

## The Joker Club.

"The Pun is mightier than the Sword."

### The Cat as a Lightning Rod.

The fact that neither cats nor back fences are struck by lightning indicates a close relation between the two. It suggests that either the fence protects the cats or that the cats protect the fence. Professor Schmidt, in investigating this matter, demonstrated to his complete satisfaction that there is no self-protecting power inherent in back fences. He found that a spark from a Leyden jar could be passed directly through any back fence, and, on one occasion, having placed a section of back fence on the top of a house, he actually saw it struck and totally destroyed by a thunder-bolt. It was thus made reasonably certain that the immunity from lightning enjoyed by back fences is due to the cats which constantly infest them, and as cats are never struck by lightning, it follows that there must be something peculiar in their electrical condition.

Now, everyone knows that a cat is simply full of the very best quality of positive electricity. If she is rubbed a little in the dark, the electricity streams from her in a shower of sparks. In this respect she differs widely from all other domestic animals. You may take a pig or a horse or a cow into the dining-room closet, and rub it for hours, but it will not give out a spark. The electricity of the cat being positive, it is of the same quality as the electricity of the clouds.

Electricians assure us that electricity of one kind is never attracted by any object charged with the same kind of electricity. Thus, a house, in order to be struck by the positive electricity of the clouds, must be charged with negative electricity, and if by any chance it is full of positive electricity it is perfectly safe. It is the positive electricity of the cat which renders that animal safe in the severest thunder-storm. The positive electricity of the thunderbolt slides off the cat as easily and safely as rain from the back of a duck. The lightning of the clouds may aim at a cat all day but it cannot hit her, and wherever the cat may be she will protect her immediate neighbourhood from lightning not only as well as, but far better than, any lightning rod.

This is the reason why back fences are never struck by lightning. As a rule they are hardly ever free from cats. Prof. Schmidt has made a calculation showing that every cat protects a surface, the square root of which is equal to three times the length of the cat, including the tail. As an average full-grown cat measures eighteen inches from tip to tip, she protects a surface of 2916 square inches, or a section of back fence fifty-four inches in length. Thus, three cats and a small kitten, arranged at equal intervals from one another, are amply sufficient to protect the back fence of an ordinary city lot from lightning, and as an average of twelve cats to a back fence is always to be found, we need not wonder that our back fences are safe.

If we substitute for the lightning rods, which are supposed to protect our houses, but which rarely do protect them, a quantity of cats, disasters from lightning will be unknown. This work of protecting houses is the true mission of the cat. The animal at which we aim boot-jacks and bad language when we find her perched on our roof is really rendering us an important service, for which we owe her a heavy debt of gratitude. Since Prof. Schmidt has made his grand discovery of the protective power of cats we may expect to see a complete change of public sentiment in relation to them. Our insurance companies will insure no houses which are not well provided with cats. On the roof of every house will be placed cat kennels with constant supplies of milk and tender mice, so as to make home attractive to the cats. The

aim of every householder will be to have his roof fairly blossom with cats, and the more he can induce to reside permanently on his roof, the safer he will feel and the lower will be his insurance premium. The day of triumph for cats has been long delayed, but it has come at last. Hereafter, whenever a thunderstorm is in progress, we shall find men and women with their arms full of cats, and invoking blessings on the only sure protection against the bolts that laugh at lightning rods and mock at feather-beds.—*N. Y. Times*.

"Walnut ulsters" is the latest for collins.

A cooking club—the rolling pin.—*Steubenville Herald*.

A nut is full of meat but a falling star is meteor.—*Boston Times*.

A man is known by the company he keeps—out of.—*Somerville Journal*.

"A rolling stone gathers no moss." Who wants to gather moss?—*Webster Times*.

They who live by their wits are sometimes at their wits end.—*Quincy Modern Argosy*.

It is easier to remove the bark from the outside of a sausage, than it is from the inside.—*Syracuse Times*.

"Coming when the dewdrops fall"—cramps, rheumatism, and Mary Ann's steady company.—*Toledo American*.

The Chinaman had a good grip on the idea when he spoke of the cucumber as "no belly good."—*San Francisco Argus*.

"I acknowledge the power of the press," as the maiden said when she entwined her lover's arms and tried to catch her breath.

There is a prisoner in the county jail they call "Bumpings," because he broke into a grocery and raised flour.—*Cincinnati Saturday Night*.

A burglar got into the house of a country editor the other night. After a terrible struggle the editor succeeded in robbing him.—*Phila. News*.

General Hawley says: "The country will not be safe until every American is a politician." All right, General; sit down. It's safe.—*Burlington Hawkeye*.

The hades of bankruptcy is paved with the broken resolutions of merchants who piously resolved but wickedly failed to advertise.—*Gouverneur Herald*.

Nothing makes so much noise as a rickety wagon with nothing in it, unless it be a man who insists on talking when he has nothing to say.—*N. Y. Herald*.

A judge says he can see no difference between gambling in stocks and gambling of any other kind. Probably he has lost in both ways.—*New Haven Register*.

An intelligent compositor, who deliberately sets up "individuals" for "invalids" has a future behind him.—*N. Y. News*. Kick his future.—*Stillwater Lumberman*.

Had the late Mother Shipton any children?—*N. Y. Commercial*. Only one, Eli Perkins Shipton, who is still at work at his mother's trade.—*Rochester Express*.

There are some awful mean men in this town. We tried to make a contract with one the other day, for some advertising, and before we got through with him we decided that he wouldn't be willing to pay over fifty cents to get into Heaven, and even then he'd want two or three complimentary tickets thrown in, to take in some of his friends.—*Evansville Argus*.

Dear girls—Whenever a young man gets so soft that he can be dipped up with a spoon, the best thing for you to do is to dip him up and pour him out over the back fence.—*Steubenville Herald*.

Seven dollars and a half was paid by a Canada harness maker for kissing the wife of a tinsmith. It was altogether too much. No poor man can stand such extravagance.—*Evansville Free Press*.

Nothing could be more generous than the following offer, from a country editor: "Show us a man too poor to pay for a country paper, and we will help him buy another dog or two."—*Peck's Sun*.

A farmer's boy tired of the plow,  
Thought city life the cutest,  
So he resolved to shoot the farm  
And become a pharmacist.  
—*Cincinnati Saturday Night*.

The New York Herald says or about one girl in twenty makes a good wife. About nineteen men in twenty make bad wives—by misusing them; and not one boy in five thousand makes a good wife.—*Oil City Derrick*.

"What are you going to make out of your boy, Bill?" asked one Austin parent of another. "I think Bill will be a great sculptor," was the reply. "Has he any talent that way?" "I should say so. He chisels all the other boys out of their marbles."—*Texas Sitings*.

The grand scramble for appointments under the municipal officers has just begun, and one of them has already hung up this sign in his office: "Lady applicants for clerkships will please weep in the ante-room, as the recorder suffers greatly from damp feet."—*San Francisco Post*.

At a recent party, a young lady was annoyed by the impertinence of a young man, and becoming tired of it, turned toward him rather angrily and requested him to cease his impudence. The young fellow replied: "Please do not eat me." She replied: "Have no fear, sir, pork does not agree with me."—*Hartford Journal*.

The annual election of the Reading Railroad Company is now taking place in Philadelphia, and Franklin B. Gowen, the former president, seems to stand the best chance of once more filling the office.—*Salem Sunbeam*. The question this item suggests is: Why should Franklin B. Gowen, if the prospect is so good for his staying?—*Cambridge Tribune*.

Just as he reached his loving arm  
To twine her waist about,  
She gave a yell of wild alarm,  
And murmured, "Ouch, look out!"

Then as she saw him look so blue,  
She quickly to him cried,  
That her heart was just as fond and true,  
But she'd been vaccinated.

—*Evansville Argus*.

"Say, barber," quoth Alphonso  
To the chap who stirred the cup,  
"Should one shave himself down, so,  
Or would you shave him up?"

"Some," he replied, "would rather  
I'd shave them up, like Brown;  
But when your face I lather  
I must indeed shave down.

—*Hackensack Republican*.

"Papa," said little Harry the other evening,  
"is your father a gun?"

"Why that's a funny question, my boy. Of course, he is not; he is a man."

"That's what I thought; but last night when young Mr. June, that you don't like, kissed sister Mary, over the front gate, she told him to be careful or father would hear; and Mr. June said: 'Pshaw, I ain't afraid of that old son of a gun,' and then they both laughed, and he kissed her again. Ain't that funny?" The old gentleman was absorbed in thought and did not reply.—*Steubenville Herald*.