

THE IRONICAL METHOD

The doors of a certain new house had shrunk horribly, as is the way of the modern door made of unseasoned wood. The builder would not send the carpenter to replace them, so the householder tried the ironical method and wrote:—

'Dear Sir,—The mice can run under most of our doors, but our cat cannot follow them. Will you please send a man at once to make room under the doors for the cat, and much oblige?'

Next day the carpenters came.

A LARGE FAMILY

A man remarked that he came from a very large family.

'How many are there of you?' he was asked.

'Well, there are ten of us boys,' he said, 'and each of us had a sister.'

'Good gracious!' exclaimed the other. 'Then there were twenty of you?'

'No,' said the boastful man, 'eleven.'

WHAT IS A LADY

What is a lady? 'The one person one must always be careful to describe as a lady,' says Mrs. Alice Perrin, 'is the female who is most unlikely to be one.' But what is a lady? In such a matter an illustration is perhaps of more value than a definition. Mr. G. W. E. Russell has a story of a house-surgeon of a London hospital who 'was attending to the injuries of a poor woman whose arm had been severely bitten. As he was dressing the wound he said, "I cannot make out what sort of animal bit you. This is too small for a horse's bite, and too large for a dog's."

"Oh, sir," replied the patient, "it wasn't an animal, it was another lady."

IT ARRIVED

A budding author who was making excursions into humor sent a paragraph to the editor of a daily paper. Not finding it printed within a reasonable time or hearing from the editorial department, he wrote about its welfare.

'I sent you a joke about ten days ago. I have heard nothing respecting its safe receipt, and should be glad to hear whether you have seen it.'

The editor's reply was as follows: 'Your joke arrived safely, but up to the present we have not seen it'

HIS FRIEND

A physician who was a guest at a social affair, was placed at dinner beside an elderly lady whom he had not previously met. Almost at once the lady, who was inclined to garrulity began to talk.

'By the way, doctor,' she smilingly remarked, 'ought I to call you doctor or professor?'

'You may call me what you please, madam,' was the physician's quick reply. 'I am frank enough to admit, however, that some of my friends call me an old fool.'

'I see, doctor,' smilingly replied the lady, 'but of course, they must be people who know you intimately.'

SIGNIFICANCE OF COLORS

The curate of a large and fashionable church was endeavoring to teach the significance of white to a Sunday school class.

'Why,' said he, 'does a bride invariably desire to be clothed in white at her marriage?'

As no one answered, he explained: 'White,' said he, 'stands for joy, and the wedding day is the most joyous of a woman's life.'

A small boy queried: 'Why do the men all wear black?'

FAMILY FUN

TRICKS AND ILLUSIONS.

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

The Inverted Glass of Water.—The following is an old experiment to show the pressure of the atmosphere, also an elaboration on the same. Take a tumbler and fill it to the brim with water. Place over it a sheet of paper. If the tumbler be now inverted the pressure of the atmosphere upon the paper will prevent the water from escaping. Not satisfied with this, the conjuror proceeds to show his audience that by his magic power the liquid will be made to remain in the tumbler even when the paper has been drawn away. This he proceeds to do, and is—or should be—rewarded by much applause for the feat. The effect is great, and the explanation simple. The fake employed in the experiment is a small piece of either mica or transparent celluloid—obtainable at most garages. This is cut to the size and shape of the mouth of the tumbler. The latter article is filled with water and the celluloid attached. When performing the trick the piece of paper is placed over the already covered mouth. The celluloid having been damped a little causes the paper to adhere. The whole arrangement is now inverted, and but little wonder will be shown at the paper not dropping, but when this is removed the conjuror meets with a reception which makes him feel that the little time spent over the illusion has been well rewarded.

A Pair of Scissors and Some String.—This is an old but yet very mystifying trick if worked smartly. Take a pair of scissors, also a short loop of string. Pass one end of this loop through one handle of the scissors and pass the other end of the loop through the end which emerges from the handle. Then pull tight and hand the end to a lady asking her to remove the scissors. If she cannot do it proceed to do so yourself by taking hold of the loop which is close to the scissors, pulling on it, passing it right over the scissors and thus freeing the instrument.

A Good 'Sell.'—A slip of paper is handed to a spectator with a request that he will write two or three words upon it. This paper carefully folded is handed to a second person for safe-keeping and a third person is asked to assist the performer upon the platform. The performer takes another slip of paper and writes a few words upon it (after a due amount of 'hanky-panky'). This paper the conjuror folds and hands to the person who is helping him on the platform. The person, who is holding the other strip of paper, is now asked to call out aloud the writing upon it. We will suppose this turns out to be 'Monkey Brand Soap.' The performer turns to the assistant on the stage, and with a magnificent air—that of a man who has succeeded in a great undertaking—asks what is written upon the piece of paper which he is holding. The assistant calls out 'Just the same.' The performer turns to the audience, bows, and the trick is done. Now for the explanation. When the performer has obtained hold of his piece of paper he writes upon it the words 'Just the same.' The rest of the trick requires no explanation. In fact that little sentence is the whole trick. The deception is as perfect as one could well desire. The performer has apparently written upon his paper the very words written by the first person because the assistant upon the stage informs the audience that the words upon his paper are 'just the same.' Thus, everyone is taken in, except the person last referred to, but a friendly wink from the performer, and a whispered injunction to 'keep quiet and help me to produce a great illusion,' will in every case—unless the assistant be a very cantankerous person—succeed.

Let dogs delight to bark and bite,
I do not care a jot;
In sooth it is their own lookout,
So they may get to pot.
But while I am upon this lay
I'll make a slight detour,
And ask you all to drink good health
To 'Woods' Great Peppermint Cure.'

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