

Most of the so-called necessary evils are unnecessary.

Fools never know when to stop talking, but wise men always know when not to begin.

A man says he lost \$15 chasing a street car. He can charge it up to running expenses.

Gasoline locomotives are coming next. Is the public ready to exchange smoke for smell?

A Wall street brokerage firm gave \$1 reward to the man who found and returned \$24,000 worth of securities. The \$1, however, was real money.

A Rochester woman turned on the gas, drank poison, cut her throat and jumped out of a window. The indications are that she wanted to die.

A Missouri man claims to have found a process for liquefying coal. The coal trust, however, will continue to work its stock in the usual way.

One paper has wasted whole columns of good space in an attempt at defining the word "crank." A crank is a man whose views differ from your own.

A New York man has been sent to jail because he permitted his wife to support him. He will no doubt become a strong advocate of personal liberty now.

A camera man who succeeds in getting a snapshot of the New York Central paying a fine of \$100,000 for rebating ought to be able to do a big business with his prints.

London physician says that people are not getting enough sleep. He was not explicit, but it is presumed he means the people who live next door to the man that owns a phonograph.

A London doctor says every man should have a silent hour at home each day. There are men who will leave the opinion that it would be easier to have their silent hours away from home.

Mrs. Sage has given \$1,000 to a church. It is the first bequest she has made out of the \$70,000,000 which was left in trust to her. She will have to pass it out more rapidly than this if she expects to get rid of all of it before she dies.

An Indianapolis boy who was incurable has been made good by the removal of his tonsils. If the surgeons can prove that similar operations will make other bad boys good it may be reasonable to expect an immediate boom in the tonsil-cutting line.

Two Pittsburg boys who stole several hundred thousand dollars from a bank explained that they did it because they had to associate with millionaires and couldn't make a decent showing on the \$60 a month that each of them was paid. It must be almost terrible to have to live in a town where even the grocer's boy has to be a millionaire.

Grangers and others interested in farm products have proposed that a day be established which shall be observed as "Apple day." To celebrate this wholesome festival every good housewife would provide apples in some form, "pie, baked, raw or sass." There is a commercial side to the idea, for the feast of the apple would mean an additional consumption of many thousand barrels. But beyond that consideration the plan is a pleasant one.

Officers of the army and navy are forbidden to use their official titles in the advertisements of business enterprises with which they are connected. Recently the naval authorities informed a retired officer that he could not have his title used as the name of a wine in Mexico, and that if it was to appear on the list of directors his name must be printed without the naval rank. Now an officer of the army has been instructed to withdraw from a mining concern unless he can arrange to have his name associated prominently in the advertising matter of the business without mention of the military title.

Back to the farm as a plea from James J. Hill, the "empire builder," is a practical suggestion which takes into account the transition of the farmer from a rural resident who grows crops for want of something to do to a business man who subscribes to the rules of commerce and adds to the modern appliances he may purchase a native ingenuity whose extent determines the annual return he reaps from the soil. The leaning is to-day more strongly back to the soil on the part of the young men thus trained and they are the ones on whom Mr. Hill may depend for the execution of his plans or the application of his ideas. As a matter of fact farming is rapidly becoming a business and the farmer a business man. He succeeds or fails according to the quality and quantity of his business acumen.

Tom Sawyer is dead. Long live Tom Sawyer. The boyhood playmate and chum of Mark Twain, who was made the hero of the story bearing his name—grown to be an old man of 70 years of age—died not long ago in San Francisco. Tom Sawyer is dead. The white-haired old fellow who was recently buried, and his day. What fun he and his chum, Sam Clemens, must have had—barring the house chores that must be done. In the old, happy days at Hannibal how they must have haunted the levees. And there were robber caves to explore and secret societies to organize and surreptitious cigars to smoke and dime novels to read on the quiet. And like other boys, they escaped an unkind fate by the favor of Providence.

That was a long time ago. And that Tom Sawyer lies low in his California grave and that Sam Clemens is quite an old boy now. But—Long live Tom Sawyer! The real boy of Hannibal lives in a countless thousand hearts, both old and young. The flesh and blood Tom Sawyers merely touched the button of Clemens' memory. The sweet fancy of Mark Twain did the rest. How the real Tom Sawyer touches us as if he were flesh and bone! How the boy with red blood in his veins—and the real man—responds to that real Tom Sawyer. Dear old Tom—the real Tom—will live so long as boys shall live, or so long as men shall be glad in calling back the memory of old and happy days. Tom Sawyer is dead. Long live Tom Sawyer!

Admiral Robley D. Evans was graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1863. He served in the Civil War and in the war with Spain, and has been attached to the navy for more than forty years. When a man has had such an experience his reflections on "Heroism in the Navy" will naturally arouse much curiosity. What, it will be inquired, were the acts that appealed to him as being heroic? and it is a significant fact that most of them were acts that have brought small reward either in money or glory. The conduct that made the deepest impression on his mind was that of Dr. Longstreet at the assault of Fort Fisher, and he tells his story as follows: "As far as the eye could reach the dead and wounded lay upon the sand, and those who had lost much blood cried out for water. Dr. Longstreet was trying to relieve this thirst by taking the canteens around among the brave lads; but the bullets were singing around his head, and I begged him to lie down. He kept on at his work, and had just said, 'We will have you all off the beach tonight, when a bullet struck him in the head, killing him instantly.' The admiral's comment is that when he thinks of Longstreet's constitutional bravery, his sense of duty and manly courage in trying to jolly along his comrades who were half dead from their wounds, he feels that no braver man ever lived. 'The help,' he says, 'which in a crisis like this was the first to come, the simple, kindly, quiet devotion to duty, looking back at it now, has impressed me as the one thing of more value in the lesson of heroism than all the rest.' It was undoubtedly an unconscious heroism that Longstreet showed, and it was of a kind fortunately that is not peculiar to armies or navies, but that is frequently noticed in civil life. The heroes may not be threatened with the bullets of an enemy as the doctor was, but, like him, they jolly others along, are actuated by a 'simple, kindly, quiet devotion to duty' and are ready to sacrifice themselves as a matter of course. They find many chances and take them, and die heroes as truly as though they had volunteered for some conspicuous service on the field of battle.

Driving Home the Cows. Out of the clover and the blue-eyed grass He turned them into the river lane, One after another he let them pass, Then fastened the meadow bars again. Under the willows and over the hill He patiently followed their color pass; The merry whistle for once was still, And something shadowed the sunny face.

Only a boy, and his father had said He never could let his youngest go; Two already were lying dead Under the feet of the trampling foe. But after the evening work was done, And the frogs were loud in the meadow swamp, Over his shoulder he slung his gun And stealthily followed the footpath damp.

Across the clover and through the wheat, With resolute heart and purpose grim, Though cold was the dew on his hurrying feet, And the blind bat's flitting startled him.

Twice since then had the lanes been white, And the orchards sweet with apple bloom; And now, when the cows came back at night, The feeble father drove them home.

For news had come to the lonely farm That three were lying where two had lain; And the old man's tremulous, pained arm Could never lean on a son's again.

The summer day grew cool and late, He went for the cows when the work was done; But down the lane, as he opened the gate, He saw them coming, one by one—

Brindle, Ebony, Speckle and Bess, Shaking their horns in the evening wind; Cropping the buttercups out of the grass— But who was it following close behind?

Loosely swung in the idle air The empty sleeve of army blue; And worn and pale, from the crisp hair, Looked out a face that the father knew.

For gloomy prisons will sometimes yawn And yield their dead unto life again; And the day that comes with a cloudy dawn In golden glory at last may wane.

The great tears sprang to their meeting eyes, For the heart must speak when the lips are dumb; And under the silent evening skies Together they followed the cattle home. —Kate Putnam Osgood.

GAME ABUNDANT IN CUBA. Native Animals Few, but Varieties of Birds Number 200.

Throughout Cuba game is abundant. Deer, though not native, have flourished and multiplied greatly. Rabbits are plentiful; also wild boar, so called, the wild pig, the wild dog and the wild cat of the island. Wild fowl, especially ducks and pigeons, abound, the former crossing from the Southern States during the winter season, while the latter remain on the island the year round. Pheasants, quail, snipe, wild turkeys and wild guinea fowl are also numerous, with several varieties of game birds, such as the perdia, tojosas, rabiches and the guanacos.

The only distinctive native animal is the jutia or hutia, ratlike in appearance and black. It grows to a length of sixteen or eighteen inches, not including the tail. While eatable, it is not especially palatable.

Cuba has more than 200 species of native birds, including those already mentioned as game birds, many possessing the most beautiful plumage, but those with song are rare.

In swampy localities crocodiles and American alligators (caimans) are found, and although these frequently grow to an enormous size but little attention is paid to them by the natives.

Chameleons, small lizards, tree toads and similar harmless siliurans of diminutive size are very common, while occasionally the iguana and other large varieties of the lizard species are seen.

Fed varieties of snakes exist in Cuba. One of these, the maja, from ten to fourteen feet in length, is a semi-domesticated reptile, if such a term may be used, for it is most frequently found about the huts, farm houses and small villages, its favorite living place being in the palm thatches of the old buildings, while its favorite food is poultry.

Another snake, named the jubo, is more vicious in disposition than the maja, although never reaching more than one-third its size. It is not poisonous. The other varieties are still smaller in size, are seldom seen and not venomous. —Havana Post.

Pick-a-Back to Japan. Taking care of little sister or little brother means much more to the children of Japan than to those of this country. As a rule, the baby is fastened to the back of the elder child, even though the latter be little more than a baby itself. Although mere boys and girls carry the tots around by the hour, they do not apparently suffer in health, but that may be the reason why the race does not reach greater physical proportions.

Magistrate—You were begging in the public streets, and yet you had fifteen shillings in your pocket. Prisoner—Yes, your worship. I may not be as industrious as some, but I'm no spendthrift.—London Express.

OLD Favorites

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TYROLESE CUSTOMS. Singular Manner in Which Proposals of Marriage Are Made.

There is an old custom prevailing among the Tyrolese regarding proposals of marriage. The first time a young man pays a visit as avowed lover he brings with him a bottle of wine, of which he pours out a glass and presents it to the object of his desires.

If she accepts it the whole affair is settled. Very often the girl has not yet made up her mind, and then she will take refuge in excuses so as not to drink the wine and yet not refuse it point blank, for that is considered a gross insult, proving that she has been merely trifling with the affections of her lover.

She will, for instance, maintain that the wine "looks sour" or that wine disagrees with her or that she is afraid of getting tipsy or that the priest has forbidden her to take any—in fact, she makes use of any subterfuge that presents itself at that moment.

The purport of these excuses is that she has not come to a decision and that the wine offering is premature.

This strange custom, dating very far back—according to one account, it was known as early as the ninth century—is called "bringing the wine" and is synonymous with the act of proposing.

Shy lovers, loath to make sure of their case beforehand, find it a very happy institution. Not a word need be spoken, and the girl is spared the painful "No" of civilization.

If any of the wine is spilled or the glass or bottle broken it is considered treated reptile, if such a term may be used, for it is most frequently found about the huts, farm houses and small villages, its favorite living place being in the palm thatches of the old buildings, while its favorite food is poultry.

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such a thing in the United States. But they had to have it and so they made it. And it was the only bridge of the kind in the world except one in Switserland that is somewhat like it. To look at it one would think that each town had started to build a bridge out to the others and all three bridges had met in the middle of the river.

Each part of the bridge had four half-ways, two big ones for horses and two little ones for people walking. It had a shingled roof over all the length of it and windows in the sides, so that it was a sort of house bridge. When it rained you could go out on the river and be out of the wet. Where the bridges came together there was a big room out in the middle of the river, with the twelve hallways opening into it. Can you imagine what a roomful of horses and wagons and people that was, with the people of three towns all crossing from hall to hall as they came and went in different directions? Everybody in the three parts of the city had to come out here whenever they went to any of the others. And so they all met in the room out in the middle of the river, no matter where they were coming from or where they were going to.—St. Nicholas.

THE BLACK BALL. A Clever Scheme That Was Spotted in the Drawing.

Two young men in a French village were called on to draw for conscription. One only was wanted to complete the number, and of the two who were to draw one was the son of a rich farmer and the other the child of a poor widow.

The farmer ingratiated himself with the superintendent of the ballot and promised him a present if he could find means to prevent his son from going in the army. In order to accomplish this the official put into the urn two black balls instead of one white and one black ball. When the young men came, he said:

"There are two balls, one black and one white, in the urn. He who draws the black one must serve. Your turn is first," pointing to the widow's son.

The latter, suspecting that all was not fair, approached the urn and drew one of the balls, which he immediately swallowed without looking at it.

"Why," said the superintendent, "have you done that? How are we to know whether you have drawn a black or a white ball?"

"Oh, that's very easy to discover," was the reply. "Let the other now draw. If I have the black, he must necessarily draw the white one."

There was no help for it, and the farmer's son, putting his hand into the urn, drew the remaining ball, which, to the satisfaction of the spectators, was a black one.

FOREIGN JOHN SMITHS. Nearly Every Nation Has a Peculiar Manner of Spelling His Name.

Of all the families of the earth probably there is none more numerous than that of Smith, and of all the Smiths in the world it seems that at least 50 per cent have been christened John. If the name were not so common we should probably admire it and see it through a glamour, as we do many other names that are not half as solid and substantial.

As it is, plain John Smith is not very high-sounding; it does not suggest aristocracy. It is not the name of any hero in die-away novels; yet it is good and honest. Transferred to other languages it seems to climb the ladder of respectability.

Thus in Latin it is Johannes Smithus; the Italian smooths it off into Giovanni Smithi; the Spaniards render it Juan Smithus; the German adopts it as Hans Schmidt; the French flatten it out into Jean Smeets; the Russian turns it into Jonoff Smitowski; the Icelanders use it as Jahnne Smithson.

Among the Tuscaroras he becomes Tam Qua Smithia; in Poland he is known as Ivan Schmittiwski; among the Welsh mountains they call him Jihom Schmidt; in Mexico his name is written Jonthi F'Smitri; in Greece he turns to Jon Smitikon; in Turkey he is almost disguised as Yoo Seef.

Robinson Crusoe. The second volume of "Robinson Crusoe," by Daniel De Foe, published on Aug. 20, 1879, was the first story published in England with illustrations. The illustrations consisted of a map of the world, in which the different voyages of the hero of the tale were delineated. The first volume of "Robinson Crusoe" was published in April, 1719, and became popular at once. A second edition was printed seventeen days after the first, twenty-five days later another followed, and a fourth was published on Aug. 8 of the same year. On Aug. 20 the second volume was issued under the title of "The Further Adventures of Robinson Crusoe," being the second and last part of his life and of the strange, surprising account of his travels round three parts of the globe. Written by himself. To which is added a map of the world, in which is delineated the voyage of Robinson Crusoe.

Plants that Take Pills. A very large and sturdy orange tree was growing in a small pot. "If that tree," said the florist, "didn't take pills it would require a pot as big as a bathtub to grow in. But it takes pills like a hypochondriac."

Chemists, agricultural experts now make plant pills, pills no bigger than chestnuts, that contain sustenance for six months, a kind of tabloid food. These chemists analyze a plant's ash, and make pills of the constituent salts. The pills, inclosed in a metal cover, are buried in the earth at the plant's roots, and the salts gradually dissolve and diffuse through the metal, giving the plants day by day the sustenance that they require.

"Pills are also applied to weak, sickly plants, which they help wonderfully."

Too Early, Yet. He—And so they are engaged to be married? She—Yes.

He—Has he given her a diamond ring? She—Yes.

He—She's wearing one, but I don't know whether he's given it to her or not. They're not married yet, you know.—Yonkers Statesman.



BLACK ART EXPOSED

to get his gun and deposit the salver. A couple of assistants extracted the genuine bullets and heated them. Herrmann went to the wing to get the plate, and secretly secured the marked bullets. The rest of the trick consisted in working up the dramatic effects.

Conjuror Must Be Actor. A great deal of the success in a trick such as this is due to the dramatic effects introduced by the wonder worker. The conjuror must be something of an actor as well as a clever sleight-of-hand performer. Herrmann was always happy in his " patter," the technical name for the magician's running conversation. He was a good bit of a comedian, and consequently was able to distract the attention of his audience from something he did not wish them to observe. He was not the first to make use of the bullet-catching trick, which really was invented by Robert Houdin, and also used by Anderson. However, Herrmann made it the great feature of his entertainment, and by performing it but seldom added to its interest, for it was believed by his audience that he placed his life in jeopardy every time he performed the feat.

Excepting the card and coin manipulators and the parlor magicians, the stage professor of the black art carries with him many tons of paraphernalia. The lightest, airiest effects are the results of elaborate and heavy apparatus, and the modern thaumaturgist must be accompanied by many mechanics and chief assistants, as well as by the chief assistants whom the spectators notice. The confederate, as he was once known, is unnecessary nowadays. The gentlemen who go upon the stage from the audience to tie the knots are all of them very innocent, indeed. There is no need of confederacy, for the trick is really a genuine, carefully planned feat, and does not depend upon any collusion on the part of some one placed in the audience.

Some Feats of Kellar. Kellar as a young man was assistant to the famous Davenport Brothers, and he reproduces some of their cabinet "mysteries" with considerable and more effective improvements. It is explained that the Davenport Brothers accomplished their feats by secretly taking up slack in the rope while it was being tied, thereby getting a loophole in the bonds through which to work one hand loose. Frequently they cut the cords with knives secreted in their sleeves. Those who have seen Kellar's dexterous performance may form their own ideas as to whether or not he achieves his results in this way.

A master magician like Kellar usually improves upon the tricks he adopts. Thus Kellar's automaton "Psycho" is not identical with Maskelyne's, which has been explained, although not beyond dispute. Kempelen's automaton chess player, which caused a sensation in Europe in the eighteenth century, was of very difficult construction. An expose of Kempelen's masterpiece showed that it was operated by a man who was skillfully concealed in the machine. The present-day "Psycho" is under no such suspicion, being merely a product of mechanical ingenuity and a thorough knowledge of psychology.

Levitation and Flight. In adopting the celebrated "levitation" mystery Kellar has also introduced improvements. It is a very surprising feat, and as first used by Kellar was explained by the diagram shown. An assistant is introduced, laid on an ottoman and then sent off into a hypnotic trance? This part of the feat, it may be explained, is the dramatic "leading up," a necessary feature in every sensational conjuring trick. The performer takes an ordinary fan and fans the body while it rises slowly about four feet in the air, where it mysteriously remains for any length of time desired. A large solid steel hoop is given for examination, and after the audience is satisfied as to its genuineness it is passed over to the body from head to feet, behind the body and over it again, at once dispelling the idea of wires or any other tangible support used, the body, as it were, journeying through the hoop each time. It will be noticed that the cranked bar is the soul of the illusion.

Houdini, the "Handcuff King," who, by the way, is an American, has astonished even the police by the rapidity and ease with which he sheds handcuffs with which he allows himself to be fettered. Handcuffs are supplied with spring locks, and can only be opened by means of a key. As a matter of fact, Houdini relieves himself of his "bracelets" by using keys which he secretes about his clothing. The costume

cannot escape a secret thrill in the presence of the possibly uncausing. What he sees there are illusions, and deceptions. He knows that Kellar, for instance, has to get along without supernatural help. Everything the stage magician accomplishes is a trick, and the fascination of the exhibition is to be found chiefly in the universal curiosity which causes each spectator to desire to know how the illusion was performed, and partly in the old credence in the miraculous powers of black art.

One may hazard a "guess" as to the method employed in one illusion or another, but he is not likely to know whether or not his surmise is correct, for the secret of the tricks is their greatest value, and the simplicity of most of them would, were it generally known, lessen the desire to see them. The average book of magic is a tantalizing treatise to a person who "wants to know." It will give the explanation of hundreds of tricks no longer exhibited, and will describe those which may still be effective in terms so vague that their mystery is, if anything, made deeper.

Revelation in Magic. An exception to the rule is "The Old and the New Magic," by Henry Ridgely Evans, which has been published by the Open Court Publishing Company of Chicago. This is a very chatty and illuminating volume, but, at times, its author takes it for granted that the reader is an adept. However, it is a very enjoyable but brief view of magic and magicians of all times. The modus operandi of some famous illusions or tricks is given, and, excepting to the professional or amateur who has followed stage magic closely, the book will prove a revelation.

One of the most simple but startling tricks shown on the stage is Thurston's "dedance of the laws of gravitation." Having made his entrance by giving some feats of card manipulation, he suspends a large ball in the air like Mahomet's coffin. It is apparently unattached to anything, for the magician passes a hoop about the ball. As he crosses the stage the ball follows him! And accompanies him as he makes his exit. The feat is accomplished by a stream of compressed air. It is very simple, but it requires great skill to reproduce.

Herrmann's Gun Illusion. The gun illusion, performed by the late Alexander Herrmann, was perhaps one of the most sensational feats ever presented. A squad of soldiers, under the command of a sergeant or corporal, comprised the firing party. The guns were apparently loaded with genuine cartridges, the bullets of which had been previously marked for identification by various spectators. The soldiers stood upon a platform erected in the center of the theater, and Herrmann stationed himself upon the stage. The guns were fired at him, and he apparently caught the bullets upon a plate.

Upon examination the balls were found to be still warm from the effects of the explosion and the marks were identified upon them. The substitution of the show cartridges, which were loaded into the guns, for the genuine ones, was very subtly executed by means of a trick salver having a small well let into its center to hold the cartridges. Into this well the marked cartridges were deposited by the spectators. In the interior of the salver was a second compartment loaded with blank cartridges. The sergeant who collected the bullets shifted the compartment by means of a peg underneath the salver as he walked from the audience to the stage. The sham cartridges were now brought to view, and the real were hidden in the body of the salver. While the soldiers were engaged in loading their rifles with the blank cartridges the sergeant went behind the side scene

Marvels of invention in these times are looked upon as matters of fact. The announcement of the discovery of the X-ray ten years ago was indeed at first viewed with some incredulity; but when the proof was quickly produced, the world was ready to believe anything. Wireless telegraphy was accepted as a matter of course; wireless telephony is now expected steadily to be made available. There is almost nothing too extravagant to be impossible for science, so far as the average man is concerned. Yet while these views are held of science, the ordinary person attending an exhibition of conjuring

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STAGE DECAPITATION.

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Houdini, the "Handcuff King," who, by the way, is an American, has astonished even the police by the rapidity and ease with which he sheds handcuffs with which he allows himself to be fettered. Handcuffs are supplied with spring locks, and can only be opened by means of a key. As a matter of fact, Houdini relieves himself of his "bracelets" by using keys which he secretes about his clothing. The costume

cannot escape a secret thrill in the presence of the possibly uncausing. What he sees there are illusions, and deceptions. He knows that Kellar, for instance, has to get along without supernatural help. Everything the stage magician accomplishes is a trick, and the fascination of the exhibition is to be found chiefly in the universal curiosity which causes each spectator to desire to know how the illusion was performed, and partly in the old credence in the miraculous powers of black art.

One may hazard a "guess" as to the method employed in one illusion or another, but he is not likely to know whether or not his surmise is correct, for the secret of the tricks is their greatest value, and the simplicity of most of them would, were it generally known, lessen the desire to see them. The average book of magic is a tantalizing treatise to a person who "wants to know." It will give the explanation of hundreds of tricks no longer exhibited, and will describe those which may still be effective in terms so vague that their mystery is, if anything, made deeper.

Revelation in Magic. An exception to the rule is "The Old and the New Magic," by Henry Ridgely Evans, which has been published by the Open Court Publishing Company of Chicago. This is a very chatty and illuminating volume, but, at times, its author takes it for granted that the reader is an adept. However, it is a very enjoyable but brief view of magic and magicians of all times. The modus operandi of some famous illusions or tricks is given, and, excepting to the professional or amateur who has followed stage magic closely, the book will prove a revelation.

One of the most simple but startling tricks shown on the stage is Thurston's "dedance of the laws of gravitation." Having made his entrance by giving some feats of card manipulation, he suspends a large ball in the air like Mahomet's coffin. It is apparently unattached to anything, for the magician passes a hoop about the ball. As he crosses the stage the ball follows him! And accompanies him as he makes his exit. The feat is accomplished by a stream of compressed air. It is very simple, but it requires great skill to reproduce.

Herrmann's Gun Illusion. The gun illusion, performed by the late Alexander Herrmann, was perhaps one of the most sensational feats ever presented. A squad of soldiers, under the command of a sergeant or corporal, comprised the firing party. The guns were apparently loaded with genuine cartridges, the bullets of which had been previously marked for identification by various spectators. The soldiers stood upon a platform erected in the center of the theater, and Herrmann stationed himself upon the stage. The guns were fired at him, and he apparently caught the bullets upon a plate.

Upon examination the balls were found to be still warm from the effects of the explosion and the marks were identified upon them. The substitution of the show cartridges, which were loaded into