

WHY THE NEEDLE POINTS NORTH.

Over 300 years ago a scientist studied out the theory of the compass and why the needle pointed to the north. It is not, however, a fact that the needle points exactly to the north. Sometimes it veers to the east and sometimes to the west, depending on the locality and, as a curious phenomenon, it does not always point the same way in the same place. The entire earth is a magnet and naturally controls all the lesser magnets. The pole in the northern hemisphere is consequently called the northern magnet and the opposite the southern magnet, but, says an authority on this subject, "Since poles of contrary names attract each other, while those of the same name repel each other, it follows that the pole of the magnetic needle which turns to the north is really the southern pole of the needle; while the pole turned toward the south is the north pole. As the vertical plane passing through its poles does not coincide with the meridian plane of the place, it follows that the needle does not always turn to the true north. The declination, as the angle of the two planes is called, is not the same in every part of the world, which accounts for the variation." The study of magnetic influences is most interesting, but as a rule the subject is quite imperfectly understood.

IT CAN BE DONE.

Here is an amusing trick for a party.

Let a circle be formed by a few persons joining hands, and let one member of the circle be securely blindfolded—that is, in such a way that he will enter into a darkness so dense that it may "be felt." To secure this desired trick-darkness, fold a pair of kid-gloves into several thicknesses, and place them like a pad one over each eye, with an ample handkerchief bound tightly over all and around the head.

Now let a card be selected at random from a pack. Take great care that no one sees any other card of the pack, even for an instant; then place it where all can see it, except, of course, the blind man. The rest of the circle must now fix their minds and gaze upon the card with every bit of earnestness they have in their nature. In the meantime, the blind man must put himself into a quiet, passive "Barkis-is-willin'" state of mind.

He will soon begin to see (scientific authority for this, remember) indistinct objects floating in the darkness. Soon they will begin to take shadowy shape, then disappear, take more definite form, and finally the card selected will appear.

Surely this is worth a trial?

A LIVELY MAIL.

One often hears the Scotch expression "a bee in his bonnet," a state of things truly unhappy. Yet it goes to prove that there are situations in which these useful but lively insects might be equally troublesome. There is no postal collection on Sunday at a certain rural village near Tamworth, but one Monday night, when the postman wanted to clear the box, as usual, he found that a swarm of bees had taken possession of it, and, so busy were the bees that it was impossible to approach within several yards. That mail remained uncollected for, I am told, an almost incredible length of time.

AN ARCTIC POST OFFICE.

The most northern post office in the world has lately been established by the Norwegian Government on the Island of Spitzbergen, off the north coast of Norway. There are practically no inhabitants to be benefitted, but the post office is a convenience to excursionists who go there during the summer months.



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