

# A Fatal Practical Joke.

Eleven Persons Killed by the Stampede of a Circus Audience.

About two weeks ago the bi-annual fair was being held in Calais, and one of the attractions of the fair was an Italian circus from Milan. The building in which the circus performances were given was capable of accommodating from 3,000 to 4,000 persons. At the performance on the 4th of February, the house was so filled that nearly 1,500 had to be turned from the doors. That evening an accident, which appears to have been the result of a practical joke, occurred, by which eleven persons were killed in a stampede of the audience. The reserved seats faced the entrance, the first-class seats being in the front rows, the second class in the back and in the gallery. During the whole of the performance a number of young workmen in the gallery kept making a noise. Toward the end of the performance during the representation of the pantomime, "Le Medecin de Campagne," this band of young men rose from their seats, causing those near to follow their example. At this moment an unknown person shouted "Au feu," causing an immediate stampede down the inclined plane on either side of the circus, which served for the entrance and exit of the second class. The persons who first reached the bottom of the staircase, instead of making for the door by which they had entered, attempted to open an extra door, reserved for cases of emergency. This door opening inward instead of outward, a block immediately ensued, people jumping down from the gallery upon those jostling below. The police officers used their utmost endeavors to calm the audience. Many kept their seats, but others, in a panic burst open the outer inclosure and jumped into the street. Others again, occupying second places, broke down the partition dividing them from the first, and pushed into the front rows, thence into the arena, and so out through the stables and the stage door. Four firemen, always on duty at the stables, one of them a bugler, hearing the first alarm of fire and seeing the people rushing out, shouted out "Fire!" The watchman at the adjoining belfry immediately rang the note of warning, alarming the town and garrison. The infantry and artillery were soon on the spot. Though not needed to extinguish fire, they did useful service in conveying the wounded to the Hotel de Ville. From a pile of bodies around the doors were taken nine corpses—two men, four boys, one woman, and two girls. A quarter of an hour later another boy died. The next morning two were found mortally, three severely, and 14 slightly wounded. Among the victims were a father and a little girl, the father struggling to save the child; both were ultimately bruised to death. The funeral expenses of the victims will be borne by the towns of Calais and St. Pierre, and the circus also gave a benefit representation for the victims on the following Thursday.—*London Times.*

## He Wasn't Mean.

Mr. Elijah Hitchcock was a Connecticut constable, whose character was under scrutiny. Deacon Solomon Rising was enquired of about him. "Deacon Solomon Rising," said the questioner, "do you think Mr. Hitchcock is a dishonest man?" "Very promptly," "Oh, no, sir, not by any means," "Well, do you think he is a mean man?" "Well, with regard to that," said the Deacon, "a little more deliberately, 'I may say that I don't really think that he is a mean man; I've sometimes thought he was what you might call a keeful man—a prudent man so to speak.'" "What do you mean by a prudent man?" "Well, I mean this: that one time he had an execution for \$4 against the old Widow Witter back here, and he went up to her house and levied on a flock of ducks, and he chased them ducks, one at a time, round the house pooty much all day, and every time he caught a duck he'd set right down and ring its neck, and charge mileage 'mounting to more than the debt. Nothin' mean about it, as I know of, but I always thought, after that, Mr. Hitchcock was a very prudent man."

# Rapid Effects of Ground Bone.

M. B. Batcham, of Painesville, says in the *Rural New Yorker*, of February 23d:

Messrs. Hough & Son, of Rootstown, Portage County, O., had five acres of clay loam soil, which they decided to sow with buckwheat. They knew that the land was poor, but having no fertilizer except one barrel (250 pounds) of bone dust from the Salem mill, they applied this broadcast on one half of the field—only one hundred pounds per acre—and harrowed it in with the seed. The field was all alike in other respects—sowed the last of June—the ground in fair order and rain enough followed to bring the plants up in due time. Almost immediately after their appearance it began to be seen that the plants on the fertilized half of the field were more vigorous than the others; and this difference increased as the season advanced, the growth of the one side being twice as great as that of the other; and at harvesting the fertilized portion gave fifty-six bushels of nice grain, while the other half was not worth cutting, and only gave six bushels. I found numerous instances where the bone-dust had been used by the farmers of Columbiana County, not far from Salem, with excellent results, when drilled in with wheat and grass seed, greatly benefitting the wheat crop and securing a five catch of grass and clover. Also applied on meadow and pasture land, a well-known dairy farmer in Geauga County used several tons of the bone with very satisfactory results, where he failed to see any benefit from a supposed fair article of superphosphate, applied at the same time as the bone, and at the same rate of 200 pounds to the acre. I will give his address to any one who desires it.

Most of the experiments with superphosphate that I have observed have been with corn, which needs ammonia more than phosphoric acid, and in a majority of cases there has been obvious benefit, in giving the plants a start in the first part of the season; but if the land was not otherwise enriched, the growth stopped when the roots got away from the influence of the fertilizer, which had been dropped in the hills, and hence it did not help in the earing time. Of course a larger application is required for poor soil, and it needs working in broadcast. I found the same true in regard to its use for garden crops; and there was no perceptible benefit the second year, even when freely applied, unless the first season was dry. The bone-dust applied at the same rate was more lasting, showing effect the second season, as well as the first, if at all freely used.

## A Timely Hint.

When M. de Persigny was French Minister of the Interior, he received a visit one day from a friend, who, on sending up his name, was shown into the great man's sanctum. A warm discussion arose between them. Suddenly an usher entered, and handed the Minister a note. On opening it he changed his tone of voice, and assumed a quiet and urbane manner. Puzzled as to the contents of the note, and by the marked effect it had suddenly produced upon the Minister his friend cast a furtive glance at it, when, to his astonishment, he perceived that it was simply a plain sheet of paper, without a scratch upon it! More puzzled than ever, the gentleman, after a few minutes took his leave, and proceeded to interrogate the usher, to whom he was well known, for he himself had been Minister of the Interior. "You have," said he, "just handed to me the Minister a note, folded up, which had a most extraordinary effect upon him. Now, it was a plain sheet of paper, with nothing written upon it. What did it mean?" "Sir," replied the usher, "here is the explanation, which I must beg you to keep secret, for I do not wish to compromise myself. My master is very warm, and very liable to lose his temper. As he himself is aware of his weakness, he ordered me, each time that his voice is raised sufficiently to be audible in the ante-room, without delay to place a sheet of paper in an envelope, and take it to him. That reminds him that his temper is getting the better of him, and he at once calms himself. Just now I heard his voice rising, and immediately carried out my instructions."

A FRENCH STORY.—D—, a Parisian, wanted to get rid of his nephew, who cost him a lot of money every year. All the efforts he had made him about getting married had been declined under the pretext that the girls were either too young or too old, or too bad tempered, etc. In despair D— went to a matrimonial agent, who showed him his register and photographs of some of his clients. The surprise of the dear uncle is impossible to describe when he discovered his own wife's likeness. Nearly out of his mind he goes home and eternally demands an explanation. "I can't deny the fact," the wife said, gently, "but it was last year, my dear, when you had been given up by all the doctors."

## SHORT AND SHARP.

It is a well known truism that people learn wisdom by experience. "A man," says Mr. Jones, "never wakes up his second baby to see it laugh."

Jones says he don't like the reduction of car fares. When he used to walk down in the morning he saved six and a quarter cents, now he can only save five.

"Did you do nothing to resuscitate the body?" was recently asked of the witness at a coroner's inquest. "Yes, sir; we searched the pockets," was the reply.

The editor of a Virginia paper was asked by a stranger "if it were possible that little town kept up four newspapers." And the reply was: "No; it takes four newspapers to keep up the town."

"It was simply an informal affair," wrote the editor, of a little strawberry party at a neighbor's house. "It was simply an informal affair," read the compositor, and that editor will never get any more invitations from that quarter.

Two Irishmen were proceeding in company to a jailyard to witness an execution, when one said to the other: "I say, Pat, where wud yez be if the hangman had his dues?" "Begorra," said Pat, "I'd just be walkin' down this street alone."

"But Paul, how can the spirit be in us and we in the spirit at the same time?" said the young man to a venerable darkey. "Oh, dar's no puzzle 'bout dat. It's like dat poker; I puts it in de fire and it gets red hot. Now, de poker's in de fire, and de fire's in de poker."

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