IT IS NOT TO LAUGH AT

Playwright Has Wholesome Fear of Ridicule, Most Powerful of Intellectual Weapons.

The playwright's sleventh commandment is, "Thou shalt not get thyself laughed at." Ridicule has always been a most powerful intellectual weapon and one against which, when skilfully used, it is difficult to offer an effective defense. But the playwright's fear of getting himself laughed at is not a personal one at all. At least, it is from a purely professional point of wiew that ridicule appears to him most perilous.

Once I wrote a novel. I never did so much work before or since for \$135.75, and yet I sometimes envy the novelist. At all events, he is master of his own pages. No cat can walk into the middle of page 168 without his consent. No blundering flyman can ruin the climax of his "big act" by lowering the curtain too soon or too late. The pet comedy scene of his book is never spoiled and blurred by the arrival in the midst of it of some bibulous party, just from a very gay dinner, falling over every one's feet on the way to their seats in the middle of a row. Fire engines never shriek past the doorway of his pages just as the hero is saying plaintively to the sympathetic heroine, "But why do I tell you all this?" Nobody in the front row ever falls in a fit and has to be carried out by the ushers right in the middle of his funniest paragraph. All his doors close when he gloses them and stay closed till he opens them. His actors always say what he tells them to say .- A. L. Thomas in the New York Tribune.

TWAIN AND THE OFFICE BOY

How the Late Humorist Rebuked by Wit an Officious Youth.

Mark Twain did not cherish a fondness for the average office boy. He had an idea that the genius was insufferable, and invariably when the humorist sallied forth into some business office there was immediate armed hostility between him and the

One day Mark went to see a friend at his office, and the office boy on guard, in icy tones, said:

"Whom do you wish to see?" Mark mentioned his friend's name. "What do you want to see him about?" came next from the boy.

Mark Twain immediately froze ur and then with a genial smile he said: "Tell him, please, I want to ask his hand in holy matrimony."

Paradoxical Problem Is Solved Through Obvious Point in Circumnavigation.

A correspondent sends to the Herald a paradoxical problem which, he believes, originally appeared in Piesse's "Chymical, Natural and Physical Magic," published some 50 years ago. Two persons were born at the same place, at the same moment of time. Fifty years after they both died, also at the same spot and at the same instant; yet one had lived 100 days more than the other.

The possible solution turns on a curious but very obvious point in circumnavigation. A person going round the world toward the west loses a day; going toward the east he gains one. Suppose, then, two persons born together at the Cape of Good Hope, whence a voyage round the world may be performed in a year; if one performs this constantly toward the west, in 50 years he will be 50 days behind the stationary inhabitants; and if the other sail equally toward the east, he will be 50 days in advance of them. One, therefore, will have seen 100 days more than the other.-Glasgow

Home Life in the Windy City. Gustav H. De Kolkey of Chicago had his wife arrested on the charge of robbing him in his own house.

"My wife, her brother and a boarder," he declared, "sneaked up behind me and bore me down to the floor. Then, while the two men held me down, your honor, my wife went through my pockets and robbed me of

"Did you rob your husband?" querled the court.

"I cannot tell a lie," replied Mrs. De Kolkey, simply. "There was no other way to get money out of him. He hasn't given me a cent for a year, and first I tried to chloroform him, but he always sleeps on his face. So I called my brother and we held him and I got what was in his pockets."

"Perfectly justifiable," announced the court.

Seafaring Races.
The pertraits of Captain Amundsen show a certain likeness to Dr. Nansen. Both have in a marked degree the long narrow skull of the Vikings. It is a curious circumstance that the seafaring races, whether on the Baltic or on the Mediterranean, have this type of head, while the inlanders of Europe are predominantly of the broad headed

But it will hardly do to make long headedness the cause of seamanship, as some enthusiasts have done, for the Japanese, who are round headed, take readily to the sea.

DIVORCED FROM DEAD MAN

Queer Requirements Made in France That Official Records May Be Completed.

In France, as in some other countries, every citizen has an official his-Not as varied and interesting tory. as his real history, but still important. From this there follow at times quaint consequences. If a woman is married, for example, a wife she remains officially though the husband may be missing.

Consider the case of the painter who went fishing on Anthie bay. He has not since been seen. The body of one man who went with him was washed ashore lifeless. You would call this tolerably convincing proof that his wife had been made a widow. She thought so and in due time she sought to have it recorded in her official history that she was a widow. We are familiar with applications to a court of justice for leave to presume the death of persons who have vanished. But the French judge was not to be so easily persuaded as our courts. The wife was in her official history a wife and there was no certificate to justify her appellation being changed to widow. Without a certificate or reasonable documentary evi- official, peremptorily.

dence no man obviously ought to die. There was a way round. The bereaved woman applied for a divorce on which I had not asked. This was an the ground of desertion. Since death is beyond dispute the most complete kind of desertion, the court of Montreuil decided that she could not be dead man as a divorcee, which does not seem very creditable to official history.

WHY THE PLANETS COLLIDE

Gravity and Other Agencies Are at Work in Bringing Stars Together.

There is good reason to believe that the bodies in space-both luminous and dead-occasionally fall together, and his conception of such an event was given by Prof. A. W. Bickerton in a late Royal Institution lecture. The collisions do not come at random. Gravity and other agencies are at work, and before two suns collide they come into each other's influence for hundreds of years, being drawn towards each other with constantly increasing speed. As the velocity would be proportionate to size, the collision would take place in the same timeabout three-fourths of an hour-for all bodies. With the collision the two stars become a new one, the tremendous speed is suddenly converted into heat, and the explosive force expands erton believes, explains the origin of Nova Persei, which suddenly flashed out in 1901 with 10,000 times the brilliancy of our sun. This star became the brightest in the heavens except Sirius, and was the most brilliant new star that has appeared in 300 years.

An Expert Name Manufacturer.

scored neatly off an advertising fad that has of late been rather overdone.

"'What shall we name our darling, Jim ?

"Jim wrinkled his brow and re-

"'Well, I submit Childa, Firstbornio, Theboi, Allours, Sunne, Ourown, Our-

"But at this point his wife shut him up. He could, of course, have kept on Pennsylvania, and handled him withindefinitely. You see, he was one of out gloves.. Cannon is a Quaker and those advertisement writers who in- so is Palmer. When conversing privent new names for breakfast foods, vately they drop into the Quaker vertinned soups and patent medicines."

Starving Out Troublesome Pigeons. City hall pigeons are once more under the ban in Philadelphia, and Director Porter is the man who is trying day." to get rid of them. Instead of attempting to do this, as Mayor Reyburn and Director Clay did, by putting up wire screen at the entrance and turning the hose upon the pigeon roozts.

the director proposes to try the star-vation plan upon the flocks.

He has issued orders to the city hall guards to stop all persons from feed-ing the birds in the courtyard and on the northeast plaza and to arrest those who persist in throwing corn, peanuts, cakes and bread to them.

Woman Bootblack.

London is to have its first woman bootblack. A woman has just completed arrangements to set up a bootblacking stand at one of the busiest corners in the West End. She be-lieves herself to be the pioneer woman bootblack in England and declares that the men in the business need not fear her competition, since she intends to devote herself exclusively to polishing the footwear of women and children.

His Sacrifice.

"I suppose, like all government officials," said the man who sneers, "you are making personal sacrifices in or-

der to serve your country." "Yes," replied the village postmaster; "it's pretty hard to have to keep reading addresses when I'd rather be looking at the pictures on the post-

MUCH ADO ABOUT A PENNY

Sample of Extent to Which Red Tape Methods Prevail in Germany.

Germany, declares Mr. S. Laring-Gould in his book, "The Land of Teck," is absolutely swathed in red tape. In illustration, he tells an experience of his own while journeying by rail from Ober-Lenningen to Owen. I asked at Ober-Lenningen for a

third-class ticket to Owen, and supposing that I had got what I asked for, stepped into a third-class carriage. On these branch lines nearly everyone travels fourth. Before reaching the next station-only a mile from Ober-Lenningen, in fact—the inspector appeared. "Hah!" he said. "You have a fourth-class ticket, and are in a third-class compartment. The fine is

six marks." I explained, and offered at once to pass into a fourth-class carriage or pay the difference in the price of

"That will not do. You have in fringed the law, and must pay six marks," the man insisted.

"I get out at Owen, and will explain matters to the station master," I said. I did so.

"The fine is six marks," said the "But, said I, "I demanded a thirdclass ticket, and was given one for

oversight on the part of the clerk." "You should have examined your ticket." the station master insisted. The train was delayed five minutes denied. So the widow is recognized as | while we threshed out the question on an independent woman and apparently the platform in great detail, and the both the law and she are satisfied. But other passengers craned their necks you will observe that the official his- out of the windows of the carriages tory must now record the wife of a and listened with lively interest. At last, reluctantly, the station master

yielded; but I must pay the difference. "What is it?" I asked. "One penny."

FIRST OF ANIMAL HOSPITALS

More Than 2,000 Years Ago One Was Established in India, Says an Authority.

The New York women who have opened a free animal dispensary in this city are regarded as pioneers in a good work. As a matter of fact one must go to the Orient and look back more than 2,000 years to find the first animal hospital known.

The famous Buddhist emperor of India, Asoka, whose long reign from 264 to 227 B. C. abounded in many good works, was probably the earliest to establish a hospital for the treatment of animals, says Our Dumb Animals. Asoka was a true humanitarian as well as a most powerful sovereign and although ruling a vast domain became deeply impressed by the horrors of warfare.

He gave up his desire for conquest the new star at the rate of millions of and the rock inscriptions, which are miles an hour. This, Professor Bick- still extant, record such beneficent planting shade trees, the digging of wells, sending out of missionaries, appointment of special officers to supervise charities, the establishing of hospitals for human kind and animals.

It is of interest to know that the last remaining of Asoka's hospitals was devoted to animals. It covered twenty-five acres and was divided into At a dinner in New York William proper wards and courts for the ac-Ray Gardiner, the advertising expert, commodation of the patients. When an animal was sick or injured its master had only to bring it to the hos-"A young couple," he began, "had pital, where it was cared for without been blessed with the advent of a regard to the caste of its owner, and little son, and the wife, at dinner one where, if nacessary, it found an asylum in old age.

Uncle Joe's Reply. Some members of the house heard a few days ago the strangest combination of sacred and profane language which had ever been uttered on that floor. During a debate Uncle Joe Cannon went after A. Mitchell Palmer of nacular. After the debate Palmer went to the former speaker, who is thirty-six years older than himself.

"Uncle Joe," he said, "thee treated me a little roughly in the debate to-

"Well," replied Uncle Joe, in a mixture of Quaker and Cannonian English, "perhaps I did treat thee a little severely, but blankety-blank, thou deserved every damned thing I said."

A Clear Case. "You claim that the wheel of the defendant's car passed over your stomach," said the defendant's attorney to the plaintiff on the stand. "Yet, here is your open-faced watch which you testify to having carried in your vest

pocket at the time, and the crystal isn't even cracked. How do you account for that?" "Why," said the plaintiff, "the car was going so fast there wasn't time for the crystal to break, sir."-Harper's Weekly.

House Cleaning Time. Woman of the House (answering third ring)-Are you trying to pull the house down?

Book Agent—Beg pardon, madam, but have you the "Life of Grant?" Woman-No; but if was a man I'd have yours in just about one minute. (Slams the door.)

Teacher-There is no glass in the windows of the Eskimos. Jimmie-Ain't that great? I'll bet the kids up there play ball the whole

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