

THE CURIOUS TADPOLE.

Maybe He Turns Into a Frog and Then Maybe He Doesn't. If a tadpole cannot get to the top of the water when it is at the time of life when it is breathing by means of its gills, like a fish, it will not become a frog. It will then always be a tadpole. Keep a tadpole in cold water and in the dark or away from the light and it will be years getting to be a frog. Left to the course of nature, says Browning's Magazine, the tadpole becomes a frog in from six to eight weeks, although it will have been two years arriving at that chance to change into the mature frog. The tadpole's mouth is so tiny that it would be difficult to insert a pin-head into it, yet it has horny jaws and a sharp, biting beak, with three rows of teeth on the upper jaw. A hood grows down and incloses the gills on the right side, leaving them open like a spout on the left side. At this stage of its transformation the tadpole breathes like a fish, taking water through the gills into the mouth and spouting it out on the left side. Its tail is what the tadpole feeds on by absorption of the white corpuscles of the blood during the molting and moulting epoch in its life, when it is fasting. When it is ready to eat again the tail and the horny beak are gone, the wide mouth of the mature frog having taken the place of the latter. There are forty species of frogs, only one of which is in South America. Australia has no frogs. Of all those forty species only one is edible—the Rana esculenta—and nowhere is this one more plentiful than in America, although that eminent naturalist St. George Mivart declares that the edible frog is unknown in America. A frog that is common in France will mew like a cat if its thigh is squeezed and emit the odor of garlic. For this it has to go through life bearing the name of Pelobates fuscus. Most species of frogs will not take anything in the way of food that is not a live, moving thing or something with the semblance of life and will starve to death among a million creatures if none oblige the frog by moving.

WHIM OF AN ARTIST.

Turner and His Great Picture, "The Building of Carthage." When Turner exhibited his great picture, "The Building of Carthage," he was disappointed because it had not been sold at once at the private view and angry with the press for criticising it severely. Sir Robert Peel called upon him. "Mr. Turner," said he, "I admire your 'Carthage' so much that I want to buy it. I am told you want 500 guineas for it." "Yes," said Turner; "it was 500 guineas, but today it's 600." "Well," said Sir Robert, "I did not come prepared to give 600, and I must think it over. At the same time it seems to me that the change is an extraordinary piece of business on your part." "Do as you please," said Turner. "Do as you please." After a few days Sir Robert called again upon the great painter. "Mr. Turner," he began, "although I thought it a very extraordinary thing for you to raise your price, I shall be proud to buy that picture, and I am prepared to give you the 600 guineas." "Ah!" said Turner, "it was 600 guineas, but today it's 700." Sir Robert grew angry, and Turner laughed. "I was only in fun," he said. "I don't intend to sell the picture at all. It shall be my winding sheet." For years he kept it in his cellar. Then it was brought up and hung in his gallery, where it remained as long as he lived. When he died he left it to the nation.

Changing a Name. The brother of Mme. de Pompadour had at first been created Marquis de Vandieres, a somewhat unfortunate title for a man of such new nobility, for he soon discovered to his profound annoyance that his enemies would persist in calling him the Marquis d'Avant Hier (the Marquis of the Day Before Yesterday). Mme. de Pompadour, naturally sensitive in such matters, brought the affair before the king and, as a title more or less was a small matter to grant the lady who grasped so much, after due forms her brother became the Marquis de Marigny.—From "Mme. Gaffrin."

Tolstoy Hated Doctors. The late Count Tolstoy loathed physicians, said at a dinner in Washington a Russian diplomat. "You remember how Tolstoy ridiculed physicians in 'War and Peace'? Well, I heard him ridicule three of them to their faces over a vegetarian dinner at Yasnyaya Polyana. "Physicians," he said bitterly, looking up from a plate of lentils, 'may be divided into two classes—the radicals, who kill you, and the conservatives, who let you die!'"

Mental Arithmetic. "Is your young man gittin' a sal'ry, Melia?" "Sure he is. An' what's mo', de boss to! William he's gwine to double it." "Dat's fine! How much he's gittin' now?" "I dunno what he's gittin' now, but I spects it's somethin' like half what he's gwine to git."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Just a Precaution. "So you are attending cooking school?" says the friend. "Are you going to do your own work?" "No. I want to be able to teach my husband how to prepare the meals in an emergency."—Judge.

A Sixth Sense.

An interesting discussion arose at a recent college lecture concerning the "instinct of direction" possessed so marvelously by savage races and by animals. Undoubtedly animals are aided largely by scent. In the case of humans it is different, and some of the pupils argued that the primitive man is able to find his way in the densest forest without taking note of the sun, the wind, the lay of the land or the course of the streams. Therefore it was said he must be guided by a sixth sense because none of the regular five senses could aid him. Other pupils, however, argued that the Indian found his way in places where there were no apparent guides because he knew how, because he had learned all his life how to do it, just as the writer, for instance, will write page after page of copy, spelling all the words correctly, but yet cannot if asked to spell a simple word. This is because he learned the words long ago and his spelling is purely mechanical. It is so with the Indian finding his way through the woods.—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

Fiction or History.

After all, fiction is not always the worst place in which to look for history. There is a story of Mr. Dismal at the time of his extremely bumptious youth when he had just returned from his travels in the east. As a young man, much under thirty, he met Lord Melbourne, who was then prime minister, at dinner. Lord Melbourne proceeded to discourse on the eastern question, but instead of listening to the prime minister with the respect which he ought young Dismal said, "It seems to me that your lordship has taken your knowledge of the east from 'The Arabian Nights'." Some prime ministers I have known would have snubbed the young man severely. Lord Melbourne was not of that kind. He rubbed his hands with great cheerfulness and said to the young man, "And a devilish good place to take it from!"—Lord Rosebery in an Edinburgh Address.

Warming the Eggs.

There was once an old lady in Scotland who kept a few hens. As she lived close to the house in which a church minister lived he asked her to send him two new laid eggs every morning and he would pay her for them. So the old lady sent her girl to the minister's house every morning with two eggs, and the minister's servant always thought the eggs were newly laid because they felt quite warm, as if they had just been taken from the hen's nest. But one day the eggs were cold, so the servant asked: "Are the eggs fresh today, Janey? They do not seem warm." The simple girl looked at the maid and then said, "Oo, aye, they're quite fresh, only my mother could not get the cat to sit on them this morning, as it ran away."

Locating Icebergs.

The captain of an ocean steamer in most cases finds out when his vessel is approaching an iceberg from the men down in the engine room. That sounds queer, but it is a fact nevertheless. It appears that when a steamship enters water considerably colder than that through which it has been going its propeller runs faster. Such water usually surrounds the vicinity of icebergs for many miles. When the propeller's action therefore is accelerated without the steam power being increased word is passed up to the officer on the bridge that icebergs may be expected, and a close lookout for them is established. There are natural reasons for the propeller acting in this way, and sea captains will assert the same thing.

A Remarkable Shawl.

The empress of Russia was once presented with a shawl of a remarkable kind. It is contained in a box only a few inches square, in which it fits easily, yet when it is shaken out it is ten yards square. This notable gift was the work of some women weavers in Oronberg, southern Russia, by whom it was presented. The box containing it is of wood, with hinges, hoops and fastenings of beaten silver.

Trapped.

"I saw the cutest thing today," began Miss Passay coyly. "It was a painting of the—er—what is the name of that little god that represents matrimony?" "Well, now," said Mr. Timmid, "you've got me." "Oh, Mr. Timmid, this is so sudden!"—Catholic Standard and Times.

Force of Habit.

A burglar went home one night, fumbled noiselessly at the keyhole and let himself in without making a sound. He was about to creep softly upstairs when his wife appeared on the upper landing. "Dan," said she, "wot makes ye come in so quiet?" "Blame it," bellowed the burglar, "I thought I was in another house!"

The Puzzling Point.

Teacher—And did you make out a list of the nine greatest men in the history of the world, as I told you? Willie—Almost. I can't pick out the best catcher, though, to save my neck. —Puck.

A Taste of It.

Missionary—And do you know nothing whatever of religion? Cannibal—Well, we got a taste of it when the last missionary was here.—Toledo Blade.

One virtue will efface many vices; one vice will efface many virtues.—Balzac.

His Promotion.

"Pa," said little Johnnie, "teacher is thinking about promoting me." "How do you know?" "From what she said today." "And what was that?" "She said if I kept on I'd belong to the criminal class."

A Failure.

"Yes, I consider my life a failure." "Oh, Henry, bow said! Why should you say that?" "I spend all my time making money enough to buy food and clothes, but the food disagrees with me, and my clothes don't fit."

A Costly Lie.

"My wife found a poker chip in my pocket, and I told her it was a dyspepsia tablet." "That was clever." "Far from it! She swallowed the chip, and the doctor's bills cost me more than the jack pot."

A Double Barreled Joke.

The facetious boarder had the plot laid for a killing joke. "It's a wonder," he said, "that you didn't serve up this hen, feathers and all." "The next time," said the landlady, with marked emphasis, "I'll serve her, bill and all."

Rubbing It In.

He was mumbling about tough steak and cold coffee and making himself generally disagreeable. "Don't growl so over your breakfast, John," said his generally meek wife. "Nobody is going to take it away from you."

A Narrow Margin.

John Stuart Mill was once dining with two brilliant French talkers who were given to monologue. One had possession of the field, and the other was watching him so intently to strike in that Mill exclaimed aloud, "If he stops to breathe he's gone."

Witty Advice.

A witty Dublin barrister was consulted by a physician as to calling out a man who had insulted him. "Take my advice," said the lawyer, "and instead of calling him out get him to call you in and get your revenge that way. It will be more secure and certain."

Generally Breaks Him.

"I see by this fashion journal that the marriage should follow the engagement almost immediately." "That may be all right for the rich, but a poor young man needs a chance to recuperate after buying the ring."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Looking Backward.

"Were you nervous when you proposed to your wife?" asked the sentimental person. "No," replied Mr. Meekton, "but if I could have foreseen the next ten years I would have been."—Washington Star.

Her Fruit.

"I wish I was a fish," sighed Susie. "Why?" "Cause papa said the ocean was full of currents, and I like currants better than any kind of fruit 'cept bananas, apples, oranges and sweet potatoes!"—Pittsburg Press.

He Paid It.

Everbroke—I want to pay you something on account. Tailor (rubbing his hands)—Ah, I'm glad to see you. Everbroke—Yes; I want to pay you a compliment on your artistic way of dunning. Sh—not a word! You deserve it. Good morning.

Cured.

Doctor (to wife of patient)—And—er—I hope you took his temperature this morning. Wife—Well, it were like this, sir. I put the barometer on 'is chest, and it went round to very dry, sir, so I gave 'im a pint of beer and 'e went to work this morning.—London Mail.

His Idea.

"What is your idea of a really perfectly good time, Bjunks?" asked Bjunks, meeting the little chap at the club. "Seeing my mother-in-law off to Europe for six months," said Bjunks without any hesitation.—Judge.

So Settled.

"Yes, I am opposed to American girls marryin' furniturs," said old Mrs. Sipes. "I'm jist that opposed to it that if my girls can't marry people of their own sex they needn't marry at all, and that's all there is about it!"—Lippincott's.

An Odd Blunder.

When the British admiralty built the splendid naval barracks at Chatham it fitted up one of the largest rooms in fine style for court martials and had "Court Martial" inscribed on a big brass plate on the door. When it was about to be used for the first time the discovery was made that the regulations require all naval court martials to be held on the water.

The Feast of Nature.

The Feast of Nature was a grand French revolutionary holiday, held Aug. 10, 1793. A plaster image of Nature was erected in the Place de la Bastille, and the chief members of the convention, public committees and other functionaries knelt in adoration, after which came firing of salutes, dancing and general rejoicings. The holiday celebrated the finished construction of the republic.

THE UPWARD WAY.

The road to success is not to be run upon by seven leagued boots. Step by step, little by little, bit by bit—that is the way to wealth, that is the way to wisdom, that is the way to glory. Pounds are the sons not of pounds, but of pence. —Charles Buxton.

A Joke on the Artists.

Some years ago there was a colony of artists painting in a Maine village some twenty miles from Prout's Neck. All were enthusiastic admirers of Winslow Homer, and all, having had a go at the painting of rocks and sea and realizing how difficult was the task, bethought them of Homer, only twenty miles away. How refreshing it would be to have a glimpse of the man's work in his studio! Fully aware that it was not his custom to admit strangers, they ventured upon the pilgrimage to that shrine. They counted on his wiving the rule where it concerned a group that contained at least one full fledged national academician and several associates of that august body. They all went to Scarborough (Prout's Neck), put up at the hotel and sent him a joint note, signing their names and begging that he would receive them. When the messenger returned they read with dismay that Winslow Homer presented his compliments and begged to be excused from receiving "art students." The joke was so good that the story was given out in artistic circles.—Arthur Hoeber in World's Work.

Mock Suns.

Mock suns are similar in point of origin to the mirages of the desert, only they occur in the arctic circle. As the long winter night of the polar region wanes once every twenty-four hours a slight glow is seen at some point on the horizon. Often accompanying this glow is seen the phenomenon of the mock suns. Several degrees up in the heavens as many as five of these spectral orbs have been seen at one time. Invariably they are all connected in a geometric figure, the suns seemingly bound together with circles and arcs of light. Often when only one appears it is mistaken for the real god of day, and natives rejoice at the early end of the long winter night only to be disappointed as the image disappears. The explanation of the phenomenon is given by physicists as refraction and reflection of light from the real sun below the horizon on the mists in the upper atmosphere.—St. Louis Republican.

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