Leprosy has existed in Norway for nearly a century. It is a hereditary disease, and breaks out among the children of Scandinavian settlers in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois.

In 1880 the district of Birmingham paid less than one-eightieth of the taxes of Alabama. To-day it pays a quarter of them, and the pace of its development is growing faster every day.

Fuel is so scarce in some portions of Russia that naphtha is now used in imquantities in place of coal or It comes from the oil measures about the Black Sea, and during 1888 over 800,000 tons weight were shipped up the Volga. The shipments this year will probably reach a million tons.

Berlin is very much taken with a young Cossack giantess now on exhibition in that city. She is only eleven years old, but is nearly nine feet high, weighs about 280 pounds, and is still rapidly growing. She has large, dark eyes and a pretty face, and in the costume of the Don Cossacks, which consists of a red skirt, blue jacket and long apron, embroidered in gold, she presents a most interesting appearance. It is said that she spends much of her time in playing with her dolls.

There has lately been unprecedented activity in building new cotton seed oilmills, most of which are independent of the Cotton Oil Trust, though the Trust has, it is generally reported, recently virtually secured control of the Southern Oil Company, with its eight large mills. The Manufacturers' Record, of Baltimore, publishes a complete list of all the cotton seed oilmills in the South, showing 213 mills, with an aggregate capital of about \$20,000,000, against 30 mills, with a capital of \$3,500,000, in 1880.

A well-known lady of St. Louis, who has been abroad for more than a year, was in Boulogne at the time of the recent visit of President Carnot and Mme. Carnot to that noted old city of the French coast. In describing an incident of the French President's tour she says: "A deputation of sailors from Sortel, as well as of Boulogne, waited on Carnot and his wife, presenting to the lady a magnificent bouquet, and Mme. Carnot presented in turn her cheeks to be kissed, which to refuse would have been anti-democratic. But not only did one sailor-he from whom the bouquet had been received-avail himself of the opportunity to kiss her, but every blessed mother's son of that band of sailors stepped forward and saluted the first lady in the French Republic first on one cheek, then on the

The twenty-first annual Co-operative Congress, recently held in England, offers some suggestions to workingmen in this country which might be made of great practical benefit. This congress is made up of delegates from co-operative societies in England. These have a total membership of 896,000. They engage in various business enterprises for the benefit of their members. Last year the sales in these co-operative stores aggregated over \$170,000,000, and the amounts saved to the members ran up into the millions of dollars. What, asks the New York News, is to hinder the success of similar institutions in this country? "American workingmen are the most intelligent of any class of workers in the world. And yet they fail to utilize their unused ability, as do their English competitors. Some efforts have been made here in the direction of co-operation, and they have failed. The same thing is true in Ireland. There co-operation has failed. It is hard to tell just why this is so. Our workingmen seem less willing to work together than those of England. Co-operation is the true ideal of the workingman. By that means he could derive whatever profit there is to be had from his own purchases and from his own labor. Whether or not the time will come when this will be generally carved out is doubtful. We are making no appreciable progress in that direction except through buildingloan associations."

A Land That Leaks. An Englishman, in exploring the North and Baltic Seas on his yacht, once picked up a pilot, who made sundry sarcastic and patronizing remarks as to the leaky condition of the yacht, for she was a boat requiring constant pumping. Presently across the dikes loomed up an enormous congregation of windmills. "What do you have all these windmills for?" asked a sailor. "To pump de water off de land," replied the pilot; "if those was not always turning round, us Hollanders would soon all be drowned." "Well. pilot," returned the Captain, "you were very severe just now because our boat leaked, but you must confess that your country leaks harder still." The pilot smiled, in spite of himself .- Argonaut.

Three hard things to keep are a diary, an umbrella and a lead pencil.

Long range practice doesn't necessarily make a cook a good sharp shooter.

# A CIRCUS FAKIR.

HOW THE "SHORT-CHANGE" MAN

While Selling Tickets Outside the Show He Adroitly Abstracts Bills in Making Change—Quick-Fingered Rogues.

A number of years ago I ran across one of the most accomplished short-change workers in this country and got well acquainted with him. He didn't suspect me of being a newspaper man, and in the three months that I knew him I didn't enlighten him. He grew very confidential and chatty, and gave away to me the innermost secrets of his craft. He was a little, slim fellow, of Irish extraction, and as bright and as sharp as a new needle. He had a way of tilting his head back and looking at folks with halfclosed eyes, while he smiled slightly, that was clever enough to make a great ait in a dramatic creation. It was perjectly fetching, but the fine contempt he had for the "suckers" whom his kind bled, and the way he had of speaking of them was much more so. It was winter time when I knew him, and he was resting until the season opened up. I approached him a dozen times to get him to tell me all about the short-change act before he became pliable. He would take a coin and palm it as cleverly as Mr. Herrmann and laugh and turn away. But one evening he opened his heart to

I had been talking about the "telegraph" method of making short change, and he spoke up and said quite scornful-

"That's no good! There's no money in that. You can only get 50 cents or \$1 out of that. There's lots of ways tronger than that!"

I asked him what they were.

bills, mostly ones and twos, out of his pocket, "they're worked this way: You do it with the 'long green.'"

He smoothed the bills out straight and caressed them affectionately.

"Ah! When these new ones wer arst issued," he said, "the boys worked all the banks in the country for them. They were the best graft the boys ever struck. You see they look just like a ive or ten if you don't show the figure. Well, this is the way the boys take the money away from the 'suckers.' You've noticed a lot of hustlers in the crowd sell- his count. ng tickets and saving people the trouble of getting in the jam at the ticket wagon, haven't you? Well, you naturally think they are hired by the proprietor of the show because they sell tickets at the regular price. But they are not. They pay 100 cents on the dollar for every ticket they sell, and they depend on their ability to swindle the buyers out of a few dollars now and then for their profit.

"A young man with his best girl omes along-or an old man alone, or a solid business man with two or three of his family; it doesn't matter who it is, they're all victims-and he sees a great crush around the ticket wagon. There sn't much chance of getting a ticket there in less than ten minutes, and there at his elbow is a young man with, 'Choice, eserved seats at regular prices! How nany?' We're here to relieve the rush at the wagon! No extra charge, sir! How many?' and he says, 'Two, please,' which will count his money that one last time. assumingly that the man buys reserved seats, would be \$2. He gives the young man a \$10 bill or maybe \$20-if there's any place on earth where a man will flash a big bill and where he hadn't ought to it's at a circus. We'll say he offers him a \$20 bill this time for the sake of the better illustration of the story. The young man takes it, puts it into his pocket, draws out a handful of bills, takes a ten, a two and five ones, and hands the lump to the buyer of seats. It is \$1 short, but the man has handled it so quickly and counted \$18 out of it so easily that oftentimes the man takes it and goes, but the fakir is sore if he does. If he is a cautious and knowing party whois 'dead onto' the tricks of 'these circus sharps' it suits the 'short-change man' exactly, for then he will carefully count his change and say:

"Here, young man! You're \$1 short

here. Only \$17 here. "That's beautiful and just as the fakir

wants it. So he says: "Sure of that? Just count it again,

"So he counts again while the fakir watches, and when he has turned over the last bill he says with the air of a man

who knows too much to be cheated by these flip circus folks:

fully:

"That's all-seventeen." "But the fakir is a little doubtful, so he says, as if trying to make sure: " 'Just let me count it please!"

"Serene in the belief that he has cor nered his man, the buyer hands it over and the fakir takes the bills in his left hand, with the \$10 bill underneath, letter?" straightens them out, and then bends the whole bunch back over his left thumb. Then he turns them over one by one, and they lie straight out-full length. When

"You're right-my mistake and your treat, or some such amiable chestnut, hands the bills back to the man, still at full length, goes down in his trousers pockets with his right hand, and gets a silver dollar, which he shoves into the stranger's hand, laughs, says something about 'mistakes will happen,' claps the manson the shoulder-with a laugh and is gone in the crowd, while the ticket buyer jams his money into his pocket and hurries into the tent where the elephants are bellowing.

"But the fakir has got the \$10 bill, because when he doubled that over in counting the seventeen he flipped it clear over and his agile little finger crushed it into a very-small wad and held it there unnoticed while the other fingers were free to use. And inasmuch as the 'sucker' has himself twice counted the bills, and has seen the fakir count them, he wilkswear that he has got all that be longs to him when he has compelled the fakir to go down into his pocket and fork out the silver dollar. He doubles up the bills without further examination and is gone.

"But the work doesn't end there. When the fakir laughingly claps his man on the back he puts a chalk mark on him which keeps all other fakirs away from him. He may try to buy red lemonade, or peanuts, or prize packages, or concert tickets, but he can't do it. The men he hails and beckons refuse to see him, and pass him by. The reason is this If they sell him something they might cause him to bring forth the roll of bills, in which case he would notice that the \$10 was missing. and would be apt to raise a row. But if one of them should overlook the signal, and be instrumental in appraising the man of his loss, he is compelled by a rule among the fakirs to stand the loss and restore the \$10, or whatever sum it may be. In case a man "Well," he said, taking a roll of small gives up a ten instead of a twenty the fakir only makes five, and if it's a five he probably only gets one. You see there must be enough bills left in the wad so that the absence of one won't be noticed."

"That's a good scheme," I remarked, "but suppose when the robbery is completed the purchaser of tickets should take the notion to count his money again?"

"There isn't one man in a thousand who will do it. You see he has counted it twice and has seen the other man verify

"Yes, I know," I persisted, "but suppose he should count it; wouldn't the fakir be in a pretty bad boat?"

"Not in the least," he replied. If such a crank should happen along, and they do occasionally, the instant he starts in to count the money the fakir drops the big bill from his left hand to the ground and catches the buyer by the arm with some such explanation as:

"'Look out there! You're losing something. You'll get the worst of it if you're not careful!'

"As he says this, he either picks up the money and hands it to the man or points it out to him and moves away in the crowd. Maybe the man suspects that the fellow tried to rob him, but he has his money and can make no kick, and beside the fakir is gone. Oh, there's no way of catching him. But, as I said, there isn't one man in a thousand who -Chicago Mail.

### Beauty and Accuracy of Great Clocks.

Accuracy and beauty are the objects aimed at by the builders of great clocks. You may get a severely plain one without chimes for \$150, or you may pay \$1000 for one that will give you the year, month, day, hour, minute, second, moon's phases and half a dozen other things, together with chimes and a rich frame. When extreme accuracy is aimed at four pendulums are sometimes put in. One corrects the other, and you get an unvarying clock. One of these has never been half a second wrong in a year, and has been tested daily by time telegraphed from the National Observatory at Washington. It is a mistake to suppose that the works of such clocks are complicated. They are extremely simple. A wheel here and a pin there produce the results Sometimes the works of an ordinary old Dutch clock are supplemented with a few simple contrivances, and all manner of information is conveyed thereafter. It is an easy matter, too, to build a clock that shall run for almost any length of time, a month, a year, five years. But expert clockmakers take no satisfaction in such clocks, because they cannot be made to keep accurate time. A slight jar will put them wrong. The eight-day-clock is better. If properly attended to it will run for years without overhauling, and keep time almost to the minute.-New

Tennessee.

Merchant-"Here! did you direct this

Office Boy-"Yes, sir." Merchant-"Well, what do these letters XEC mean?"

Office Boy-"That's the State. You reaches the last one he says, cheer- told me to abbreviate everything I could to save time."

Chipmunks Charmed by Rattlesnakes.

"Those knowing folks who ridicule the idea that a rattlesnake can charm the bird or animal it covets for its dinner, don't van't to talk to me, after an experience I had a few days ago," said Edward Blaisdell of Hawley, Penn. "I was always a little skeptical myself on the power of the snake to charm, and consequently when was taking a walk through the woods near Hawley one day last week, and saw a chipmunk sitting on the rock and giving no sign that my near approach to it disturbed it in the least, the thought that the influence of a snake had anything to do with the indifference of the little squirrel was the furthest thing from my mind, although it struck me as being singular, the agility with which the chip munk makes itself scarce as a person approaches it being well-known to me. "The squirrels side was toward me,

and it was as motionless as if it had been part of the rock itself. It was gazing intently in the direction of a log that lay a few feet from the rock. I stopped within less than a rod of the rock, and watched the chipmunk a moment. I had my revolver with me and made up my mind I would see what the affect of a shot at the squirrel would be. I fired, not aiming to hit the chipmunk, and the bullet furrowed the rock close by it. The squirrel did not move a hair. I fired again but the chipmunk paid not the slightest attention to the noise or the whizz of the bullet that struck the rock directly in front of it. I began to think that the little animal was dead. I stepped a little closer and got directly behind the squirrel and fired a bullet close over its head and into the log. The result was startling. Something fell from the log and began to thresh around among the ferns and low bushes. The chipmunk started up, ran to and fro on the rock in a dazed manner and then dodged with its peculiar chirp into its hole off to one side of the rock. I stepped forward to the log to see what was the cause of the disturbance there, and found an enormous rattlesnake. It had been shot through the neck, and was still writing under the effects of the wound. I had been so taken up with the strange conduct of the chipmunk that I had not seen the snake, which must have been lying on the log nong the moss that covered it in range of my bullet. That the snake held the squirrel under the spell of its fascinating powers which accounted for the chipnunk's indifference to my presence, there can be no doubt, the moment my bullet struck the rattle snake and knocked it from the log the fatal spell was broken, and the squirrel, recovering in a few seconds from its effects, was able to escape into its hole.

"In that same vicinity, some years ago, Solomon Purdy, who lived near Hawley, discovered a red squirrel on a log, in a condition similar to the one in which I discovered the chipmunk. He knew the habits of rattlesnakes and understood at once what the situation meant. He got his eye on the snake, which was coiled on the end of the log, his head uplifted, and his eyes fairly glittering. He shot the snake's head off. The squirrel dropped from the log also. Purdy went to the spot where the squirrel had disappeared. He found it lying on the ground dead, although there was not a mark of injury upon it."—New York Sun.

An English wife suing for divorce alleges in her complaint that "the defendant does not come home until ten o'clock at night, and when he does return he keeps plaintiff awake, talking sometimes until midnight." In another case the complaining wife declares that the "defendant is guilty of cruel and inhuman treatment in thiswhen he suffers financial loss he lays it to the plaintiff, and censures her in bitter terms."

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