when no one notices she wears old fashioned clothes.

Don't keep your eyes on the man you have just heard something bad about. It is more important that you keep them on your mouth.

If a man is saying anything he shouldn't and his wife gives him a little punch under the table he takes it for an encore and says it again.—Atchison Globe.

Early Glassmaking.

The first attempt at glassmaking in this country was some years before the Revolution and was made at Quincy, Mass., by a company of Germans. Some specimens of their articles still exist. The place in Quincy where their manufactory was established acquired from them the name of Germantown, which name it retains to the present time. The site of their manufactory is now occupied by the institution called the Sailors' Snug Harbor. About 1785 Robert Hewes, a well known citizen of Boston, made probably the first effort to establish a window glass manufactory on this continent. Mr. Hewes carried his works to the fuel and erected his factory in the forest of New Hampshire.

Safety in Elevators.

Many persons have an objection to riding in elevators, or, more properly speaking, this objection should be classed as a feeling of dread or fear. But according to the superintendent of a big office building in Philadelphia the safest place for a person to be in an elevator—that is, statistically speaking. In the set of elevators for which statistics have been kept by the superintendent there has been an average transportation of 2,400,000 persons each year for seven years, an aggregate of 16,800,000, and of this number but one person has been injured, and that injury did not result fatally.—Rochester Post-Express.

A Famous Widow.

One of the most famous widows of antiquity was Agrippina, the widow of Germanicus. During the lifetime of her husband she attended him in all his campaigns and shared his dangers. Suspecting that her husband had been poisoned, she had his presumed murderer assassinated and was herself soon after treated with such indignity by Tiberius that she was driven to despair and starved herself to death.

Tradition Defied.

The bull had just entered the china shop. "Here," he remarked, "is where I knock tradition endwise." Carefully backing from the place without so much as jarring a saucer, he inquired the route to the stockyards and went his way.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Breaking the Record.

Small Brother (enthusiastically)—Oh, grandma, Harry broke the record at the college contest! Grandma—Well, I declare, that boy is always breaking something! What will it cost to fix it, or will he have to get a new one?

A Striking Fact.

A young man was riding in the cab with a locomotive engineer.

"Now," said the young man, shuddering, "suppose a stage load of children were to glide on to the track from that lane—what a blessing it would then be if you could stop short, instantly, like a man walking."

"Blessing?" said the engineer. "Why, young fellow, if that stage you speak of were to appear now, and I could stop short like a man walking, I wouldn't do it. Instead, I'd keep right on and kill the kids."

"Why?"

"Because it would be the more humane course. In one case there would be a stage load of kids slaughtered; in the other case there would be the slaughter of a trainload of people. This train is going at the rate of forty-five miles an hour, and the sudden stoppage of a train going at that rate would give the passengers precisely the same shock that they would get from a fall of fifty-four feet—a fall from a housetop."

Preparing For the Storm.

A correspondent in the north of Ireland sends the following account of an interesting incident that came under his observation:

Being on a walking tour through Inishowen and passing along the edge of Lough Swilly, the romantic Lake of Shadows, he noticed an immense gathering of rooks on the sandy shore. In company with several others, the tourist was attracted by this novel spectacle and began to wonder at the cause of it. An old man who was working in a field near the place offered an explanation. He said that the birds were picking up sand to ballast themselves in a storm and that when they did so it was a sure sign of approaching bad weather. He added that on shooting rooks after a gathering of the sort he had found that they were loaded with sand. As a matter of fact, the gentleman concludes, a violent gale set in early next morning.—Pearson's Weekly.

The Spider's Web.

If we compare the dimensions of the spider with those of its web we are forced to admit that the little creature is a true engineer, able to construct a cable network of relatively enormous size. Thread after thread is put in position in the desired and necessary order, and sometimes prolonged observation on the part of the investigator is required in order to understand the reasons which direct the spider in its complicated operations and which make it always follow the same order and the same laws. Some of these reasons are explained by geometry, others by the strength of materials, and he who succeeds in discovering the "why" of all the interesting details of the method employed is compelled to admit to himself that he could not have achieved so good a result with the same materials.

Poor Richard.

"In December of the year 1732," says Bigelow's "Life of Franklin," "Franklin commenced the publication of what he styled 'Poor Richard's Almanac,' price fivepence. It attained an astonishing popularity, and at once. Three editions were sold within the month of its appearance. The average sale for twenty-five years was 10,000 a year. He was sometimes obliged to put it to press in October to get a supply of copies to the remote colonies by the beginning of the year. It has been translated into nearly if not quite every written language, and several different translations of it have been made into the French and the German. It contains some of the best fun as well as the wisest counsel that ever emanated from his pen."

China's Flag.

The flag of China is one of the gayest among ensigns. The body of the flag is pale yellow. In the upper left hand corner is a small red sun. Looking intently at the sun is a fierce Chinese dragon. The dragon's belly is a brilliant red and white. His green back is covered with stiff knobs. He is standing on his two hind paws and the left fore foot. His feet are five-toed and slightly hooked. His long, five forked tail stretches away in the rear. The dragon's neck is arched back. His mouth is wide open, and he looks as if he were about to try to swallow the red sun.

Then and Now.

"When old Fladger came to this town twenty-five years ago," said the man in the mackintosh, "everything he had in the world was on his back."

"And now?" queried the man who had his feet on the table.

"Well, his wife and six daughters have relieved him of the burden. They carry it all on their backs now."—Chicago Tribune.

Postprandial.

"Judge Goodliven just went down the street. I thought you said he was attending a big banquet to him this evening."

"Not at all. I saw him coming out of Del's, and I merely remarked there was a big dinner in his honor this evening."—Philadelphia Ledger.

Procrastination.

How mankind defers from day to day the best it can do and the most beautiful things it can enjoy without thinking that every day may be the last one and that lost time is lost eternally!—Max Muller.

Sufficient Reason.

Roomerton—Guess I'll have to give up boarding. Flatleigh—Going to get married? Roomerton—No, but my landlady wants her money.—Chicago News.

A joker is near akin to a buffoon, and neither of them is the least related to wit.—Chesterfield.

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