

RAINY-DAY DIVERSIONS

Some Arithmetic Puzzles

By CAROLYN WELLS

NOW, Uncle Bob," said Fred, "won't you give us some more arithmetical tricks?"

"Certainly, Fred, you've only to ask for what you want. Get your pencils and pads."

"Can we each do it at once?" asked Lucy.

"You can; but it's more confusing. Suppose you try it together. Choose a number, write it down and tell me if it's odd or even."

So Fred wrote nineteen, while Lucy looked over his shoulder.

"Now triple it," said Uncle Bob, "and divide it by two; but wait," he said. "You have an odd number, haven't you? Well, add one to it, and then divide it by two."

Fred did as he was told, with the result twenty-nine, though, of course, only he and Lucy knew this.

"Now multiply by three; divide by nine, and tell me your quotient—don't mind any remainder there may be."

"The quotient, not counting the remainder, is nine," said Lucy.

"Then your original number was nineteen."

"That's the sort of game I like," declared Fred. "Show us how to do it, please, uncle."

"Well, try it once more with an even number."

This time Lucy wrote twenty-six.

"Now triple it, halve it and triple again. Now how many times will nine go into your result, not counting a remainder?"

"Thirteen times."

"Then you chose twenty-six."

"We surely did!" exclaimed Fred. "Tell us how."

"Well," said Uncle Bob, "when you do this trick, you must always direct that the chosen number be multiplied by three. Then, if the chosen number was even, direct next that it be divided by two. But if the chosen number was odd, direct to add one and then divide by two. After this, in any case, direct to multiply by three again, and then to divide by nine. Then ask the answer, not counting a remainder. Whatever the answer is, double it mentally, and if the original number chosen was even, you will have it. If odd, add one to your mental result and announce it."

"Here's another variation of the same trick. Write down two consecutive numbers, like seven and eight, or twenty-four and twenty-five."

Fred wrote twelve and thirteen.

"Now square each number, and subtract one square from the other."

So Fred subtracted one hundred and forty-four from one hundred and sixty-nine, and announced that his answer was twenty-five.

"Then you chose twelve and thirteen," remarked Uncle Bob.

"That's a neat one," said Fred admiringly. "I like that kind."

"It's an easy one," said his uncle. "After your friend squares two consecutive numbers and tells you the difference between the squares, you have only to divide the number he tells you by two. There will always be a remainder of one, and the quotient will be one of the numbers you seek, and the quotient plus one the other. For instance, you told me your answer was twenty-five. Two goes into twenty-five twelve times and one remainder. So twelve was one of your numbers chosen, and twelve plus one the other."

"Those arithmetical ones are clever," said Lucy; "but they dizzy my head. Do show us one of those tricks that fool people."

"Well, here's one of your sort then," said Uncle Bob. "See, I have here a dime and a nickel." He laid them on the table in front of him, as he sat opposite the two children, and pushed back his coat sleeves and cuffs.

"I want you to see that I have nothing concealed in my sleeves," he went on. "This is a fair, genuine trick. You may watch as closely as you like. Now, you see, I take the dime in my right hand and the nickel in my left, and close my hands tight—so." Uncle Bob laid his clenched fists on the table before him, about two feet apart.

"Now," he said, "I purpose to make those two coins change places, without opening my hands or allowing my hands to touch each other. Watch closely, and when I say 'Fly!' you will see the dime where the nickel now is, and the nickel in the dime's place, yet my hands will remain tightly shut."

The children stared with wide-open eyes. Uncle Bob said: "Fly!" in a stern voice, and then what do you suppose that man did? Merely crossed his arms one over the other, thus bringing his right hand to the place his left had occupied, and vice versa.

The children could not deny that the dime was now in the place where the nickel had been, and the nickel in the dime's place, and they laughed heartily at the sell.



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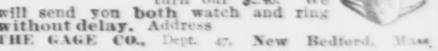
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A YARD OF SILK

By Nixon Waterman

OH, I am so tired!" said Mrs. Noddody one day in the lunch hour. "Why, my dear, what have you been doing to make you so tired?" wonderingly inquired Noddody, who happened to be spending the noon hour with his family instead of remaining down town and patronizing a restaurant as was his usual custom. "I try to make life easy for you," he continued with a suggestion of fault-finding in his tone. "I am only too happy to pay for services of servants, and I wish that being surrounded as you are you might manage to get along with your home affairs without becoming so fatigued as you seem to be. How does it happen, dear?"

"I've been shopping," she answered apologetically, for she detected the thread of displeasure running through his remarks and was wondering if it was really her fault or her misfortune that she usually came home from her shopping trips almost tired out.

"Shopping?" he repeated with a queer expression about his mouth that came near to suggesting a sneer. "I've always

entertained a more or less clearly defined impression that shopping would be something in the nature of recreation rather than an occupation designed to fatigue one. For the life of me I never could understand how women make so much work of it. Really I am moved to suspect, my dear, that you do not go about it so systematically and intelligently as it might be done. Please do not think me in a fault-finding mood, but I would like sometime to do some shopping for you, just to show you how men would perform such superficial duties."

"It is very kind of you to offer your services," she responded, "and now that I think of it I failed to get a yard of silk which my dressmaker informs me I shall need to finish a gown she is making for me. If I give you a sample of the goods would it be too much trouble for you to bring a yard of it home with you this evening and save my going after it?"

Noddody thought that the occasion offered a splendid opportunity for him to impress upon his wife's mind how easy it would be for her to do her shopping,