



YES, "IF."

Says a poky paragrapher
 In a penny morning sheet:
 "We could save a pot of money
 If we didn't have to eat."

That's a fact beyond disputing,
 And it's evident, no less,
 That our wads would be much fatter
 If we didn't have to dress.

Furthermore, the truth here stated
 Should be plain to any gawk:
 We could save a lot on footwear
 If we didn't have to walk.

Then again we'd do more labor
 And some extra shekels reap,
 Also save on beds and bedding,
 If we didn't have to sleep.

Summing up, to this conclusion
 Free indorsement you will give:
 We could be as rich as Rocky
 If we didn't have to live.

DON'T SHOOT—PLL SURRENDER.

My preachment last month about the exchanges being such dry pickings seems to have sorter soured on the stomach of the "Big Pistol" man. He squirts about two columns of his new-fangled, home-made words at me and wants to know if I meant anything personal. He is willing to bet this, that and the other that The Big Pistol was not in that pile of exchanges. You're a good guesser, Ben—The Big Pistol was not there. I get a few choice exchanges that I put in a different pile, and The Big Pistol goes with the choice ones. I read them carefully, squeeze out all the mental juice I can get, and lay them away for future reference.

I take better care of The Big Pistol than the editor of The Lash does. T'other day I happened to step in at the home of L. B. Laws, and I sez to him, sez I:

"Look-ee here, Laws, you must be mighty careless with your firearms."
 "Why so?" sez he.
 "Well," sez I, "just now, as I came in, I saw a Big Pistol lying out there on the walk."

Now, Ben, you know who appreciates you most here at Moravian Falls. You are one among ten thousand, and altogether funny. So just keep The Big Pistol loaded to the muzzle, and every time it fires make the old sinners think judgment has come.

CONSIDER THE FLEA.

Speaking of bravery, what's the matter with the little old razor-backed, hopping flea? It was old man Solomon, I believe, who advised us to consider the ant. But I think Sol let a mighty good chance get away when he failed to call our attention to the festive and fleet-footed flea.

Say, you old puckery plugs of humanity, did you ever lay aside your corn-cob pipe long enough to consider the flea? Did you ever wake up in the shank end of the night with a sensation as if a fisherman was digging for bait in the small of your back?

I can see you with my mind's eye as you get up in your shirt-tail and light the lamp. It doesn't matter to you that the window is open, and that the young courting couples are passing on their way home from night meeting. I see you twist that flowing garment first to one side and then the other, and crane your neck like a sick gander as you try to take a fine sight down your backbone.

At last you catch sight of the cause of all your trouble. He is sitting cross-legged under the hem of your shirt-tail and quietly chewing on that hunk of meat that he excavated from the region of your spine.

You set your jaws like a vise and your fingers like a steel-trap, and—grab! You rub that shirt-tail between your finger and thumb till it begins to smoke, and then you open up, expecting to find the mutilated remains of that flea. But about thirteen times out of a dozen you will be somewhat surprised at the abrupt and pronounced manner in which he is not there.

You rub liniment on that flea-bite, at the same time thinking a few words that it isn't proper for nice folks to say. Then you sadly puff out the light and tumble back into your bunk. You ain't more than got to sawing gourds right good till Mr. Flea is back on the job with a steam drill and two or three hired hands.

Ah, dogon your spotted hide, mister, you can't get ahead of the flea. He is the most active and elusive creature in all the earth. He can bite you on the hip or the big toe, and then be a hundred yards off and sound asleep in the dog-house before you have time to grab at him. The flea has absolutely no fear.

I don't know whether he is naturally a dare-devil, or whether he just ain't got sense enough to be afraid. But I guess he knows that the clumsy fingers of a mere human are not hard for him to dodge.

The flea can out-jump all creation. He is about one-sixteenth of an inch long, and he can easily jump five feet, or 960 times his own length. The average man is nearly six feet tall. In order to jump as far as Mr. Flea (considering the size of the jumper) a man would have to jump something over a mile. And wouldn't that be some jumping, though? If you could jump 960 times your own length, you could draw a bigger crowd than all the circuses and soon be richer than John Rob-a-feller. And yet the little old pesky flea can do that and we never think anything about it.

If there was an animal a million times bigger than you are, I think you'd be sorter careful how you messed with it. You wouldn't be apt to crawl up its leg and bite it on the belly or the shoulder blade. You'd be afraid. But you are a million times bigger than the flea, and he don't ask you one bit of odds. He just shoulders his little meat-axe and goes galloping over your mortal corporosity any time he feels like it, and the only thing you can do is to claw and cuss.

And so it seems to me that even the flea possesses some traits of character that we might learn to admire if we would just go at it in the right way.

Therefore I say unto you, consider the flea.

If you are growling at the hot weather now, you will have a chance to change ends with your growler about next Christmas.

CASEY'S PICTURE.

Casey decided to go into business, so he bought out a small livery stable and had a painter make a sign for him showing him astraddle of a mule. He had this sign placed in front of the stable and was quite proud of it. His friend Finnigan happened along and stood gazing at the sign.

"That's a good picture of me, ain't it?" asked Casey.

"Sure, it looks something like you," said Finnigan, "but who in the devil is that man on your back?"

TALK, TALK, TALK, TALK.

I recently saw a newspaper article with the above heading. I didn't read the article, and don't have any more idea than a hog what it was about.

But the head caught me, and I said to myself, "There! Guess I'll just hook that heading and use it as a summer bonnet for one of my own preachments."

Talk, talk, talk, talk.

And then get a long breath and talk some more.

It takes talk to run the world.

And I don't wonder at it, for lots of the talk I hear is enough to run most anything.

It nearly runs me crazy sometimes.

Don't bother to think, but just talk.

Thinking tires the thinker, but talking only tires the listener, and that don't matter.

Therefore talk.

Talk early and often, late and loud.

Go into the office where people are busy, crank your mouth and put it to work.

The boss pays his hands to listen at you talk.

And they enjoy it.

If somebody else is talking about something of importance, that's just the time for you to butt in. Crack away and tell 'em you know more about it than they do.

That's good manners.

It don't matter whether you know anything or not—make a bluff and pretend that you know.

The less you know the more you should talk.

Make up in talk what you lack in knowledge, and maybe you will fool somebody into thinking you are smart.

Exercise is good for the tongue—therefore let it wag.

Tell 'em your name is Mr. Gabby-Jack from away up Longtongue Creek.

JUST DISSOLVED.

"So you broke your engagement with Miss Spensive?"

"No, I didn't break it."

"Oh, then she broke it, did she?"

"No, she didn't break it."

"But it is broken, isn't it?"

"Yes, she told me what her clothing cost, and I told her what my income was, and then our engagement sagged in the middle and just gently dissolved."