

PASSING OF LEGERDEMAIN.

The Occupation of the Professional Sleight-of-Hand Performer Is About Gone.

One of a group of three men who were seated in the Waldorf-Astoria cafe one night lately was amusing the other two with some clever sleight of hand tricks performed with a silver dollar that appeared and disappeared in a quite mysterious manner, says the New York Herald.

"Where did you learn that cleverness?" asked one of the spectators. "In Philadelphia, 40 years ago," he answered, "during the days of Signor Blitz, who was my teacher. I was a very young man then and lived next door to Blitz. He took a fancy to me and taught me many sleight of hand tricks that I have not forgotten.

"Blitz was one of the men who helped to bring juggling to its perfection and paved the way for the great prestidigitators who followed him. "Now the profession is in its decadence. It has passed its zenith and its performances fail to excite to wonder. It still survives as an adjunct to other performances, particularly for the amusement of children, and that is about all.

WHERE DO THE CLOTHES GO?

Here is a Possible Explanation of Disappearances of Garments in Country Houses.

The tendency of various articles of dress belonging to guests to disappear in country houses is undeniable, and there is scarcely a visitor who has not his story of a missing coat or pair of trousers or some similar article to tell. It is never known just how these things get away, but they go, and the circumstances of the loss usually prevent extended investigation.

The experience of a guest at a country house recently opened his eyes as to the possible reason for some of these mysterious disappearances, says the New York Sun.

"When the valet came to the room to unpack my bag," he said, "I found that I had come off without a most necessary part of my wardrobe. I had all my dress suit excepting the trousers."

"My host was exactly my opposite in figure, and there was no hope of relief from that quarter. None of the other men stopping in the house had any extra garments, and as it was only a short time before dinner the situation looked critical. Then the valet came to my assistance and said that he thought he could find a pair of trousers to fit me. He brought a pair and they were all right.

"After I had tried them on he told me that he had another pair that had had on the seams, if I liked that better. Of course when I left I gave him twice as large a tip as I would have done had I not been indebted to him for his trousers.

"I did not ask him the source of his supply, but it occurred to me that the inexplicable way in which visitors' garments disappear at times in country houses might be explained by the collections of emergency garments that the valets have on hand."

Plain Quarters for a Prince. The czar of Russia is described as having been a bright but rather shy little boy of 13 when his father, Alexander III, was crowned. His schoolroom at the Antichkoff palace, on the Nevski Prospekt in St. Petersburg, was an uncarpeted and barely furnished room, with desks and forms running round it, like a room in an English village school. The only decorations on the walls were those which had been put up by the imperial children themselves, and consisted chiefly of pictures of the Russo-Turkish war from English papers.—Chicago Record-Herald.

Poor, But Not Needy. Gilles—I know a man who actually rejoices in being poor. Miles—He must be a fool. "Not necessarily. He's the living skeleton in a dime museum at a salary of \$100 a week."—Chicago Daily News.

ALLIGATORS LIKE NEGROES.

They Will Eat Them, Says an Authority, in Preference to a White Man.

An interesting story of the saurian family is told by one of Algier's oldest citizens, Mitchell J. Barrett, who has spent much of his life in adventure on the high seas and in traveling in a business way along the Gulf shores, says the New Orleans Times-Democrat. He relates that when a boy, living on the banks of the St. Johns river, it was customary for the boys in the neighborhood to go in swimming every day.

Alligators were very numerous, but it was a seldom occurrence that a white person was molested by them. Mr. Barrett says that he cannot recall an instance where a white man or boy was ever killed by one. On the other hand, he was to the pick-aning who ventured into the St. Johns, where these water pests held forth. It is said that a negro never risks his life where an alligator lives. Mr. Barrett says that on one occasion, while he and several of his comrades were in bathing, a negro boy, well known to the party, came by, shuffled off his clothes and dived in with the others. He had been in but a few minutes, when he suddenly disappeared without the slightest apparent struggle. An alligator caught him in the "middle" and took him under the water without giving him time to even warn the others.

He tells of a similar incident on the Sabine river, another paradise for the alligator. He states that while he, two friends and a negro were crossing the river in a small boat it ran against a snag and capsized near a nest of the pests, and the white men swam ashore without molestation. But the negro was pounced upon by several alligators, as if they had some special grudge against him.

Men can easily avoid attacks from this source. But long ago, when Florida was more sparsely settled and there were no fences along the banks of the rivers, cattle and swine naturally strayed down to the river's edge to find a quiet, cool spot to graze and fight the gallinippers which were there in droves and made a shadow as a cloud. As long as the stock would find these places on the banks they were comparatively safe from alligators. But as the day would grow, and as the heat would increase, they would stray down to the river's edge and wallow in order to get under the water to keep cool. Their instinct, however, failed to teach them caution, for invariably the sly alligator was there for a different purpose. He had crawled to the water's edge to sun his back, which could scarcely be distinguished from an old log, and while the thoughtless cow or hog wallowed in the waters the pest of the Florida waters would make his attack with varying success.

THE SLOTH'S HAIR.

Certain Plants Are Said to Grow and Thrive on It—Cause of Its Green Tinge.

It is a very curious fact that certain plants grow and thrive on the hair of sloths, says a writer in Knowledge. Apart from its extremely coarse and brittle nature, the most striking peculiarity of the outer hair of the sloth is its more or less decidedly green tinge. . . . Now, green is a very rare color among mammals, and there ought, therefore, to be some special reason for its development in the sloth. And, as a matter of fact, the means by which this coloration is produced is one of the most marvelous phenomena in the whole animal kingdom—so marvelous, indeed, that it is at first almost impossible to believe that it is true. The object of this peculiar type of coloration is, of course, to assimilate the animal to its leafy surroundings, and thus to render it inconspicuous as possible; and when hanging in its usual position from the under side of a bough, its long, coarse and green-tinged hair is stated to render the sloth almost indistinguishable from the bunches of gray-green lichens among which it dwells. In the outer sheath of the hairs of the sloth there are a number of transverse cracks, and in these cracks grows a primitive type of plant—namely, a one-celled alga. And for the benefit of non-botanical readers, it may be well to mention here that algae (among which seaweeds are included) form a group of flowerless plants related on the one hand to the fungi, and on the other to the lichens. . . . In the moist, tropical forests forming the home of the sloth, the algae in the cracks of their hairs grow readily, and thus communicate to the entire coat that general green tint which, as already said, is reported to render them almost indistinguishable from the clusters of lichen among which they hang suspended."

ROMANCE IN A GOLD STRIKE.

Peniless Man Makes a Rich Find in British Columbia in Worked-Out Digging.

News has been confirmed of a rich strike on Horsefly creek, in Old Cariboo, B. C. Pana run up to two dollars, and there is a wild stampede on similar to the first rush to the Klondike. At first the news was received with incredulity, the statements being made that the country was all worked out, as far as placers were concerned, 30 years ago. In the rush of the '60s \$2,000,000 was taken from Lightning creek, Cariboo, in three weeks, and Antler creek was almost as rich. It is claimed that in the rush of long ago for some reason Horsefly creek was overlooked, says a Vancouver report.

The present rush is the result of a romance. Adolphe Drucker, a former British M. P., met some British Columbians in London, England, who told him of the riches that had been obtained in Cariboo 30 years ago. He became enamored with the story. He borrowed money to reach Cariboo, as he was penniless. When he arrived he was laughed at for coming so far to a worked-out diggings. He went up the Horsefly creek, though warned not to, owing to the difficulty in getting supplies, and was told that no white men had yet been able to go to the head of the creek. Drucker went up the creek, however, up to the head where no one had gone before him, and his first pan yielded two dollars. Drucker kept the matter secret, and, returning to civilization, picked out those who had been kind to him, and among them they staked nearly the whole creek. Every pan tried was rich in gold. Numerous other creeks not prospected are now supposed to be equally as rich. Drucker will be a millionaire.

A Wise Fool.

A wise man in business may be a fool in love.—Chicago Daily News.

Why They Never Get There.

Few men ever reach the top—probably because the top grows away from the average man as fast as he climbs.—Chicago Daily News.

QUEER FAIRY IN SCOTLAND.

Or Else the Stories About a Mysterious Lady Are in Some Respects Inaccurate.

The name, at any rate, has at last been discovered of the mysterious and beautiful lady who has lately been making her home on the seashore in a lonely spot on the Argyllshire coast. She is Miss Margaret MacDougal. But at that point information ceases. Young and singularly attractive, with great masses of brown hair worn loose over her shoulders, or lightly tied with a piece of ribbon, she has been residing on the Ardmaddy beach at the high water mark without shelter and without food of any kind save shell fish. She sleeps on the grass and declines all offers of food, clothing or money. The most extraordinary stories are current about the fair unknown, of which the following—supplied by a local correspondent—are a fair sample: "When at leisure," the correspondent says, "she knits and knits, and the ball of worsted never seems to decrease in size. She talks English and Gaelic fluently, and even converses in several other languages, to suit the person talking to her. She has been photographed several times, but none of the photographs seem alike, and she does not appear to everybody the same. "To some she appears to be about 34 years of age and to others about double that age. She gives her name as Margaret MacDougal, but nothing is known as to where she comes from. Armadady, where she resides, has been always famous as the rendezvous of fairies. Near by is Dun-na-tien and Creagan-Fharaidh, places famous as haunts of those spirits that influence men for good or ill. To this place, it is believed, she retires at night. There she gets news of all that will transpire the following day. She has a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures and has a great hatred of the clergy."

A PEACEFUL BOMBARDMENT.

Many Seeds Bown by Means of Two Old Cannon Wanting a Desolate Waste.

Near Blair castle stands a high, rocky crag named Craigiebarra, which, says the London Daily Mail, for a long time looked grim and bare in the midst of beauty, and its owner thought how much better it would look if only trees, shrubs, etc., could be planted in its nooks and crannies. It was considered impossible for anyone to scale its steep and dangerous activities, and no other way was thought of to get seed sown.

One day Alexander Nasmyth, father of the celebrated engineer, paid a visit to the grounds. The crag was pointed out to him, and after some thought he hit upon a scheme. In passing the castle he noticed two old cannons. He got a few small tin canisters made to fit the bore of the cannon and filled them with a variety of tree, shrub and grass seeds. The cannon was loaded in the usual way and fired at the rock from all sides.

The little canisters on striking the rock burst, scattering the seeds in all directions. Many seeds were lost, but many more fell into the ledges or cracks, where there was a little moss or earth. These soon showed signs of life, and in a few years graceful trees and pretty climbing plants, all sown by gunpowder, were growing and flourishing in nearly every recess of the formerly bare, gray crag, clothing it with verdant beauty.

BRAZIL'S FLYING MAN.

Rejoicing in the South American Republic Over the Success of Santos-Dumont.

In Brazil there is much rejoicing over the success of M. Santos-Dumont with his flying ship, and the reason is given in a letter which has been sent to the fortunate aeronaut by the minister of public instruction in Brazil. In the name of President Campos Sales, the minister, in this letter, congratulates M. Santos-Dumont on having added a new luster to the glory of Brazil, and on having completed the work inaugurated by Bartholomew de Gusmano, says the New York Herald.

Though his name and work are now known to few, Gusmano was a noted scientist in his own day. A Brazilian by birth and a Jesuit priest by profession, he flourished during the first years of the eighteenth century, and his principal achievement was a flying machine. The descriptions of this machine, as found in old chronicles, are not very clear, but it was evidently shaped like a bird and had in the interior a series of tubes, through which the wind passed and inflated an enormous pouch or balloon. The machine, being buoyant, readily went aloft as soon as the pouch was filled with air.

EVERYTHING GOES.

Little Willie—Say, pa, what does "carte blanche" mean? Pa—It is a term used to explain the actions of a man who has \$50 in his pocket and his wife is spending a week in the country.—Chicago Daily News.

A Night of Horror.

Triggs—Did you have an exciting adventures while you were in Canada? Griggs—Did I? I tried to go home from the club on snow shoes.—Town and Country.

THE VANISHING ELEPHANT.

Mystifying Trick of a Sleight-of-Hand Performer and the Way of Doing It.

Come, let us fancy that we are in the hall where a famous magician is giving a performance. One number on the programme, we notice, is "The Vanishing Elephant," and we wonder what it means. Surely he is not going to bring an elephant on the stage, and with a wave of his wand make him disappear, as he does a watch, an egg or a bird? says the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

But now we shall know, for the elephant comes next, and here is the magician making things ready. He moves to the front of the stage a small wooden stand with a circular top. The top is supported by a single upright rising from a broad base. Between his thumb and his finger the magician holds a little figure of an elephant, which glitters like silver. Taking his position near the stand, he thus speaks to the audience: "During my visit to East India, ladies and gentlemen, I witnessed a strange disappearance. I am going to reproduce that disappearance this evening, and I trust that it may interest you as much as it did me. The little wooden stand here serves to isolate the silver elephant which I now introduce, cutting it off from all communication with the stage and the surroundings. I mount the elephant on the little column, and thus make a miniature statue of it. The little animal is pretty heavy, as you may know from the sound it makes as I drop it on the table. There! We will now place a glass shade over the statue. Now, as you know from the sound the statue made when I dropped it on the stand, it is not light enough to rise and float off through the air, and yet I am going to make it disappear.

"Pardon me if I now cover the shade with this colored handkerchief; it does not reach all the way to the bottom, but that does not matter. As I have said, I am going to cause the little silver elephant to disappear by making it pass through the shade and away into space. Where would you like to have it reappear? Shall it be in the pocket of some one in the audience? Very well. I take my wand and command the elephant to leave. One, two, three! He has gone! Let us remove the handkerchief and see for ourselves!"

The cover is taken off, showing the stand without the elephant, which is found in the coat pocket of a gentleman in the audience.

Well, how is it done? It is the simplest thing in the world—when you learn the secret. The statue is frozen mercury. The conjurer of the present day knows a great deal about science, and he can freeze mercury as hard as stone by evaporating solid barbonic acid dissolved in ether. He puts the fluid mercury into a mold shaped like an elephant, and thus makes the statue by freezing. The disappearance of the elephant is simply its melting into fluid mercury again, which runs down the hollow upright of the stand. The little elephant taken from a gentleman in the audience is a real figure, made of metal and then silvered. It gets into this gentleman's possession by collusion, or by some trick of the magician's.

ROOSEVELT AND THE INDIANS.

The President Entertained a Very Poor Opinion of the Noble Red Man in 1898.

The following concerning Theodore Roosevelt, printed in 1886, before he came into political prominence, will no doubt be of interest at this time, says the Detroit Free Press:

"My friends seem to think," said Theodore Roosevelt the other night, "that I can talk only on two subjects—the bear and the cowboy, and the one I am to handle this evening is rather the more formidable of the two. After all, the cowboys are not the ruffians and desperadoes that the nickel library paints them. Of course, in the frontier towns, where the only recognized amusements are vice, there is more or less of riot and disorder. But take the cowboy on his native heath, on the roundup, and you will find in him the virtues of courage, endurance, good-fellowship and generosity. He is not sympathetic. The cowboy divides all humanity into two classes, the sheep and the goats—those who can ride bucking horses and those who can't; and I must say he doesn't care much for the goats.

"I suppose I should be ashamed to say that I take the western view of the Indian. I don't go so far as to think that the only good Indians are the dead Indians, but I believe nine out of every ten are, and I shouldn't like to inquire too closely into the case of the tenth. The most vicious cowboy has more principle than the average Indian. Turn loose 200 families of New York and New Jersey, support them for 50 years in vicious idleness, and you will have some idea of what the Indians are. Reckless, revengeful, ferociously cruel, they rob and murder, not the cowboys, who can take care of themselves, but the defenseless lone settlers on the plains. As for the soldiers, an Indian chief once asked Sheridan for a cannon. 'What! Do you want to kill my soldiers with it?' asked the general. 'No,' replied the chief, 'want to kill cowboys; kill soldiers with a club.'

"Ranch life is ephemeral. Fences are spreading all over the western country, and by the end of the century most of it will be under cultivation. I, for one, shall be sorry to see it go; for when the cowboy disappears one of the best and healthiest phases of western life will disappear with him."

Publicity for Corporations.

In Great Britain the corporation laws provide for a great degree of publicity in connection with promotion of corporations and their regular management. There is a like degree of publicity for corporations in France, Germany and Austria, and in these latter countries there are such rigid provisions regarding the valuation of property and reports of promoters and directors that stock watering in the ordinary sense of the expression, as used in the United States, is almost, if not quite, an impossibility.—Casier's Magazine.

A Fairy Cradle.

In South America the Brazilian peasant women often take their infants down to the water and use the leaves of the Victoria Regina water lily as cradles. The leaves are often a yard in diameter, circular, and with an inch-high border which stands up like the rim of a tea tray.—Detroit Free Press.

ODD POLITICAL DIVISION.

The Geographical Peculiarity That Started the Eastern Shore of Maryland Controversy.

The Chesapeake bay in Maryland, long the chief means of communication between the counties of that state, has recently become a geographical means of division between the counties to the east of it, which constitute the eastern shore of Maryland and those of the west, which include a predominant portion of the voters of the state, giving rise to a political division which is duplicated nowhere else and has established a new political, if not official, division of the United States known as the "peninsula," says the New York Sun.

Between the Chesapeake bay and the Atlantic ocean there is a neck of counties in three states—Maryland, Delaware and Virginia—which terminate at Cape Charles and have more interests in common with each other than the states of which they are a part. Kent and Sussex counties, Del., the rural counties, are politically affixed to Newcastles, which includes the city of Wilmington and constitutes the most progressive portion of that state. Accomack and Northampton counties, Va., are completely separated from the mainland of that state and include inhabitants who have little in common with the other citizens of Virginia, and are much more nearly allied with the voters of the states of Maryland and Delaware, with which geographically they are connected.

The ratio of illiteracy in these two counties, as in the Maryland counties on the eastern shore and in the Delaware counties in the peninsula, is unduly high. For a number of years the Maryland counties of the eastern shore claimed to be entitled to one United States senator and for many years this claim was sustained by the Annapolis legislature. More recently, however, the views of the residents of the peninsula have been disregarded. The claim of the residents of the eastern shore of Maryland to a senator has been abrogated, the votes of the representatives of the peninsula counties of Delaware for Addicks in that state have been ineffective and the protest of the voters of the two peninsula counties of Virginia against the constitutional convention have been overruled.

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Short Skirts.

The woman who believes that good taste in dress depends as much upon its conformity to occasion as to fashion will never be without a well-tailored short skirt in her wardrobe. She will wear it for shopping, for traveling, and if she is a woman engaged in business she will wear it always in business hours. It is unpleasant, if nothing more, to allow a dress to drag over payments and in stores, and both ungraceful and difficult to lift. The trailing tailor-made skirt is an important feature of every woman's wardrobe, but it is reserved for calling, the club and the matinee. The richer costumes are of smooth-faced cloths. Brown and black will be seen most frequently on the street, though green and blue are used to some extent.—Helen Marshall, in Woman's Home Companion.

Ways of Trimming Coats.

Horizontal, graduated, stitched strappings form a favorite decoration, three or five lines terminating at the left side of the front with large, pierced bone buttons or small leather buckles. There is choice galore, too, in coats, which may be short and single breasted, long and double breasted, or of the loose sack bolero order. And a Russian blouse affair fastening only at the waist, the fronts of it being worn unbuttoned to the throat, where a small round collar appears, pronounces itself a fitting finish to an immaculately neat and really workmanlike costume. One model slightly more elaborate than its fellows is strapped with a very delicate champagne-tinted suede, bands of the same apparently holding in position the slight fullness of a plaited bolero, the fronts of which touch the waist in a point.—Washington Star.

Cauliflower in Beef Nests.

Cut slices of rare roast beef rather thin, spread them on one side with butter and seasoning and cover with a half-inch layer of dressing made by mixing together one cupful of chopped cooked cauliflower, one-half cupful of bread crumbs, one teaspoonful of minced parsley, one beaten egg and seasoning to taste. Roll up, fasten with a neat skewer or tie, and fry to a delicate brown in smoking hot oil or fat, drain and serve it once.—Good Housekeeping.

The Way to Color Things to Eat.

A drop or two of cochineal may be added when you use rose flavor; a little grated yellow rind of orange will give the desired color for orange flavoring; and green is obtained from pistachio. Bitter almond is always used with white, also vanilla. The various colorings sold for ices are used in such small quantities that they are harmless.—Ladies' Home Journal.

From the Godmother.

Godmothers must give up their penchant for silver mugs and spoons and rattles. If the godchild happens to be a little girl the only correct present from the godmother is a tiny white necklace. Pearls are, of course, the perfect illustration of this fad, but moonstones, enamel and even mother of pearl beads with handsome gold clasps are appropriate.—N. Y. Sun.

Veal Scallop.

Cut veal from the leg or other lean part into pieces the size of an oyster; have a seasoning of salt, pepper and a little mace; rub some over each piece; dip in well-beaten egg and then into cracker crumbs and fry as you do oysters.—Ladies' World, New York.