

THEY ARE FLIES ON IT.

THAT IS THE COMPLAINT ABOUT THE STICKY PAPER.

Astra Agrees with a Correspondent that the Use of Such a Decoy is a Disgrace to Civilization—Her Opinion of People Who Ill Treat Insects.

I see that "subscriber" has taken up the subject of sticky fly paper, and hopes that I will consent to enlist my pen in the same cause. Well I would have done so long ago with the greatest pleasure, if I had thought that it would be of any use for I am cordially in sympathy with "subscriber" on the subject, but when I spoke to one druggist about it, he smiled, the pitying smile one bestows on a sick child or a harmless lunatic, and said that was what the paper was for, they wanted it to catch flies, and he guessed the flies did not mind it when they got used to it.

I agree with "Subscriber" that the use of sticky fly paper is a disgrace to civilization and that the people who use it are more in need of missionaries than the savages of South Africa, who have never been taught any better. Indeed I am inclined to think there is a very strong resemblance between nineteenth century christians, and the inhabitants of darkest Africa, for the amazement displayed by the former, when a decently humane person objects to some of their barbarous practices, is something the same as the King of Dahomey might express when some meddlesome missionary remonstrated with him upon his little custom of having the ankles of all his wives broken, and the entire lot buried alive in his grave, when he dies. Human nature in the block, is I firmly believe utterly brutal, and utterly cruel, and the rare exceptions one encounters during their earthly pilgrimage only serve to prove the rule. I think I have argued before now that the religion of every day—commerce—I was going to say since christianity seems to be reduced to a matter of dollars and cents now, but perhaps I had better say of everyday use, has little or nothing to do with the religion of kindness to all creatures which Christ taught eighteen centuries ago, and the church deacon, and Sunday school superintendent who each step out of their way with equal alacrity to step on the helpless beetle, or crush the unoffending spider, which happens to come in their way.

I have seen women placidly pick up harmless moth millers, and equally harmless and helpless beetles, and drop them inside the lamp chimney, smiling pleasantly and continuing their conversation easily while watching the wretched creatures roast slowly to death! Was ever an Indian roasting his victim at the stake more fiendishly cruel. "I don't like to step on a June bug, and squash him," said a sweet little woman to me. "Because it makes such a horrid noise that I am fairly sick, but I just drop him inside the lamp, and there is an end of him." I have also seen a woman who would have been wounded to the heart if anyone had called her cruel, take a "catch and alive" fly trap, and place it in a rather cool oven, to bake its occupants slowly with just the same expression on her face as if she were going to cook a pan of biscuit. I asked her if she did not think it wrong, and she opened her eyes wide and said she had tried drowning the flies but never felt sure they would not come to life again.

"Then why do you use it at all?" I asked. "Can't you try poison pads, or Dalmatian powder?" "I suppose I could," she answered, "but if you could just see the delight baby takes in watching that trap when it is full, you would not wonder that I use it. Why, she will play with it by the hour, putting her little hand over it to make them buzz, and laughing like a little cherub at the noise they make." She is dead, now so perhaps she may have learned a new code of mercy on that "peaceful shore, where billows never beat, nor tempests roar." But think of the example for the baby!

Human nature is weak, and initiative so what can you expect either in the present, or in the future of a generation who have grown up to see their mothers countenancing cruelties which are none the less sickening from the fact that they are small. The woman who permits her children to watch the struggles of a crowd of hapless flies stuck firmly to a paper which has been covered with a preparation especially designed by some evil mind to keep the wretched creatures alive as long as possible, and condemn them to a death of lung-ringing torture, has no right to complain if one of those children should happen to end his days dangling from a rope, in expiation of the crime of murder, small beginnings often make large endings, and the child who is accustomed to witness suffering unmoved in his infancy may come to regard human life as a very small matter by and by.

"But they are only flies," you say, "Only a pest and they ought to be killed" so some people think. I know and I have seen a grey haired man old enough by at least sixty years, to know better, tear the legs and wings of a fly, and then throw it on the floor to die, just because it had presumed to alight upon his bald head. But even flies are God's creatures and though I well know that they are annoying, I have reason enough, sense enough, and educa-

tion enough to know that God put them in the world for a good purpose, and but for the existence of those humble creatures we should not be able to live in the world at all, in summer, but would simply die, from the impurities which exist all around us, in hot weather, the deadly microbe would carry us off bodily into his lair, and devour us at his leisure, and all the deadly family of germs and bacteria would fatten on our defenceless tissues to a much greater extent than they do now, were it not for this poor little "summer pest" to whom we are so ungrateful that the only return we make him for his invaluable services is the devising of a variety of cruel deaths for him, anyone of which would put the ingenuity of an apache Indian to shame.

I wish, I do heartily wish, that flies could be exterminated for one summer, and that the summer in question would be what is commonly termed a "scorching" somehow I don't think we should hear much about sticky fly paper. And I also wish that the people who hap sold and used sticky fly paper might be the principal victims of the terrible fevers, and plagues which would scourge the earth during the summer. Violent diseases require violent remedies, and perhaps their suffering might teach them a little humanity. The countries where the slaughter of the birds is carried on most extensively, are paying their cruelty now, by having their crops devoured by insects; they have killed their protectors, who are defenders against the ravages of their enemies and this would be the case, only in a much worse degree, if we were without flies to feed upon the impurities which otherwise poison the air, and creep into our veins in the form of malaria.

No, "subscriber" I am afraid it is not a case either for the S. P. C. A. or the Bands of Mercy! I fear any of these organizations would be powerless to effect a reform; the wretched insects are outside of their jurisdiction, at least I suppose so, but if the press of our land would interest itself in the matter, and open its columns as "PROGRESS" has done, to protest on the subject, it might be possible to get a fine imposed upon every druggist who either exposes the loathsome sheets of torture in his window, or keeps it for sale in his shop. If that were impracticable, I should be strongly in favor of boycotting all druggists who sold it.

I do not think I am unreasonable; I know quite well that a certain number of flies must be destroyed else we should be over run with them, but I maintain that it is the duty of all decent people to see that wanton cruelty is not practiced even upon so mean a creature, as a fly. ASTRA.

HEAR SWELL INJUN!

Uses a Hearse for a Carriage and Becomes Leader of the Boo Ton.

When the Indians of the Nez Perces reservation had received their money from the Government they went to the neighboring towns to spend it. Their visit was, of course, anticipated, and all possible schemes were on foot to relieve Uncle Sam's wards of their cash as speedily as possible. The Indians were on the buy, too, and money was no object when anything they saw took their fancy. The redskins took a notion to buy carts, wagons, buggies, etc., and in a short time every available vehicle in the little town of Farmington was in their possession.

There was one old Indian who failed to make a purchase, however, and after all the buggies were gone a desire to possess some sort of conveyance started him on a diligent search. After visiting all the places where vehicles were sold without success he finally learned of a conveyance which, from the description, completely overshadowed anything in point of elegance ever sold before, and the possession of which would render all the other Indians wild with envy. He sought out the owner, who proved to be the town undertaker, and opened negotiations for the purchase of the vehicle. The undertaker soon found the Indian wanted to obtain his hearse. The thought staggered him for a moment, but having an eye to business, and noting the anxiety of Mr. Redskin, the hearse was sold for a good round sum.

The Indian hitched two horses to the sombre vehicle, and putting his squaw and pappoose on the inside, trotted off for home, the proudest coquette that ever strutted in a bow. The other Indians, hearing of his coming, had lined up along the road to watch him pass. Perched on his high seat, he drove haughtily by them, while the little pappoose peered through the glass sides and clapped their hands rapturously. The agent remonstrated with the Indian, but all to no purpose. He retained the hearse, and in his frequent visits to the surrounding towns, driving in his somewhat gloom-inspiring conveyance, is no longer an object of curiosity.

Easy Enough to Do.

A famous lawyer once had a singular case to settle. A doctor came to him in great distress. Two sisters, living in the same house, had babies of equal age, who so resembled each other that their own mothers were unable to distinguish them when they were together; and it happened that by the carelessness of the nurses the children had become mixed. How were the mothers to make sure that they had received back their own infants?

"But, perhaps," suggested the lawyer, "the children weren't changed at all." "Oh, but there's no doubt that they were changed!" said the doctor. "Are you sure of it?" "Perfectly." "Well, if that's so, why don't you change them back again?" I don't see any difficulty in the case.

ONE THEORY ABOUT IT.

WHY THE WHITE MAHATMA CAN DO STRANGE THINGS.

The Philosophy of the Matter Discussed by One Who Witnessed the Phenomena—It is not to be Explained but yet It is Not Due to Trickery.

How does she do it? is the question of the hour, asked of course, about the White Mahatma. And the question though repeated on reams of paper remains unanswered. Speculation suggests reflecting mirrors but no one in any of the immense audiences which have filled the Opera house during the past week has seen or saw through a glass darkly. The theory of careful preparation is also inadequate, as many of the questions are obviously incapable of being ascertained in advance. An interested politician, at one sitting, was answered writing his question as to the probable candidates of his party at the next election; a lad was told the precise date of his birth; while many questions which had not presented themselves to the minds of those who asked them more than a few seconds before were repeated by Miss Fay as soon as they were written. These instances more clearly tend to prove the existence and operation of a force which is perhaps understood by none and is certainly operated with by very few. Its existence is as surely a deduction from the phenomena exhibited during the past week as the virtual prophecy of the position and magnitude of a certain planet before it had swung within the field of telescope. All knowledge, we readily admit, is a matter of degree. There is no being, however insignificant, whose internal existence is not correlated with some outward facts thereby constituting a rudimentary intelligence. The lowest beginning might be taken as that imaginary one of Taine who pictures a bookworm as devoid of any idea of a third dimension of space, namely height. The insect is conscious of traversing his world, a book, longitudinally and transversally and the philosopher propounds the question whether or not the mite would be conscious of some, to him, indefinable sensation when passing from one level to another as at the crease of the leaves. The worm would not be able to recognize this new sensation as being the same as either class of his former experiences. His mind, if such we may call it would not be able to comprehend the new sensation, but he would still feel that there was something beyond his experience. Fanciful as the illustration may seem there is in it a germ of truth. Take a few facts in narrow experience as data for a just hypothesis.

Many of us have at times experienced on entering or beginning to address an assembly, a feeling either of sympathy or opposition. It is indefinite; is not in the appearance of the people; is not expressed by sound or glance but it is there. Its effect is marked. The speaker either launches into his subject freely and buoyantly or with hesitation and embarrassment yet he simply knows that there is a something which he can not define. Similarly on meeting a stranger, many people are either attracted or repelled. The cause of this phenomena is not in the usual qualities of either party. In some cases they may appear to the factors, but in others the moral incongruities of the characters which attract each other is apparent. The fact however, cannot be gainsaid. Before the discoveries which have made brilliant the later years in the field of electrical science were made known, let us suppose that man, without in the least apprehending what he had discovered had hit upon the telegraph or telephone or caused an electric light to gleam. By him the phenomena would have been inexplicable; to others it would have been mysterious and even more inexplicable. Such phenomena, however, would clearly not have depended upon the moral qualities of the accidental operator nor upon the purposes to which his discovery was applied. The fact would remain, awaiting an adequate explanation which in our scientific ages we know it would be forthcoming. Or let us suppose that any naturally intelligent savage, living in a country where snow had never fallen, were shown a thermometer by a European and told that also mercury should shrink to a designated graduation of the scale, under certain atmospheric conditions, a white substance would be precipitated from the air, and would cover the earth to a considerable extent. The savage might believe the statement but he could not really comprehend it until he had seen the occurrence. The explanation might have been made by a quack doctor to a ward politician but this would not lessen its truth.

To apply the principle of the illustrations we must assume that whether ultimately within our comprehension or not there exists as yet undefined force which produces the phenomena witnessed by so many people this week; that the force is of a purely material character in that it has no association with moral conditions and that, as yet, it is not capable of relation by the greater number of human beings.

This, in effect, specializes a sixth sense. The distinction as to the moral qualities of operator of subject is not made with any

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uncomplimentary remarks to the lady whose exhibitions here attracted so much attention, but solely to get rid of the idea which widely prevails that because the cabinet work is probably a trick and therefore a deception even through it may be styled a legitimate one, and that therefore the question answering phenomena are also to be classed as tricks and moral deceptions. The recognition of a power that works those seeming miracles does not necessarily imply any religious belief or ethical development. It is purely a question of science and can only stand in the same relation to religion that all other sciences usually occupy.

His Autograph in Demand. Unsuccessful Author—Jack your fame is spreading wonderfully. Only this a ternaon a friend of mine asked me to try and secure your autograph for him. Successful Author—Why, sure, Tom; glad to oblige him. Who is it? Unsuccessful Author—Isaacstein, the note-broker. He wants it on the back of my note.

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