

certain length, and the novelist had written several hundred words too many. In order to make the story fit the space at his disposal, the last few paragraphs were condensed into a single sentence. This is the way it read: 'Von Berken took a small glass of whisky, his hat, his departure, no notice of his pursuers, a revolver out of his pocket, and, finally, his life.'

SUPPLYING THE ANSWER

A speaker who relies upon his audience to supply a point he has been trying to drive home has too much confidence in his own powers. There was the quack doctor, for example, who said 'I have sold these pills for over twenty years and never heard a word of complaint. Now, what does that prove?'

'That dead men tell no tales,' came the answer.

Another instance is furnished by a priest, quoted by the *Michigan Catholic*. He was giving a lecture on the evil of great wealth, and turned to a man among the audience whom he knew to be the father of seven girls. 'Think,' said the priest, 'of being the proud father of seven daughters. Think who is the happier—the man with a million dollars or the man who is the father of seven daughters? I will ask you, Mr. Sheldon, who do you think is the happier?'

'Father,' replied the man, cheerfully, 'I think that a man with seven daughters is the happier. A man with a million dollars worries for more. A man with seven daughters never does.'

HOW COULD HE

A shambling old negro went down the street, leading a big dog, with a 'For Sale' sign on its collar. A little girl espied the dog and wanted it. She teased so hard that her mother finally asked its price.

'Ten shillings,' said the negro, an expectant grin dividing his features.

'Ten shillings!' exclaimed the lady, 'Why, the dog isn't worth that much. I'll give you two shillings.'

The negro drew himself up indignantly. 'Lady,' he said, 'Ah couldn't think of it. Why, de fellow ah got dis dog from gave me five shillings to get rid of him!'

A BIRD STORY

Some years ago my father had a pair of common white pigeons (says a writer in the *London Spectator*). They were very tame, and became very much attached to him, so much so that they were almost his constant companions, accompanying him in his walks or when out driving. They would answer his whistle like a dog, and would alight on his proffered hand or enter his pocket if opened for them. A sceptical friend thought they would show the same familiarity to any other person, and, to give them a fair trial, he procured a suit of clothes of the same color as that which my father wore.

Arrayed in his disguise, our sceptical friend, imitating my father's whistle as nearly as possible, whistled to the pigeons. Immediately they left their perch on the house-top and flew down to the hand held out to receive them, but when they came within a few yards of it they suddenly checked themselves, fluttered perplexedly for a few moments around our friend, and then flew back to the house-top. This was conclusive evidence. But a sad accident happened. One morning one of the pigeons was found upon the high-road dead, its body bearing marks of injury, but from what cause we never knew. We carried the dead body home and buried it in a sunny and quiet spot in the garden. For three days the surviving pigeon, with untiring energy, searched the country far and near for its mate, but in vain. It refused to touch food, and even the influence which my father usually exercised over it was gone. On the third day we found it dead in the dovecot, its little heart broken with grief by the loss of its life-long companion. We buried it beside its mate. Since then my father has never kept pets.

A LITTLE GENTLEMAN

A little boy and girl were once playing together, and the boy struck the girl, hurting her so that she began to cry. The boy looked at her a few moments, then he said, 'I didn't mean to hurt you, Katie, and I'm sorry.' The little girl's face brightened instantly and she replied, 'Well, if you are sorry, it doesn't hurt me any more.'

FAMILY FUN

TRICKS AND ILLUSIONS.

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

The Suspended Matches.—The performer shows an ordinary box of wooden matches, one of which he removes, uses, and throws aside. He then turns the box upside down and slowly removes the inner compartment of the box. The matches, however, do not fall out. This inner compartment, still upside down, is now placed on top of the cover which is transferred to the opposite hand. The free hand then takes the interior, still upside down, and slowly returns it to the cover *via* the opposite end. The effect is very pretty. The box and matches are immediately handed for examination. The secret in this case is a piece of match placed across the centre of the box from side to side. This must be broken off the right length to pinch securely across the box, but must not bulge out the sides so as to prevent it being pushed in and out of the cover easily. Place a loose match on top of the cross piece—or, if the box is not too full one or more matches may be removed from under it, and all is ready. In conclusion, when offering the box for examination purposely spill the matches, thereby concealing the short piece.

A Miniature Firework.—Some of the best tricks depend upon chemical action. To make this little firework it is not necessary to be a skilled workman. All the mechanism required is an ordinary clay pipe and a candle. You take some leaves of tinfoil (that in which chocolates are often wrapped will do), and cut them into strips about half an inch wide. Then, holding one of the strips near a lighted candle, you use the tobacco pipe as a blow pipe, and blow the flame on to the tinfoil, when the metallic leaf takes fire and falls in balls of fire, which roll about over the table, sometimes for a considerable distance, and sometimes dividing and giving birth to other balls of fire, which run about in similar fashion. When the flame is strong, and the tinfoil burns quickly, the globules are very abundant, and present the appearance of a veritable shower of fire in miniature. The experiment is absolutely without danger. The combustion of the globules of the oxygen evolved is so complete that they might even drop on a wax tablet without leaving any trace. The experiment is really a very pretty one.

The Vanishing Matches.—This is an amusing trick at the expense of one of the company. The effect is as follows:—The performer asks one of the company to oblige him with a match. He must make sure first of all that his victim uses wooden matches. Receiving the box the performer proceeds to open it, remove a match, and 'light up.' He then returns the box with profuse thanks, and the victim puts the box in his pocket—victim, because the box is empty. The explanation is this: Previous to borrowing the matchbox, the performer has palmed in his left hand an empty interior of a similar box. Receiving the box in the right hand he transfers it to the left, forcing one end on to the concealed 'empty,' which action pushes open the box in the most natural manner, and exposes the matches, one of which is now removed for the usual purpose. The box is then transferred to the right hand, the action enabling him to push in the empty interior which pushes the one which is full into the right hand, where it is 'palmed.' The box is then returned empty.

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