

'So did I,' replied Tom. 'I do believe if I hadn't had the brake hard on all the way up, she would have run back again.'

WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN

Mr. W. J. Bryan, the new American Secretary of State, is the most indefatigable of public orators. Once, during one of his candidatures for the Presidency, he made no fewer than 13 different speeches in 13 different towns in the course of a single day, his audiences being computed at about 100,000. He was to have made a fourteenth speech, but when the time came for delivering it he was fast asleep in the train in which he was touring. It seemed cruel to wake him, so one of the newspaper correspondents accompanying him, who happened to bear a close facial resemblance to Mr. Bryan, borrowed Mr. Bryan's slouch hat, personated him, and made the speech which he thought Mr. Bryan would have liked to make. The reporters took it down, the newspapers printed it as Mr. Bryan's, and it was not until after the campaign was over that the secret of its authorship was revealed.

IT'S USE

The Lady Friend: 'What do you use that blue pencil for?'

The Editor: 'Well—to make a long story short.'

DIFFICULT ORDER

This letter was written by a moderately sensible man, about to begin a garden at his suburban home, to a tradesman who sells seeds:

'Dear Sir,—Having one-quarter acre of ground, which is not used for anything but growing stones, I wish to make it into an attractive and profitable garden. Please send me the following:—

'One dozen strawberry seeds.

'One dozen plum seeds.

'Ten square yards grass.

'One bee with hive complete.

'One concrete path, winding.

'Six wallflowers with six pieces wall.

'One safety lawn-mower with patent apparatus for converting into a safety-razor.

'Also please send me enough baskets to hold the strawberry and plum crops and side and back combs for the honey. The grass should be green, and not the withered kind I note in so many gardens. The seeds should be of some flavour that chickens do not like.—Your kind attention will oblige, yours truly, JOHN SMITH.'

ABSENCE OF MIND

Sheridan Knowles, the author of *William Tell*, was one of the most absent-minded of men. On one occasion he sent £200 in bank-notes to his wife, but forgot to address the envelope. The dramatist wrote furiously to the Postmaster-General, and the delay was explained.

On another occasion he met a friend in the street, and said: 'Ah, my dear fellow, I'm off to-morrow. Can I take any letters for you?'

'Well, you are very kind,' said his friend; 'but where are you going?'

'Ah!' replied Knowles, 'I haven't quite made up my mind, yet.'

Rogers was once walking with an equally self-absorbed friend, and in the course of conversation told him that on the previous day a lady, half-recognising him, inquired: 'Isn't your name Rogers?'

'And was it?' mildly inquired the friend.

This is an admirable instance of absent-mindedness.

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FAMILY FUN

TRICKS AND ILLUSIONS.

(Special to the N.Z. Tablet by MAHATMA.)

To Discover a Chosen Card.—To discover a card which has been chosen by a member of the company after that card has been returned to any part of the pack is a sleight which is of the greatest importance to the conjuror, for many tricks are based upon it. A good method is to divide the pack into reds and blacks before commencing the performance. A card is chosen, the conjuror noting whether from the top half, which we will suppose contains the red cards, or from the bottom half of the pack, containing the blacks. If the card is chosen from the reds he must see that it is returned to the bottom part of the pack, and vice versa. A glance will suffice to show the conjuror the chosen card. Another method, as the cookery book says, is to open the pack in the centre and to have a card chosen. This is replaced on the top of the bottom half of the pack. The tip of the left little finger is then inserted between the two halves of the pack, and above the chosen card. If the top half is now carried under the bottom half the chosen card will come to the top of the pack and can be produced when required.

A Startling Card Trick.—The following trick depends for its success upon the performer's ability to find two cards in the manner just described. He invites a lad from the audience on to the stage. This boy, the performer informs his audience, is to assist him in working a great thought reading illusion. The conjuror steps down among the company and has two cards chosen. He opens the pack in the centre and has the first card placed on the bottom half. He inserts his little finger between the two halves, and under the pretence of shuffling the pack, brings the first chosen card to the top. This operation is gone through with the second card, only this time the card is worked to the bottom of the pack instead of to the top. Thus the position is that the two chosen cards are now at the top and bottom respectively. The performer again reminds the lad on the stage that he is to help him in working out the illusion. The performer now takes the pack between his thumb and first finger, which should previously be slightly moistened. He asks the two persons who chose cards to name their cards, and then throws the pack in the air. The two chosen cards which were at the top and the bottom of the pack will adhere to the finger and thumb. They are now quickly drawn into the palm of the hand and as the cards fall in a shower the hand should again be shot forward and the two cards produced. Now turn to the lad who is helping and say 'I've done my part of the trick, will you now do yours by picking up the cards.'

A Good Coin Trick.—Besides being a good trick to perform, the following is a good one to practise when alone, for by it many conjuring mysteries are worked. Turn up the cuffs of your coat and place a coin on your elbow, your arm being bent towards the shoulder. Now suddenly drop the arm and catch the coin in the hand. This is easily performed. You next take a smaller coin and place it halfway between the elbow and the wrist, when by suddenly bringing the hand down the coin will fall into the turned-up cuff and will apparently have disappeared. Now take a tumbler, and bidding the spectators look upwards, inform them that the coin will drop down through the ceiling. By placing the glass at the side of your arm, and elevating the hand the coin will fall into the tumbler.

Another Good Coin Trick.—Borrow a hat and throw into it a few pennies. Hold up the hat and shake the coins. Then ask one of the company to take one out and pass it round, that the date and any slight mark upon it may be noted. One of the company may place a mark upon it with a penknife. The penny having been well examined is thrown back again into the hat. The latter is placed behind the performer's back and placing his hand into the hat he triumphantly draws forth the coin which was chosen. The explanation is the penny having been passed from hand to hand in the course of its examination became warm. When thrown amongst the other coins the chosen one was therefore easy enough to discover.

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