



A SUBTLE DIFFERENCE

Having at last succeeded in getting an order out of one of the largest firms in Scotland, after months of hard work, he purchased a big box of costly cigars, which he intended to present to the manager as a token of his gratitude.

But the manager was highly offended.

"Naw, naw, mon," said he, "I canna tak' them; it's just bribery, that's what it is, and me one of councillors of the toon, too!"

"But surely," persisted the traveler, "you can accept a present from me?"

"I couldna, mon; I couldna do it!"

"Well, then, I'll tell you what—I'll sell the cigars to you for a purely nominal sum; say, a shilling the box."

"Weel, that's different," answered the scrupulous one. "An' as you're so pressin' I'll pay ye cash for three boxes!"

NO IMAGINATION

Mr. Midge took an extraordinary delight in digging little facts out of the papers and holding forth on them to his wife.

One evening as they sat together, she sewing and he reading, a smothered grunt of satisfaction warned Mrs. Midge that her husband had discovered something which he considered interesting.

"That a most extraordinary thing—most extraordinary, my dear!"

"What is it?" asked his wife, in a resigned tone that always made him boil inwardly.

"Why, it says here that even if you pumped water out of the sea at the enormous rate of a thousand gallons a second—a thousand gallons!—it would still take twelve million years to empty it! Marvelous, isn't it?"

"Marvelous! Stuff and rubbish I call it!"

"Now, Mary," said Midge, beginning the inevitable lecture, "can't you see—"

"Silly nonsense!" said Mary, biting off a bit of cotton. "Where do you suppose they're going to pump all the water to, anyway?"

KILLING A VILLAIN!

Claude Fleming, the famous baritone, relates an amusing instance of "gagging" on the stage in San Francisco.

"Die, villain!" the hero of the drama said, and shot off his revolver at the villain's head.

But the gun didn't go off. Six times the hero pulled the trigger, and not a single explosion took place. The audience was getting hysterical, when the victim struck an attitude and said:

"Your pistol has missed fire, Sir Reginald; but what difference does it make? The thought that I was to be shot has frightened me to death!"

And he rolled over and died.—**THE**
Bits.