

WEEKLY COURIER

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JASPER, INDIANA.

There are two sides to every question except the one which is most dear to your heart.

A man refused an offer of \$40,000 for a horse. Probably he is holding out for a kingdom.

A man named Wind won \$15,000 in a Panama lottery and, of course, blew it all in inside of a week.

It is coming. Some day we will hear of rules requiring airships to turn to the right when passing.

The Goldfield miner who left his fortune to the girl who jilted him must have been mighty glad of it.

Music is said to be the food of love—but you can't induce the butcher and grocer to swallow such talk.

President Roosevelt's idea of providing plenty of shade on the farm should make a hit with the hired man.

Another reason why men don't go to church is that so comparatively few of them are candidates, declares the Ohio State Journal.

A day on the planet Jupiter is said to be as long as 50,000 American days. If we had a holiday of that length we'd never get over it.

"What is more cheering than the sunshine after a storm?" queries the Chester (Pa.) Republican. A storm after too much sunshine, of course.

A Pittsburgh girl offers \$450 for a husband. But if she gets one at that price he will have no assurance that she will not trade him for a \$30 piano.

The West Virginia boy who ran away from home because his father would not let him study medicine has been caught. He will now get his medicine.

Rockefeller's autobiography is to be published in several languages, but for candid expression concerning the distinguished citizen English will remain the vehicle.

A New York bull recently tried to throw a locomotive off the track, and it took three hours to get the meat out of the running gear. This should serve as a warning to Castro.

The arguments for better highways are well known. The interest in the movement grows steadily as population increases, boasts the Chicago Tribune. It is not special idea for the benefit of any particular class.

Not one play in 500 of those that are written in England in a year has in it either an idea, or evidence of clever treatment, says the Weekly Dispatch, that would induce a sane manager to encourage the author.

The older States are slowly coming to a realization of the importance of good highways, affirms the Boston Transcript. They are a vital factor of our general prosperity and therefore among the best investments of public money.

We are the greatest meat eaters in the world as it is, notes the Baltimore News. If scarcity were to drive the housewife to the exercise of ingenuity in devising substitutes, it would be a fine thing for the digestion, the health and the pocketbook of the working man.

Alaska is clearing her title to a star in the flag. This month the last dance hall in the Territory will close its doors, its license being about to expire and a new one being refused. Decency and order are the rule, even in the larger towns, and there are few left of the usual mining camp characteristics, unless it is the high prices which prevail. Though newspapers cost twenty cents apiece they have a big sale.

Philadelphia can probably lay claim to the champion practical joker. Of course, he's Irish, and his wit ought to make the renowned Brian G. Hughes retire from the field. Pat was digging a ditch. On the first day of the job he dug and dug, but made small progress. He went back next morning only to find that what he had done the day before was entirely wiped out by a cave-in. Then a brilliant idea occurred to Pat. Half burying his pick and shovel in the earth, leaving only the ends sticking out, he carefully threw his coat and dinner pail over the edge of the cave-in and then hid. In a short time people came along, took in the situation at a glance, jumped at the conclusion that the laborer had been caught in the fall of the bank, and went to work hastily, trying to uncover his body. Half an hour later three sweating and puzzled men stood by the nearly completed ditch and wondered where the buried man was. Then Pat came out from his retirement and said: "Thank ye, gentlemen. I knowed you'd bite on that."

Astonished the Natives

Remarkable Performance of French Wizard in Algeria

There are several of our older readers who have doubtless witnessed the performances of that famous French prestidigitator, the late Robert Houdin. He was never excelled, and seldom equalled, in his calling. He was well declared to be the prince of conjurers, for he elevated his occupation to a profession, and was an able mathematician and mechanician.

His ingenuity was unlimited, and it was absolutely impossible to detect the secret of his innumerable tricks and performances. Without the least assistance he would hold an audience in delight and amazement for hours, everything being done with a graceful facility which showed that Houdin absolutely enjoyed his business. He taught his son many of his original tricks, but never imparted them to others; while the secret of some of the most remarkable performances has died with their great master, and no one can ever hope to reproduce them.

Probably the first instance in which a conjurer has been called upon to exercise his profession in government employ was that of Robert Houdin. He was sent to Algeria by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs to exercise the black art in that benighted country, hoping thus to destroy the influence exercised among the Arabs by the Marabouts, an influence which was often mischievously applied. By a few cunning, yet clumsy tricks, these Marabouts passed themselves off as sorcerers, and were held in fear and veneration by the ignorant tribes.

The French Government desired to show the Arabs that these would-be leaders among them were mere imposters, and that their pretended supernatural powers were without the least foundation in truth. The best way to do this it was thought would be to send one among them who should eclipse their skill, and thus discredit their science and pretended powers. It was resolved to send Robert Houdin, and the wizard was ordered to appear at the government office in Paris.

Houdin was a little puzzled to know what the Minister of Foreign Affairs could want of him.

The plan and purpose of the government were made clear to him and he entered with spirit into the idea and its successful application. With every facility and all needed protection Robert Houdin sailed for Algeria to astonish the natives.

Arriving under such favorable auspices, he went at once to work upon the object of his mission, and gaping crowds followed him everywhere, thinking him to be inspired. He succeeded in showing the people that he could vanquish the control over the ignorant masses of the population, and thus threw them into such discredit that he succeeded in disarming them almost entirely of their influence.

Still there was one of the Marabouts whom he had not yet met, and who scoffed at the reported power of this French wizard. A day was therefore appointed when the two should appear before the people, and each give evidence of his own peculiar powers.

One of the great pretensions of the Marabout was to invulnerability. At the moment that a loaded musket was fired at him, and the trigger pulled, he pronounced a few cabalistic words, and the weapon would not go off. Robert Houdin instantly detected the trick and showed that the touch-hole of the musket was carefully plugged. This rendered the Arab conjurer furious, and he, of course, abused his French rival without mercy.

Houdin was perfectly cool, and said: "You are angry with me?"

"I am," said the Arab. "And would be avenged?"

"Yes."

"It is very easy."

"I will show you," said Houdin quietly.

The Arab was all attention.

"Take a pistol, load it yourself. Here are bullets. Put one in the barrel. But stop—"

"For what?"

"Mark the bullet with your knife, so that you may know it."

The Arab did as he was told.

"You are quite certain now," said Houdin, "that the pistol is properly loaded?"

"Yes."

"Tell me, do you feel no remorse in killing me thus, even though I consent?"

"No."

"It is strange."

"You are my enemy, he coldly answered, "and I will kill you."

"Wait but a moment."

Houdin then stuck an apple on the point of a knife, and calmly gave the word, as he held the fruit raised in one hand:

"Fire!"

The pistol was discharged, the apple flew far away, and there appeared in its place, stuck on the point of the knife, the bullet the Marabout had marked. The spectators, though aroused to intense excitement of feeling, remained mute with stupefaction, while the Marabout bowed before his superior, saying:

"Allah be great! I am vanquished." Great was the triumph of the French wizard.

Houdin then called for an empty bowl, which he kept constantly full of boiling coffee, though but few of the Arabs would taste it, for they were sure that it was the devil's coffee-pot whence it came.

He then told them that it was within his power to deprive them of all strength, and to restore it to them at will, and he produced in illustration a small box, so light that a child could lift it with the fingers.

And now came their astonishment. This box suddenly became so heavy that the strongest man present could not raise it, and the Arabs, who prize physical strength above everything, looked with terror upon the magician, who, they doubted not, could annihilate them by the exertion of his will.

The people expressed this belief, in which Houdin of course confirmed them, and promised that at a day appointed he would convert one of them into smoke. The day came and the

strong was prodigious. A fanatical Marabout had agreed to give himself up to the French sorcerer for the experiment.

The preparations were on a grand scale.

The Marabout was made to stand upon a table and was covered with a transparent gauze. Then Houdin and another person lifted the table by the ends, when the Arab disappeared in a profuse cloud of smoke. The terror of the spectators was indescribable. They rushed out of the place, and ran a long distance before some of the boldest could make up their minds to return and look upon the Marabout. They found him near the spot where he had so mysteriously disappeared, but he could not answer their questions. He could tell them nothing at all, and only gazed wildly at them like one bereft of his senses. He was entirely ignorant of what had happened to him.

This was Houdin's closing exhibition in Algeria. He had filled the minds of the people with wonder, he was venerated by all, while the pretentious Marabouts were in utter disgrace; their influence was banished. He had met these conjurers on their own ground, and had in a most incredible short time completely vanquished them.

The object of the French Government was completely attained, and Houdin returned to his home. He had made no pecuniary terms with the Minister of Foreign Affairs before obeying his orders, but so well satisfied was the government with his remarkable success that besides paying all his expenses he was presented with a check upon the treasury for \$50,000 francs.

Such is a single chapter in the life of a famous French wizard—Lieut. Murray in New York Weekly.

FARM TO BE ADAMLESS EDEN.

Russian Woman Plans Philanthropic Experiment on Long Island.

Long Island is to have an "Adamless Eden." Mme. Davidoff, a native of Russia, but now a resident of New York City, is establishing an experimental farm at Bellcrest, near Northport, Long Island, which will be operated by women. Men will be barred from the greenhouses, where fruits and flowers are to be grown every month in the year by the aid of electricity. While similar experiments have been made by this and other Governments, Mme. Davidoff believes her experiments will prove more successful than those carried on by the Bureau of Plant Industry of the Department of Agriculture.

Mme. Davidoff is a writer for magazines. She says the experiments will be based on the theory that the growth of vegetable matter, which ceases at sundown, will continue through the night if proper artificial light is supplied to stimulate the developing powers of plants. Fruits and flowers that are grown in this section only in the spring and summer months, she believes, can be cultivated during the entire year by supplying the necessary artificial heat through the electrical process that will be adopted.

"This is not intended as a money-making enterprise," said Mme. Davidoff recently. "While, of course, we expect the experiments to prove successful and the farm to be self-supporting, yet my object is to make it a philanthropic enterprise with the view of helping members of my own sex, as well as to prove the scientific value of the plan which I have been experimenting with for several years. There is no connection between my venture and the utterances of Sir Oliver Lodge, the English savant, relative to the influence of electricity on plant life. The two systems differ chiefly from the fact that all of my experiments are made under glass and under certain conditions a static machine is used in addition to dynamos."

Active work on the farm at Bellcrest will begin, she says, within one month upon the completion of the necessary buildings and the installation of the electrical apparatus.—New York Herald.

BOOK AGENT IS REPROVED.

He Tells One at His Own Expense—The Story.

The book agent seldom tells a joke at his own expense, but here is one recently related by one of the much maligned fraternity:

"I had been in poor health," said this particular book agent, "and had been advised to go to the mountains of Eastern Tennessee to recuperate. To kill two birds with one stone I took along some specimens of an encyclopedia I had on my list, thinking I might possibly get a few orders."

The first person I stacked up against was a typical mountaineer. He was sitting in the sun in front of his shack, watching his wife do the family washing at a little brook that flowed in front of the house. He listened attentively while I got off my little speech. He allowed me to get along without an encyclopedia.

"Then I started afresh, and I saw he was getting a trifle bored. 'Why, sir, no family is complete without this book,' I exclaimed.

"'Tain't, huh?' he drawled. 'What you all consider a complete family? See them 're young 'uns a-playing about?'

"I nodded.

"'How many d'ye see?' he demanded.

"'I counted nine.'

"'There's two more at school,' he said. 'an' three boys a-working down on the new railroad cut. How many do that make?'

"'Fourteen,' I said.

"Then he commenced to call his dogs. 'See them hounds?' he asked.

"'I saw them.'

"'Wall, they's six o' them, an' three more often in the woods. How many do that make?'

"'I told him nine.'

"'So no family is complete without that 'ere book, eh?' he ruminated.

"'Pears to me fo'teen children an' nine dawgs is a putty complete family, an' I hev managed to struggle along with it so far!'

Spiritual wealth may often depend on willingness to experience material poverty.

A Runaway Match

Who Understands a Woman?

He saw the graceful figure, in its becoming blue habit, the decked sunlight upon her shining hair, ahead of him, and reined up his horse. She looked over her shoulder and seeing him, gave a vicious cut with her whip.

"As if I would intrude upon her! A heartless coquette—a woman without womanly principles!" he said bitterly, drawing his horse down to a slow walk.

She disappeared around the bend in the road in a whirl of reddish dust. Guy Mortimer's thoughts, as they followed her, were not pleasant. Only last summer he had been the accepted lover of the prettiest girl in all the Blue Ridge region of Virginia, to find himself one day suddenly supplanted by a wealthier rival. He wondered why she had come back to such a quiet little out-of-the-way place as Vinto, and why she had not married. The horse slowly made its way along the shady road and turned the bend.

As he did so the man gave such a start as caused them to draw up abruptly beside the dismounted rider standing in the middle of the road.

"Have you been thrown Mab—Miss Andrews?" he asked, springing out of the buggy.

She moved toward him, the sunlight resting upon her red gold hair, her eyes on the ground. "My horse—the saddle—something was loose," she mumbled incoherently, "and when I got down to see if I could fix it—why—the horse ran off. I hope he will go home! Do you think he will?"

"I should not worry about him nor myself," he said slowly. "I am going your way and will take you as far as the plantation in my buggy. It will be no trouble at all," he continued, in answer to her question of protest.

"I suppose you are staying at the plantation?"

She hesitated an instant, the red blood mounting to her face at his tone and coolness; but she allowed herself to be helped into the seat beside him, and looked straight ahead.

"I am putting you to a lot of bother," she murmured at length. "It is too bad the horse left me. I could walk—" hesitating. "Oh, I hope nothing will happen to the horse."

"He will go home of course. I am surprised at his running away from you; the plantation horses are generally more gentle—they are poky," he replied.

There was a pause. "Do you think it will rain?" she asked.

"You are just as mean as you can be! I'm so very sorry to subject you to all this annoyance—"

"No excuse necessary—one can endure anything for a while. I did not intend coming here this summer, only I supposed you had gone far to other fields, and this little country place was so restful."

"Thank you!" coolly.

"I had no idea you would bury yourself here again when you could enjoy the fashionable world under Mrs. Wadsworth's chaperone."

"I really don't know how I withstood the temptation," she retorted, "since Johnny Wadsworth is such a nice fellow. He would take me any distance in his buggy or auto—and never snub me once." The eyes that looked into his from under the visor of the jaunty cap were full of laughter, and in an instant his control of himself was gone.

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"I see you still find me amusing!" he exclaimed bitterly, "you laughed at me then; and you laugh at me now; you gave me the discipline I deserved for thinking of you that way, but it was a true love on my part, even if it was laughable to you. We two have come to the parting of the ways. I shall leave you at the plantation, and drive on to the station, so I will not intrude upon you again." He flicked his whip and the horse broke into a brisk trot.

"There was a light in the girl's eyes that had not been there before, as she leaned over and took