

This and That

WHAT HE WANTED TO KNOW.

A rather amusing story is told in connection with a certain learned professor. He had been asked to deliver a lecture—which he readily consented to do—in the village school room, and on the important night the place was packed with an expectant audience. The front seats were occupied by a few of the shining lights of the neighborhood, and apparently the lecturer was addressing the select few, for he talked completely over the heads of the rest of the audience.

At length, at the expiration of a couple of hours, the professor dropped his lofty style and blandly remarked:

'And now, friends, in conclusion, allow me to say that if any one has a question to ask I will do my best to answer him.'

It was a very old villager in the back seats who slowly rose to his feet and asked the first and only question.

'Aw'd by vurry mich oblesogd, mester,' he remarked, 'if ye'd jest tell us wot on airth it is that ye've been praiching about?'

A gentleman one day asked a shoe-black who was cleaning his boots if he ever read the newspapers.

The boy promptly replied, 'Oh, yes, sir, I reads the paper.'

'What do you read, my lad?' asked the gentleman.

'Oh,' retorted the boy, 'I read the House of Commons news, sir.'

A policeman, standing near, who had heard the conversation, strolled up to the lad when the gentleman had left and said: 'Did you ever read the police intelligence?'

'Garn! They ain't got none!' curtly responded the youth.—'Tit Bits.'

WILL NIAGARA RUN DRY?

Government engineers have estimated the normal discharge of Niagara river into Lake Ontario at 222,000 cubic feet per second. The total abstraction of water by the five power plants in operation and its process of construction is placed at about 48,800 cubic feet per second. Add to this the diversion caused by the Welland canal running from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario, and the power development along this channel; that of the Chicago drainage canal, running from Lake Michigan to the Des Plaines river; that of the new barge canal, which will follow the line of the present Erie canal, from Buffalo to Savannah, and the possible diversion by the canal that is to be built under the so-called "Love charter," from La Salle to Devil's Hole, in the gorge below Whirlpool Rapids, and we have, according to the estimates of the engineers, a total diversion of water from the great lakes above the falls of about 61,300 cubic feet per second. And there is the possibility of great power development of the Chicago drainage canal, on the Illinois and Des Plaines rivers, and on the Kankakee river, in Indiana, all of which is now beyond human estimate.

The real danger to the falls will come from the granting of additional power franchises in the future. If such grants should get through the state legislature in defiance of public sentiment upon this question, it is not believed that they would receive the official sanction of the executive. There can be no mistake about the attitude of the people of New York, and of the entire country, regarding a further diversion of the waters of Niagara river for power purposes, for while the present division has had no appreciable effect upon the cataract itself, there is strong opposition to new power projects that will further diminish the volume of water flowing over the precipice.—American Monthly Review of Reviews.

Britisher—I say, what makes you Americans talk with your noses?
American—I say, what makes you Britishers talk with your don't-you-knowes?

"Yep," answered Paul in school one day; and when his teacher heard His strange response, to punish him, she bade him seek the word Within the dictionary. After she had let him grope. In vain for it, she asked, "Is it there?" And Paul said, "Nope."
—Woman's Home Companion for August.

A PROMISING CUSTOMER.

The brisk, well-dressed stranger stepped into the corner drug-store, and passing by the boy who usually attended to casual customers, approached the proprietor, who, with his back turned, was rearranging some goods on a showcase.

"Mr. Sawyer, I presume," he said, pleasantly, and the druggist turned and bowed gravely.

"I have heard my friend, Senator Brown, speak of you often," said the brisk man. "He told me if ever I needed anything in this line to come to you. He spoke of you as a man on whom one could rely with perfect confidence, who carried only the best of everything, and with whom it was always a pleasure to deal."

"The Senator is very kind," said the druggist, beaming with gratification. "He is one of my best customers. What can I do for you this morning?"

"Well—er—this morning, as it happens," said the stranger, with a shade less of briskness, "this morning I should like, if you will allow me, to consult your directory."

"Certainly," said the druggist. "We also have a fine line of postage-stamps if you ever need anything of that line."

A MODERN DIOGENES.

One evening, long ago, when my grandfather was young and in love, with my grandmother, he prepared to go a-courting. After making a careful toilet, absorbed with thoughts of her, unconscious of what he was doing, he picked up the lighted candle, and started off down street. He was recalled from dreams of love by the teasing voice of his brother, saying, "John, where are you going with that candle?"

THE EXTENT OF THE UNIVERSE.

To determine a single position of any one star involves a good deal of computation, and if we reflect that, in order to attack the problem in question in a satisfactory way, we should have observations of a million of these bodies made at intervals of at least a considerable fraction of a century, we see what an enormous task the astronomers dealing with this problem have before them, and how imperfect must be any determination of the distance of the stars based on our motion through space. So far as an estimate can be made, it seems to agree fairly well with the results obtained by the other methods. Speaking roughly, we have reason, from the data so far available, to believe that the stars of the Milky Way are situated at a distance between 100,000,000 and 200,000,000 times the distance from the sun. At distances less than this it seems likely that the stars are distributed through space with some approach to uniformity. We may state as a general conclusion, indicated by several methods of making the estimate, that nearly all the stars which we can see with our telescopes are contained within a sphere not likely to be much more than 200,000,000 times the distance of the sun. The inquiring reader may here ask another question. Granting that all the stars we can see are contained within this limit, may there not be any number of stars without the limit which are invisible only because they are too far away to be seen?—Simon Newcomb, in Harper's Magazine.

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