

Cats as Pointers of Poisonous Odors.

An experiment tried recently by a woman in Hoboken to detect the presence of sewer gas in her rooms was a topic of conversation among the Sanitary Inspectors at the rooms of the Board of Health yesterday. The woman had noticed an offensive odor in her parlor, and she went to the agent of the house to request that a plumber be sent to examine the drainage pipes. The agent told her the plumbing in the house was perfect. She went home and called in some neighbors, who thought sewer gas was escaping from the waste pipes. Acting on the suggestion of a friend, she sent out for some oil of peppermint and poured it into a stationary wash-basin on the third floor. From the basin, the oil passed down through a waste pipe behind a closet off the parlor. Very soon, the odor of peppermint prevailed the parlor. The woman then went to the agent again, and told him she was convinced that there was a break in the waste pipe on the first floor of the house, at the same time telling him of her experiment with oil of peppermint. The agent refused to send a plumber, declaring that the odor of peppermint was so penetrating that it would soon fill a building. After studying over the situation for a time, the woman purchased some oil of valerian and poured it into the wash-basin up-stairs. She then borrowed from her neighbors two able-bodied cats and placed them in the parlor. The cats sniffed the air in the room as if it were agreeable to them, and they both went toward the door of the closet. When the closet door was opened for them, they went in immediately and sprang upon a shelf, where they remained, purring and manifesting unmistakable delight. The woman then went to the agent's office and related what she had done. Although incredulous still, the agent sent a plumber with directions to tear away the lath and plaster in the closet at the point where the cats had rested in their hunt for the valerian. The plumber found behind the shelf the waste pipe completely disjointed. The break in the pipe was large enough to allow an unwholesome amount of sewer gas to escape into the house. Some of the Sanitary Inspectors said yesterday that the experiment was new and decidedly ingenious. They thought that cats might be used in a similar manner in this city to more advantage than in Hoboken. By employing their household pets as pointers, it was said, residents of the city might save themselves from illness from poisonous gases, and also save the cost of employing sanitary engineers to examine the drainage in their houses. —[Tribune.]

A Talent for Conversation.

A talent for conversation has an extraordinary value for common, every-day life. Let any one who has this gift enter into a social circle anywhere. How every one's face brightens at his entrance! How soon he sets all the little wheels in motion, encouraging the timid, calling out unostentatiously the resources of the reserved and shy, subsidizing the facile, and making everybody glad and happy!

To converse well is not to engross the conversation. It is not to do all the talking. It is not to do all the talking. It is not necessary to talk with very great brilliancy. A man may talk with such surpassing power and splendor as to awe the rest of the company into silence, or excite their envy, and so produce a chill where his aim would be to produce heat and sunshine. He should seek the art of making others feel quite at home with him, so that no matter how great may be his attainments or reputation, or how small may be theirs, they find it insensibly just as natural and pleasant talking to him as hearing him talk.

The talent for conversation, indeed more than anything else in life, requires tact and discretion. It requires one to have more varied knowledge, and to have it at instant and absolute disposal, so that he can just use as much or just as little as the occasion demands.

Fashions.



Fig. 1 shows a very pretty style of walking dress, the waist being box-pleated and trimmed with a fancy braid about quarter inch wide. The overskirt has pointed front and frill back. The skirt trimmed with a double box-pleat, headed with a braided fold.



Fig. 2 is a pretty dress for little child from 2 to 6 years of age. The collar and sleeves are trimmed with lace, and the skirt is finished by a sash to match material, or any contrasting color; 3½ yards of material will make a medium size.

Wit and Humor.

A small boy who was playing truant the other day, when asked if he wouldn't get a whipping when he got home, replied, "What is five minutes' licking to five hours of fun?"

Not long since a family moved into a village out West. After a week or so a friend of the family called on them and asked how they liked the locality. "Pretty well." "Have you called on any of the neighbors yet?" "No; but I'm going to, if there's any more of my firewood missing."

An absent-minded New Yorker has been so much in the habit of sending his children to their mother when they preferred any request, that the children after a time took to going directly to her, as to headquarters. One day the elder son, aged six, wanted to look at a "picture book" belonging to his father, and asked permission of his mother. She replied, "Go and ask your father." "Why," said the boy, in astonishment, "is he boss now?"

One afternoon, a stranger, observing a stream of people entering a church, approached a man of gloomy aspect, who was standing near the entrance, and asked, "Is this a funeral?" "Funeral, no;" was the sepulchral answer; "it's a wedding." "Excuse me," added the stranger, "but I thought from your serious looks that you might be a hired mourner." "No," returned the man with a weary, far-off look in his eyes, "I'm the son-in-law of the bride's mother."

"That man is a phrenologist, Pat." "A phat?" asked Pat, puzzled. "A phrenologist." "Phat's that?" "Why, a man that can tell, by feeling of the bumps on your head, what kind of a man you are." "Bumps on me head, is it?" exclaimed Pat. "Bagorra, then, I should think it would give him more of an oidea phat kind of a woman me wife is!"

In the whiskey ring investigation at Washington, Thursday, the Editor of *The Critic*, in reply to a question as to why he had mentioned the names of several prominent journalists as having been bribed by the whiskey men, stated that "it was a joke." There could be nothing more side-splitting than this, except the sight of somebody hitting the Editor of *The Critic* with a club. —[Chicago Tribune.]

SIR,—Would you please inform me through your valuable paper where I can procure a fruit evaporator, and what is the cost?
W. G. O., Huntley.

[Consult our advertisement columns.]

Magical Music.

This is a game in which music is made to take a prominent part. On one of the company volunteering to leave the room, some particular article agreed upon his hidden. On being recalled, the person, ignorant of the hiding-place, must commence a diligent search, taking the piano as his guide. The loud tones will mean that he is very near the object of his search, and the soft tones that he is far from it. Another method of playing the same game is for the person who has been out of the room to try to discover on his return what the remainder of the company desire him to do. It may be to pick up something from the floor, to take off his coat, to look at himself in the glass, or anything else as absurd. The only clew afforded him of solving the riddle must be the loud or soft tones of the music.

Charles French asks: I have two valuable, pure white fantail pigeons which will not lay eggs. The hen builds a nest and sets two weeks, then stops setting for a time and then builds another nest and sets the same period of time. Nothing could possibly take the eggs, because I have them in a secure place.

[You had better separate your fantails and after a few days pair them with fresh birds.]