

The Man of Principle

by Ambrose Bierce

During a shower of rain the Keeper of a Zoological garden observed a Man of Principle crouching beneath the belly of the ostrich, which had drawn itself up to its full height to sleep.

"Why, my dear sir," said the Keeper, "if you fear to get wet, you'd better creep into the pouch of yonder female kangaroo--the *Saltarix mackintosha*--for if that ostrich wakes he will kick you to death in a minute."

"I can't help that," the Man of Principle replied, with that lofty scorn of practical considerations distinguishing his species. "He may kick me to death if he wish, but until he does he shall give me shelter from the storm. He has swallowed my umbrella."