

Hissed His Own Play.

Baron de Frenilly, who figured prominently in France during the days of "the terror," must surely have been the only author who ever hissed his own play. This was entitled "Les Trois Tantes" and was produced at the Vaudeville theater, Paris.

"Before half of the first scene had been played I said to myself, 'Oh, but this is execrable!' The public was of the same opinion and, while my friends kept applauding, hissed with all its strength. I ended by heartily hissing myself, for the further the play progressed the more convinced I was that the people were right.

"On leaving the theater a friend who was not in the secret of the authorship said to me, 'What a piece of extravagance, what a wretched farce!' 'Detestable,' I replied, and whatever he said I went one better. 'It is said to be by Comte de Segur,' he continued. 'No,' rejoined I: 'it was written by me.' The poor man was fixed with amazement."—From "Baron de Frenilly's Reminiscences."

Riddle Making Epochs.

There have been epochs at which riddle making has been more especially in vogue, and such epochs would appear to occur at seasons of fresh intellectual awakening. Such an epoch there was at the first glimmering of new intellectual light in the second half of the seventeenth century. This was the age of Aldhelm, bishop of Sherborne, the first in the roll of Anglo-Latin poets. He left a considerable number of enigmas in Latin hexameters. Aldhelm died in 709. Before his time there was a collection of Latin riddles that bore the name of Symphosius. Of this work the date is unknown. We only know that Aldhelm used it, and we may infer that it was then a recent product. The riddles of Symphosius were uniform in shape, consisting each of three hexameter lines.—Cornhill Magazine.

Explosive Barrels.

Nitroglycerin, though an explosive, is rarely used by itself, being mixed with guncotton to form blasting gelatin or with a certain earth to make dynamite. Huge quantities of the explosive liquid are kept in casks, and the wood of these casks becomes so highly explosive through being soaked with the liquid that a kick will blow them to pieces. It is not safe to use the empty casks again for refilling them with the explosive, nor can they be used in any other way, even for firewood. There is only one thing, indeed, that can be done, and that is to explode the casks. They are placed on waste ground and usually exploded by means of a rifle bullet fired into them. Very little of the cask remains after the explosion.—London Standard.

Chicken Talk.

The chickens were gathered together in the farmyard conversing with one another, as is the custom among all self-respecting chickens who have been brought up by a careful and judicious mother hen.

"What would home be without a mother?" asked one little fellow, looking tenderly at old Mrs. Hen, who was searching among the neighbor's freshly planted seeds for some dainty morsel with which to treat her brood.

"An incubator, I guess," answered his small sister, who had inherited her old man's unseemly sense of humor.—Pittsburgh Telegraph.

Tatoosh Island.

The most equable climate in this country is found in Tatoosh island, in the strait of Juan de Fuca, between Washington and Vancouver island, where the temperature never has been above 80 degrees and rarely falls below 50 degrees.

To Use Small Oriental Rugs.

The abuse of the small oriental rug, no less an object of art than of utility, is an especially common mistake. By all logic any rug used for a floor covering should emphasize the function of the floor as a solid foundation under our feet. To do this it must honor and obey the lines of the floor, at least that part which it decorates. Yet time and again, where several small rugs are used for the carpeting of a room, we find them all thrown down on the bias, often at different angles. With none of the sides of a rug parallel to the bounding lines of the floor, we are made conscious of a new decorative idea, one built on top of and at cross purposes with the original one. Chairs, tables and other pieces of furniture must then be placed either to conform with the position of the rugs or with the structural arrangement of the room; both sets of lines they cannot follow. So, at best, we have a confusion of ideas, a room which seems to rest on an insecure foundation.—Agnes Rowe Fairman in Good House-keeping.

Why Mothers Sing to Babies.

Psychologists who have carefully studied the characteristics of instinct in women have discovered just why mothers sing their babies to sleep. It is not merely inspired by the expectation of better sleep in their children, but it is the primeval call of the feminine nature. It is a material prompting which occurs naturally to each mother.

Savage mothers who are never known to sing upon other occasions invariably hum and croon to their children at night and upon one other instance, when they are planting seed. It is a peculiarity of the Zuni native women and one which has been but recently understood. The theory of primitive peoples is that there is some mysterious connection between the sound of a woman's voice and growing things.—Columbus Dispatch.

Nice Ballroom Ornaments.

Count Moltke in 1856 accompanied the crown prince of Prussia to Moscow to attend the coronation of Alexander II. At a ball in the Kremlin Moltke was introduced to a group of picturesque potentates from central Asia, with their girdles stuck full of daggers and pistols in the Albanian manner, and he begged to know whether these firearms of theirs were loaded. "Why should I carry them if they were not loaded?" replied the spokesman of the party, and in a letter to his English wife Moltke confessed that he had never experienced such a setback all his life. "Here at last," he said, "I have found 'un homme sérieux,' a man who is what he looks and means what he says.

Sincerity's own realm is one's secret chamber; strong here, a man is strong everywhere.—Salgo.

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