

A PROSPECTIVE CUSTOMER

The English sergeant's eyes glistened; at last he had struck a likely recruit. The youth pushing a milk cart along the street was far too good for such work. He was cut out for the army. Going up to the milk-boy, he asked, smiling the while:

'Would you like to serve your King and country, my lad?'

'Yes, rather,' came the reply, as the boy picked up his measure. 'Pint or a quart?'

A PRINTER'S MISTAKE

A funny mistake occurred lately in printing labels for a meat-preserving company. The printer had been in the habit of labelling tins of beef or mutton, as the case might be, with the words 'without bone' prominently displayed. The company having added kidney soup to its list, the new article was duly ticketed as 'Kidney soup—without bone.'

NOT ON THE MAP

Joan was a most conscientious pupil, eight years old. During one of the school study periods the teacher noticed her searching a large atlas intently with a most puzzled expression. After a few minutes she asked the child what she was looking for.

'Oh,' said the anxious student, 'Miss Kane said we were to find all the places spoken of in the history lesson on the map, and it says that "Columbus was at the Point of Starvation," and I can't find it anywhere!'

A BIG DOSE

A doctor once sent his man with a box of pills to a patient, and a hamper containing six live pullets to be left at the house of a friend. Unluckily the messenger bungled over his errand, and took the hamper to the patient and the pills to his master's friend. Imagine the consternation of the patient on receiving along with the fowls the following prescription:—

'Two of these to be taken every half-hour.'

NOT QUITE

A farmer in great need of extra hands at haying time finally asked Bill Smith, who was accounted the town fool, if he would help him out.

'Wha'll ye pay?' asked Bill.

'I'll pay what you're worth,' answered the farmer.

Bill scratched his head a minute, then announced decisively:

'I'll be durned if I'll work for that!'

CORRECT

A Sunday school teacher who had asked his class what weapon Samson used to slay the Philistines, and failed to get an answer, sought to assist the young ones by tapping his jaw with his finger, saying at the same time: 'What is this?'

Promptly came the response, 'The jawbone of an ass, sir.'

A TALENTED ARTIST

He thought he was a connoisseur, and he was lamenting the decadence of art.

'Look,' he said, 'at the great Italian school of painters. Look even at the old Greeks! Why, Zeuxis painted grapes so naturally that birds came to peck at them.'

'He did, did he?' said a hearer. 'That's nothin'. I've got a friend who paints a dog so natural that he has to paint a muzzie on him to keep him from biting.'

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FAMILY FUN

TRICKS AND ILLUSIONS.

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

The Tied Pack.—This little dodge will set your audience guessing. Tie a pack of cards together with a hair, or two hairs if necessary. You may then throw the pack through the air and the cards will not scatter until the pack strikes a wall, or other hard obstacle, when the hair will break. The hair is, of course, quite invisible at a short distance.

A Sell.—This is a splendid sell for an evening party. The performer comes forward and gravely informs the company that he is about to give a demonstration of his wonderful thought reading powers. He asks a gentleman to take a piece of paper and a pencil and requests him to write down any name he wishes. He is then instructed to fold the paper, place it upon the floor and stand upon it. The performer, with as much gravity as he is able to command now announces that he will call out what is upon the paper. Going to the other side of the room he addresses the gentleman who is helping him, with the words 'You are upon the paper.'

An Effective Card Trick.—Arrange a number of cards in the form of a capital 'Q,' or rather in the form of a circle with a tail to it. Say there are 17 cards in the circle and six in the tail. Now request one of the company to count any number he pleases, commencing at the tail end and travelling up the left hand side of the circle, touching each card, then to count back again, calling the last card touched 'one' and travelling, not down the tail again but up the opposite side of the circle and stopping at the same number. The performer must recite while this is being done. He then comes forward and picks up the card last touched. The result will be the same irrespective of the number of cards employed. The secret depends upon the fact that the card last touched will be the same number from the root of the tail as there are cards in the tail itself. If required to repeat the trick the tail of the 'Q' is re-arranged presumably to increase the difficulty, but really to disguise the necessity of altering the length of the tail. The reason is obvious.

The Balanced Coins.—No particular dexterity is necessary to perform the trick I am about to describe, although considerable care must be exercised for its successful execution. The performer having obtained the loan of three coppers from members of the audience, lays them in a row on the palm of the left hand in which position they may be inspected by all present. He then, with the thumb and second finger of the right hand, grips the edges of the outermost coins and raises all into a perpendicular position. The trick is performed with the actual borrowed coins and the secret depends upon the use of a little accessory in the shape of a thin strip of wood, say a quarter of an inch thick, and in length about one-sixteenth of an inch longer than the combined diameter of three coppers. At the commencement this strip of wood is concealed in the left hand. The performer receives the coins in the right hand, then transfers them to the left hand, secretly placing them in the required position. The coins effectually conceal the piece of wood. Now by gripping the coins together with the piece of wood, no difficulty will be experienced in securing the above result. In conclusion, the coins are again laid carefully in the left hand, then tossed with apparent carelessness into the right hand and forthwith handed to owner. The strip of wood is of course palmed in the left hand in the act of tossing the coins into the right hand.

PILES.

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