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THE
BLACK ART

Fully Exposed and Laid Bare.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

NEW YORK:
FRANK M. REED, Publisher.

REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 1880

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

T H E

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WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

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PUBLISHER.

1875

GRIM CARE, *anxiety, moroseness, all this rust of life, ought to be scoured off by the oil of mirth. It is better than emery. Every man ought to rub himself with it. A man without mirth is very like a wagon without springs, in which every one is caused disagreeably to jolt by every pebble over which it runs. Therefore, whenever the opportunity occurs, laugh—a hearty, rollicking, explosive laugh—which you can do at any time, on short notice, by sending for the following two books:*

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
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THE BLACK ART,

FULLY EXPOSED AND LAID BARE.

To Determine the Article Selected by the Company, the Performer Being Absent from the room at the Time of the Selection.—The effect of this trick upon the uninitiated is little short of marvelous. The performer places three articles in a row upon the table. As, for instance, a decanter, a glass, and a plate. He then requests the company to determine among themselves, in his absence, which of the articles he shall touch on his return. He leaves the room and is recalled when the decision is made. Pretending to examine the articles from various points of view, and after an apparent mental calculation, the conjuror points out the article selected by the company.

In order to accomplish this mystery, the performer simply employs a confederate, agreeing with him beforehand upon signs and signals to denote the numbers 1, 2, and 3. For example, the confederate is to pass his hand through his hair for number one; keep his hand on his watch-chain for number two; and do nothing at all for number three. Let it be understood that the articles are to be known by numbers, counting always from the *performer's* left hand. Thus, the decanter is number one, the glass

number two, and the plate number three. The articles being in position, the operator leaves the room. The confederate, of course, remains with the company, who, we will suppose, select the wine-glass. The operator is recalled; and, in the course of his examination or calculation, takes an opportunity of stealing a glance at the confederate, who, with his hand on his watch-chain, signifies number two (the glass) to be the article selected. The operator may then repeat the performance, varying the effect by requesting the company to place the articles in any other position they please; the operator and his confederate always remembering to count from *the left hand*.

To Knock a Tumbler Through a Table.—This trick is very effective, and calculated to excite an immense amount of curiosity and surprise. Take an ordinary tumbler and a newspaper. Sit on a chair *behind the table*, keeping the audience in front of it. Place the tumbler on the table and cover it with the newspaper, pressing the paper closely round, so that it gradually becomes *fashioned to the form of the glass*. Then draw the paper to the edge of the table, and drop the tumbler into your lap—quickly returning the paper to the centre of the table; the stiffness of the paper will still preserve the form of the tumbler; hold *the form* with one hand, and strike a heavy blow upon it with the other; at the same moment drop the tumbler from the lap to the floor; and you will appear to have positively knocked the tumbler through the solid table. Care should be taken after the tumbler is in the lap to place the legs in such a fashion that the glass may slide gradually toward the ankles, so that the fall may not be sufficiently great to break the glass. Care should be also taken to smooth out the paper after the blow has been struck, to prevent suspicion of the fact that the *form of*

the glass was simply preserved by the stiffness of the paper. Never repeat this illusion.

To Drive one Tumbler Through Another.—This trick requires some little practice, or the result is nearly certain to be attended with considerable destruction of glass. Select two tumblers of exactly the same pattern, and considerably larger at the top than the bottom—so much so, indeed, that either tumbler will fit at least half-way into the other. Sit on a chair, so that the falling tumbler may fall softly into the lap. Hold one tumbler between the thumb and second finger of the left hand. Then play the other tumbler with the right hand several times in and out of the left-hand tumbler, and during this play contrive at the same instant to retain the right-hand tumbler between the thumb and first finger of the left hand, while the other or lower glass drops into the lap. Well done, this trick has few superiors, and it is worth any amount of practice to achieve it. It would be desirable to get a tinman to make a couple of common tumbler-shaped tin cups to practice with. It will save much expense in glass.

The Dancing Skeleton.—This is calculated to excite much astonishment, if well arranged beforehand.

Get a piece of board about the size of a large school-slate, and have it painted black. The paint should be what is known as a dead color, without gloss or brightness. Sketch out the figure of a skeleton on a piece of cardboard, and arrange it after the manner of the dancing sailors and other cardboard figures exposed for sale in the toy-shops, so that by holding the figure by the head in one hand, and pulling a string with the other, the figure will throw up its legs and arms in a very ludicrous manner.

Make the connections of the arms and legs with black string, and let the pulling string be also black. Tack the skeleton by the head to the black-board. The figure having been cut out, is of course painted black like the board.

Now to perform. Produce the board. Show only the side upon which there is nothing.

Request that the lights may be reduced about half, and take position at a little distance from the company. With a piece of chalk make one or two attempts to draw a figure; rub out your work as being unsatisfactory; turn the slate; the black figure will not be perceived; rapidly touch the edges of the cardboard figure with chalk, filling up ribs, etc., at pleasure, and taking care *that nothing moves* while the drawing is progressing. Then manipulate with the fingers before the drawing, and request it to become animated. By pulling the string below the figure it will, of course, kick up the legs and throw about the arms, to the astonishment of everybody.

A little music from the piano will greatly assist the illusion.

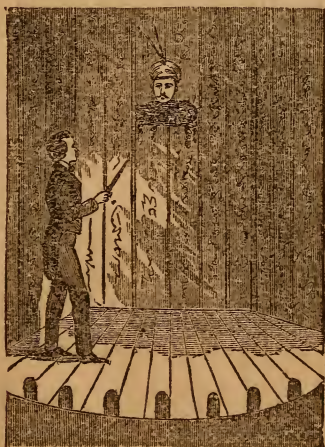
The Head of the Decapitated Speaking.—This illusion, performed with a table, under which two pieces of



looking-glass are placed, at an angle of forty-five degrees, concealing the body of the actor, attracted thousands to the London Polytechnic when first exhibited.

The Mystery of the Floating Head.—One of the most startling of conjurers' tricks, and one which has piqued public curiosity to the utmost, is that sensationally announced as the "Human Head Floating in the Air." Multitudes have witnessed and wondered at this performance, which seems to have defied any explanation by the uninitiated.

That the head is a gutta-percha or plaster affair, is a pet theory with those who have not seen it, but after witnessing the exhibition this idea is reluctantly discarded. In reality it is a human head, and the seeming absence of



THE "FLOATING HEAD" AS EXHIBITED.

any body attached thereto will be accounted for as soon as we disclose the mystery and secret of the performance.

The sides and back of the stage are hung with curtains. Near the back of the stage two mirrors are placed at right angles, the *point*, equi-distant from each side of the stage, facing the audience. The mirrors being at angles with the sides, of course reflect the curtains at the sides, and these curtains being the same in style and material, their reflection has the same appearance as the curtain at the back of the stage. The audience seeing this reflection naturally imagine they are having an unobstructed view of the back of the stage.



HOW THE "FLOATING HEAD" TRICK IS DONE.

Behind this wall of glass the conjuror's confederate takes his position, of course only that part of his person which is above the glass being visible. So the "floating

head" is really a man peeping over a glass fence. The cushion which is commonly used to apparently support the head, is suspended outside of the glass, by fine wire.

The exhibitor is always careful to keep out of the angles of the glass, otherwise he would be reflected, and the existence of the glasses disclosed to the audience. When standing at the stage "wings," or when *directly* in front of the central "point" of the mirrors, he is secure from reflection.

Our illustrations will, we think, make this explanation perfectly clear. The first shows the head as it appears to the audience; the second shows the position, behind the glass, of the individual personating the "head." In the latter picture the spectator is supposed to be looking *through* the mirrors. Thick plate glass will answer equally as well as the mirrors in exhibiting this trick.

To Place a Lighted Candle under Water, without Extinguishing it; or a Handkerchief without Wetting it.—Procure a good-sized cork, or bung; upon this place a small lighted taper; then set it afloat in a pail of water. Now, with a steady hand, invert a large drinking-glass over the light, and push it carefully down into the water. The glass being full of air prevents the water entering it. You may thus see the candle burn *under* water, and bring it up again to the surface, still alight. This experiment, simple as it is, serves to elucidate that useful contrivance called the diving-bell, being performed on the same principle.



The largest drinking-glass holds but half a pint, so that your diving-light soon goes out for want of air. As an average, a burning can-

dle consumes as much air as a man, and he requires nearly a gallon of air every minute, so that, according to the size of the glass over the flame, you can calculate how many seconds it will remain alight; of course a large flame requires more air than a small one. For this and several other experiments, a quart bell-glass is very useful, but, being expensive, it is not found in every parlor laboratory; one is, however, easily made from a green glass pickle-bottle; get a glazier to cut off the bottom, and you have a bell-glass that Chilton would not reject. In the same manner you may put a handkerchief rolled tight together, and it will not wet.

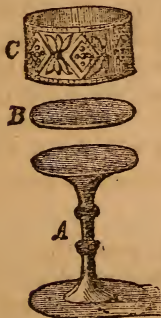
To Place Water in a Drinking-glass Upside Down. Procure a plate, a tumbler, and a small piece of tissue or silver paper. Set the plate on a table, and pour water in it up to the first rim. Now very slightly crumple up the paper, and place it in the glass; then set it on the fire. When it is burnt out, or rather just as the last flame disappears, turn the glass quickly upside down into the water. Astonishing! the water rushes with great violence into the glass! Now you are satisfied that water can be placed in a drinking-glass upside down. Hold the glass firm, and the plate also. You can now reverse the position of the plate and glass, and thus convince the most sceptical of the truth of your pneumatic experiment. Instead of burning paper, a little brandy or spirits of wine can be ignited in the glass; the result of its combustion being invisible, the experiment is cleaner.

The Faded Rose Restored.—Take a rose that is quite faded, and throw some sulphur on a chafing-dish of hot coals; then hold the rose over the fumes of the sulphur, and it will become quite white; in this state dip it

into water, put it into a box, or drawer for three or four hours, and when taken out it will be quite red again.

The Protean Liquid.—A red liquor, which, when poured into different glasses, will become yellow, blue, black, and violet, may be thus made : Infuse a few shavings of logwood in common water, and when the liquor is red, pour it into a bottle ; then take three drinking-glasses, rinse one of them with strong vinegar, throw into the second a small quantity of pounded alum, which will not be observed if the glass has been newly washed, and leave the third without any preparation. If the red liquor in the bottle be poured into the first glass, it will assume a straw-color ; if into the second, it will pass gradually from bluish-gray to black, provided it be stirred with a bit of iron, which has been privately immersed in good vinegar ; in the third glass the red liquor will assume a violet tint.

The Burned Handkerchief Restored.—Get a flat-topped stand, such as is shown at A, and make a neat paste-board or tin cover, as is seen at C, and be sure to ornament it with various showy devices. The cover must slip very easily over the stand. Cut a flat circular plate, B, the least bit wider than the top of A, and just large enough to slip easily into C. Here is all your apparatus.



Before you show this trick, place in your pocket a piece of white rag that looks like a handkerchief. Borrow a clean white cambric handkerchief from among the audience, and just before you receive it, conceal in your hand the white rag. Have the apparatus ready on a side-table, with the movable plate laid on the stand.

Lay the handkerchief on the plate, place the cover over the handkerchief, and press it down with a smart slap.

Now take off the cover, squeezing it well so as to take up the plate, as you do so ; put your hand into it as if about to pull out the handkerchief, and substitute in its stead the white rag. Lay the rag on the stand, apply a match to it, and let it burn to ashes. Replace the cover on the stand, and press it down. Then loosen the grasp of the hand and the plate will fall on the stand, completely concealing the ashes. Lift the cover gently, when the handkerchief will fall upon the plate, and may be restored unhurt to the owner.

Eatable Candle Ends.—Take a large apple, and cut out a few pieces in the shape of candle ends, round at the bottom and flat at the top, in fact, as much like a piece of candle as possible. Now cut some slips from a sweet almond, as near as you can to resemble a wick, and stick them into the imitation candle. Light them for an instant, to make the tops black, blow them out, and they are ready for the trick. One or two should be artfully placed in a snuffer-tray, or candle-stick ; you then inform your friends that during your “travels in the Russian Empire,” you learned, like the Russians, to be fond of candles ; at the same time lighting your artificial candles (the almonds will readily take fire, and flame for a few seconds), pop them into your mouth, and swallow them, one after the other.

To make a Watch Stop or Go at the Word of Command.—Borrow a watch from any person in company and request of the whole to stand around you. Hold the watch up to the ear of the first in the circle and command it to go. Then demand his testimony to the fact.

Remove it to the ear of the next, and enjoin it to stop. Make the same request of that party, and so on through the entire party.

Explanation: You must take care in borrowing the watch that it be a good one and goes well; have concealed in your hand a piece of loadstone, which, as soon as you apply it to the watch, will occasion suspension of its movements, which a subsequent shaking and withdrawing of the magnet will restore.

To Walk Upon a Hot Iron Bar.—Take half an ounce of camphor, dissolve it in two ounces of aqua vitæ, add to it one of quicksilver, one ounce of liquid storax, which is the droppings of myrrh, and prevents the camphor from firing: take also two ounces of hematis, which is red stone, to be had at the druggist's,—and when you buy it let them beat it to a powder in their great mortar, for being very hard it cannot well be reduced in a small one; add this to the ingredients already specified, and when you purpose to walk upon the bar, anoint your feet well with it, and you may then put the feat into execution without the slightest danger.

How to cut your Arm off, without hurt or Danger.—You must provide yourself with two knives, a true



one and a false one, and when you go to show this feat, put the true knife in your pocket, and then take out the false and clap it on your wrist undiscovered, and with a sponge make the knife bloody, and it will appear you have nearly severed your arm.

A knife for the nose may be made on the same principle.

To pour cold Water into a Kettle and Make it come out hot without the aid of Fire.—You give a pint of cold water to one of the company, and taking off the lid of the kettle, you request him to put it into it; you then put the lid on the kettle. Take the pint, and the exact quantity of water comes out of the kettle boiling hot.

This trick is performed in the following way: The kettle has two bottoms; boiling water has been previously conveyed into it through the nose. There is no passage for the cold water, which is put in when the lid is off; consequently, the hot water can alone be poured out.

This trick may be varied, and for the better; as the heat of the water may betray it, should the bottom of the kettle be full. You may therefore propose to change water into wine or punch.

A coffee-pot may be made on a similar plan; but a kettle is preferable, it being more likely from its size and breadth, to baffle the examination of the curious.

This trick may also be improved by an additional expense, so that whatever liquor is on either bottom may be poured out occasionally. For this purpose there must be a double passage to the nose of the kettle, and secret springs to stop either passage.

How to cut a man's Head off, and put it into a Platter, a yard from his Body.—To show this feat, you must cause a board, a cloth, and a platter to be pur-

posely made, and in each of them must be made holes fit for a boy's neck. The board must be made of two planks, the longer and broader the better; there must be left within half a yard of the end of each plank half a hole, that both the planks being put together, there may remain two holes like the holes in a pair of stocks. There must be made likewise, a hole in the cloth; a platter, having a hole of the same size in the middle thereof, must be set directly over it; then the boy sitting or kneeling under the board; let the head only remain upon the board in the frame. To make the sight more dreadful put a little brimstone into a chafing-dish of coals, and set it before the head of the boy, who must gasp two or three times that the smoke may enter his nostrils and mouth, and the head presently will appear stark dead, and if a little blood be sprinkled on his face, the sight will appear more dreadful. (This is commonly practiced with boys instructed for that purpose). At the other end of the table where the other hole is made, another boy of the same size as the first boy must be placed, his body on the table and his head through the hole in the table, at the opposite end to where the head is, which is exhibited.

To discover any Card in a Pack by its Weight or Smell.—Desire any person in the company to draw a card from the pack, and when he has looked at it, to return it with its face downwards; then, pretending to weigh it nicely, take notice of any particular mark on the back of the card; which having done, put it among the rest of the cards, and desire the person to shuffle as he pleases; then giving you the pack, you pretend to weigh each card as before, and proceed in this manner until you have discovered the card he had.

To turn water into Wine.—Take four beer glasses,

rub one of them on the inside with a piece of alum; put in the second a drop of vinegar; the third empty, and then take a mouthful of clean water and a clean rag, with ground brazil tied in it, which must lie betwixt your hind teeth and your cheek. Then take of the water out of the glass into your mouth, and return it into the glass that has the drop of vinegar in it, which will cause it to have the perfect color of sack; then turn it into your mouth again, and chew your rag of brazil, and squirt the liquor into the glass, and it will have the perfect color and smell of claret; returning the brazil into its former place, take the liquor into your mouth again, and presently squirt it into the glass you rubbed with alum, and it will have the perfect color of mulberry wine.

Magic Breath.—Put some lime-water in a tumbler; breathe upon it through a small glass tube. The fluid, which before was perfectly limpid, will gradually become white as milk. If allowed to remain at rest for a short time, real chalk will be deposited at the bottom of the tumbler.

To make a Party appear Ghastly.—This can only be done in a room. Take half a pint of spirits, and having warmed it, put a handful of salt with it into a basin, then set it on fire, and it will have the effect of making every person within its influence look hideous.

How to eat Fire.—Anoint your tongue with liquid storax, and you may put a pair of red hot tongs into your mouth, without hurting yourself, and lick them till they are cold. You may also take coals out of the fire and eat them as you would bread; dip them into brimstone powder, and the fire will seem more strange, but the sulphur puts out the coal, and if you shut your mouth close

you put out the sulphur, and so chew the coals and swallow them, which you may do without offending the body. If you put a piece of lighted charcoal into your mouth, you may suffer a pair of bellows to be blown into your mouth continually and receive no hurt; but your mouth must be quickly cleaned, otherwise it will cause a salivation. This is a very dangerous trick to be done, and those who practice it ought to use all means they can to prevent danger. I never saw one of these fire-eaters that had a good complexion.

To Dip the Hand in Water without Wetting It.— Powder the surface of a bowl of water with lycopodium; you may put your hand into it and take out a piece of money that has been previously put at the bottom of the bowl, without wetting your skin; the lycopodium so attaching itself to the latter as to keep it entirely from coming in direct contact with the water. After performing the experiment, a slight shake of the hand will rid it of the powder.

How to Shoot a Bird and bring it to Life Again.— Load your gun with the usual charge of powder, but instead of shot put half a charge of quicksilver; prime and shoot. If your piece bears ever so little near the bird, it will find itself stunned and benumbed to such a degree as to fall to the ground in a fit. As it will regain its senses in a few minutes, you may make use of the time by saying, that you are going to bring it to life again, this will astonish greatly the company; the ladies will no doubt interest themselves in favor of the bird, and intercede for its liberty. Sympathizing with their feelings for the little prisoner may be the means of some of them sympathizing with yours.

Hideous Metamorphosis.—Take a few nut-galls, bruise them to a very fine powder, which strew nicely upon a towel; then put a little brown copperas into a basin of water; this will soon dissolve and leave the water perfectly transparent. After any person has washed in this water, and wiped with the towel on which the galls have been strewed, his hands and face will immediately become black; but in a few days by washing with soap they will again become clean. This trick is too mischievous for performance.

How to Fill a Glass with Beer and Water at the same time, without mixing the two Liquids.—It is done thus:—Half fill a tumbler with beer, then take a piece of brown paper or thin card, and placing it on the top of the beer, let it get perfectly still and quiet, taking care to keep the table on which the tumbler is placed quite steady. When all vibration has ceased, take some clear spring water, and having a small phial filled with it, proceed to pour it on the card as gently as possible, and in as small a quantity as you can, recollecting at the same time, that the whole success of the experiment rests on the steadiness with which you pour the water on the card. You will by degrees perceive the water sliding from the card to the surface of the beer, and covering it like a sheet of paper, making them appear separated, one lying on the top of the other; but the steadiness of hand must be preserved until the glass is sufficiently full. You may reverse the order of the liquids if you please—*i. e.* by putting in water first and then the beer, the same process will give the same result.

How to Kill a Fowl and bring it to Life Again.
—Take a hen or chicken, and thrust a sharp-pointed knife through the midst of the head, the joint toward the

bill, that it may seem impossible for her to escape death, then use some words, and pulling out the knife, lay oats before her, and she will eat, being not at all hurt with the wound, because the brain lays so far behind the head, that it is not touched.

To light a Candle by a Glass of Water.—Privately stick a small piece of phosphorus on the edge of a glass of water, apply a candle newly blown out to it, and it will immediately be re-illuminated. The warmth of the snuff causes the phosphorus to ignite.

To Light a Candle by Smoke.—When a candle is burnt so low as to leave a tolerably large wick, blow it out, and a dense smoke, which is a compound of hydrogen and carbon, will immediately arise; then if another candle or lighted taper be applied to the utmost verge of this smoke, a very strange phenomenon will take place: the flame of the lighted candle will be conveyed to that just blown out, as if it were borne on a cloud.

To Freeze Water by Shaking It.—During very cold weather put some water into a close vessel and deposit it in a place where it will experience no commotion; in this manner it will often acquire a degree of cold superior to that of ice, but without freezing. If the vessel however, be agitated ever so little, or if you give it a slight blow, the water will immediately freeze with singular rapidity.

Iron changed into Silver.—Dissolve mercury in marine acid, and immerse in it a bit of iron, or if this solution be rubbed over iron, it will assume a silver color.

Two cold Liquids when mixed become boiling hot.—Put into a thin phial two parts (by measure) of

sulphuric acid, and add to it one part of water; on agitating or stirring them together the mixture instantly becomes hot, and acquires a temperature above that of boiling water.

The incombustible Handkerchief.—Mix the whites of eggs and alum together; then smear a handkerchief with it all over. Wash it in salt and water, and when dry fire will not consume it.

Two cold Liquids produce Fire.—Put a small quantity of aquafortis into a saucer, add a few drops of oil of turpentine, oil of caraways, or any other essential oil, and a flame will instantly be produced.

To give a person a Supernatural Appearance.—Put one part of phosphorus into six of olive oil, and digest them in a sand heat. Rub this on the face (taking care to shut the eyes) and the appearance in the dark will be supernaturally frightful; all the parts which have been rubbed appearing to be covered by a luminous lambent flame of a bluish color, whilst the eyes and mouth appear like black spots. No danger whatever attends this experiment.

The floating Needle.—Pour some water in a plate; then drop a needle lightly and carefully upon the surface, and it will float.

Luminous Writing.—Take a piece of phosphorus, and, during candle-light, write upon a whitewashed wall any sentence or word, or draw any figure according to fancy. Withdraw the candle from the room, and direct the attention of the spectators to the writing. Whatever part the phosphorus has touched will be rendered quite luminous, omitting a whitish smoke or vapor. Care must

be taken while using the phosphorus, to dip it frequently in a basin of cold water, or the repeative friction will throw it into a state of the most active combustion, to the manifest detriment of the operator.

Beautiful Transformations.—Pour half an ounce of diluted nitro-muriate of gold into an ale glass, and immerse in it a piece of very smooth charcoal. Expose the glass to the rays of the sun, in a warm place, and the charcoal will very soon be covered over with a beautiful golden coat. Take it out with forceps, dry it, and enclose it in a glass for show.

To Break a Stone with a Blow of the Fist.—Find two stones, from three to six inches long, and about half as thick; lay one flat upon the ground, on which place one end of the other, raising the reverse end to an angle of forty-five degrees, and just over the centre of the other stone, with which it must form a T, being upheld in that position by a piece of thin twig or stick an inch or an inch and a half long; if the elevated stone be now smartly struck about the centre with the little finger side of the hand, the stick will give way, and the stone will be broken to pieces. The stones must be placed, however, so as not to slip, otherwise the feat will not be effected.

Magical Teaspoons.—Put into a crucible four ounces of bismuth, and when in a state of fusion, add two ounces and a half of lead, and one ounce and a half of tin; these metals will combine, and form an alloy fusible in boiling water. Mould the alloy into bars, and take them to a silversmith to be made into teaspoons. Give one to a stranger to stir his tea with, and he will be greatly surprised to find it melt in his teacup.

To bring two separate Coins into one Hand.—Take two cents, which must be carefully placed in each hand, as thus: The right hand with the coin on the fourth and little finger, as in the illustration. Then place, at a short distance from each other, both hands open on the table, the left palm being level with the fingers of the right. By now suddenly turning the hand over, the cent from the right hand will fly, without being perceived, into the palm of the left, and make the transit appear most unaccountable to the bewildered eyes of the spectators. By placing the audience in front, and not at the side of the exhibitor, this illusion, if neatly performed, can never be detected.



To cut and tear into pieces a Handkerchief, and to make it whole again.—This feat, strange as it appears, is very simple; the performer must have a confederate, who has two handkerchiefs of the same quality, and with the same mark, one of which he throws upon the stage to perform the feat with. The performer takes care to put this handkerchief uppermost in making up a bundle, though he affect to mix them together promiscuously. The person whom he desires to draw one of the handkerchiefs, naturally takes that which comes first to hand. He desires to shake them again, to embellish the operation, but in so doing, takes care to bring the right handkerchief uppermost, and carefully fixes upon some simpleton to draw; and if he find that he is not likely to take the first that comes to hand, he prevents him from drawing by fixing upon another, under pretence of his having a more sagacious look. When the handkerchief is torn and

carefully folded up, it is put under a glass upon a table placed near a partition. On that part of the table on which it is deposited is a little trap, which opens and lets it fall into a drawer. The confederate, concealed behind the curtain, passes his hand within the table, opens the trap, and substitutes the second handkerchief instead of the first; then shuts the trap, which fits so exactly the hole it closes, as to deceive the eyes of the most incredulous. If the performer be not possessed of such a table (which is absolutely necessary for other feats as well as this), he must have the second handkerchief in his pocket, and by sleight of hand change it for the pieces, which must be instantaneously concealed.

How to fire a loaded Pistol at the Hand, without hurting it.—This extraordinary illusion is performed with real powder, real bullets, and a real pistol; the instrument which effects the deception being a ramrod. This ramrod is made of polished iron, and on one end of it is very nicely fitted a tube, like a telescope tube. When the tube is off the rod, there will, of course, appear a little projection. The other end of the rod must be made to resemble this exactly. The ramrod with the tube on being in your hand, you pass the pistol round to the audience to be examined, and request one of them to put in a little powder. Then take the pistol yourself, and put in a very small piece of wadding, and ram it down; and in doing so you will leave the tube of the ramrod inside the barrel of the pistol. To allay any suspicion which might arise in the minds of your audience, you hand the ramrod to them for their inspection. The ramrod being returned to you, you hand the pistol to some person in the audience, requesting him to insert a bullet, and to mark it in such a way that he would know it again. You then take

the pistol back, and put in a little more wadding. In ramming it down, the rod slips into the tube, which now forms, as it were, an inner lining to the barrel, and into which the bullet has fallen; the tube fitting tight on to the rod is now withdrawn along with it from the pistol, and the bullet is easily got into the hand by pulling off the tube from the rod, while seeking a plate to "catch the bullets;" and the marksman receiving order to fire, you let the bullet fall from your closed hand into the plate just as the pistol goes off.

A Vessel that will let Water out at the Bottom, as soon as the Mouth is uncorked.—Provide a tin vessel, two or three inches in diameter, and five or six inches in height, having a mouth about three inches in width, and in the bottom several small holes, just large enough to admit a small needle. Plunge it in water with its mouth open and full; while it remains in the water stop it very closely. You can play a trick with a person, by desiring him to uncork it; if he places it on his knee for that purpose, the moment it is uncorked the water will run through the bottom, and make him completely wet.

The Conjuror's Banquet.—In which he eats a quantity of paper shavings; afterwards draws from his mouth a barber's pole, six feet in length; then draws out several yards of different colored ribbons; then pushes out with his tongue an ounce of pins; and lastly, after well shredding the paper shavings, to show that there is nothing in them, a flight of birds come out from among them, their number *ad libitum*. This is really a first-rate experiment, and if got up carefully will excite much wonder. I shall commence by giving instructions how to make the necessary properties, commencing with the Barber's Pole. Cut some white paper into lengths, three inches wide; paste them

together, making a long length of ten or twelve feet or more ; paint one side red, a strip about half an inch wide, the whole length of the paper, and at its edge ; glue on at one end of the paper a piece of round wood, with a small knot on the end ; then roll the paper up like a roll of ribbons. I will explain presently what to do with it. The next is to prepare your pins and ribbons. In a piece of soft paper, in as small a compass as you can, roll up a number of pins, and upon this packet roll your ribbons of different colors, making altogether a round ball, which you can conveniently slip into your mouth ; then make a long paper bag similar to those of the confectioner ; paint it in stripes—pink and white ; in this place your birds—canaries, sparrows, or any small birds you can most conveniently procure. The process will not hurt them, if you make a few pin-holes in the bag to admit the air ; you then procure some pink and white tissue paper, cut it into strips until you have a good heap, as many shredded out as would fill a small bread-basket, in which you place them ; at the right hand, hid in the shavings, you have the barber's pole, the ribbons and pins, and the bag containing the birds, and by your side a glass of water, of which you pretend to drink occasionally. Thus prepared, you present yourself to the audience. Sip a little water, make two or three preliminary ahems ! run your fingers through your hair, arrange your necktie, curl your moustache—if you have none it will be the greater burlesque to pretend to curl it—and then, with mock dignity, address your audience : “ Ladies and gentlemen, doubtless you have witnessed the performance of many conjurors, some of them clever ; but of all the professors you ever saw, none of them ever possessed such extraordinary abilities as the illustrious individual who now does you the honor of exerting himself for your amusement. My natural

modesty and diffidence prevent my saying more. I shall at once commence my performance by introducing the Conjuror's Banquet. I have some macaronies (alluding to the paper shavings.) Excuse the vulgarity, but I must refresh" (takes a quantity of shavings in each hand and commences munching them as a horse would eat hay, taking a little water occasionally, smacking his lips, and seeming to enjoy the feast very much.) After having proceeded in this manner for a short time, take up among the shavings the barber's pole ; place it, shavings and all, against your mouth, take hold of the little knob at the end of the pole which is rolled up like a roll of ribbons, pull it gradually out, and it presents the appearance of a barber's pole several feet in length ; put this carefully on one side ; commences feeding again upon your paper shavings in the same burlesque style, then take up your roll of ribbons and pins, and during the process of seeming to eat, you slip the roll of ribbons and pins into your mouth.

You must chew the shavings you place in your mouth into a hard lump, and as you supply one mouthful from the heap you hold in your hand, push the hard lump of chewed shavings out of your mouth with your tongue. Well, you have the roll of ribbons in your mouth ; place your shavings again in the basket, put your finger and thumb in your mouth, taking the end of the ribbon, and pull it out of your mouth with both hands, one after the other ; letting the ribbon slip through your hands as you pull it out, it will apperr a larger quantity. After one length or color is pulled out of your mouth, sip a little water, smack your lips, and again secure the end of the ribbon, pulling it out in the same manner as the previous one ; continue this until you have pulled all the ribbon out of your mouth ; you will now feel with your tongue the paper containing the pins ; take a little more water,

saturate the paper and the pins will remain in your mouth ; these you push out with your tongue, keeping the lips almost closed ; spit the pins out on a small tray, one that will sound when the pins fall on it ; it is more effective. The trick is now finished, excepting the flight of birds. Your bag containing them is at your right hand ; you slip this in among the shavings, and commence shredding them, and during this process tear the bag open, and the birds, of course, escape. The paper being painted in pink and white stripes, cannot be observed.

A Dollar Bill Concealed in a Candle.—Ask some one to lend you a dollar bill, and to notice the number, etc. You then walk up to the screen behind which your confederate is concealed, pass the bill to him, and take a wax or composite candle. Then, turning to the audience, you ask one of them—a boy would be preferred—to step up on the platform. At your request he must cut the candle into four equal parts. You then take three of them, and say you will perform the trick by means of them, passing the fourth piece to the other end of the table, where your confederate has already rolled up the note in a very small compass, and thrust it into a hollow bit of candle, previously made ready. You take up this piece, and, concealing it in your hand, you walk up to the boy, and appear accidentally to knock one of the bits of candle out of his hand, and while you are stooping to pick it up off the floor, you change it for the bit which contains the bill. You then place it on the table, and say to the audience, “Which piece shall I take—right or left?” If they select the one which contains the note, ask the boy to cut it carefully through the middle, and to mind that he does not cut the bill. When he has made a slight incision, tell him to break it, when the note will be found in the middle. If the au-

dience select the piece which does not contain the note, you throw it aside, and say the note will be found in the remaining piece. When this is done with tact, the audience will naturally believe that they have really had the privilege of choosing.

To Melt Iron in a Moment, and make it Run into Drops.—Bring a bar of iron to a white heat, and then apply it to a roll of sulphur. The iron will immediately melt, and run into drops.

The experiment should be performed over a basin of water, in which the drops that fall down will be quenched. These drops will be found reduced into a sort of cast-iron.

To change a Bowl of Ink into clear Water, with Gold Fish in it.—The same glass bowl as in previous trick. If your bowl has not a foot to it, it must be placed on something that will hold it high above your table. Some small fish, a white plate or saucer, a piece of black silk just fitting the inside of your bowl, a spoon of peculiar construction, so that in a hollow handle it will retain about a teaspoonful of ink, which will not run out as long as a hole near the top of the handle is kept covered or stopped. A large tumbler and two or three minnows will do for a simpler exhibition, but will, of course, not be so pleasing to the eye.

Place the black silk so as to cover the part of the bowl that is shaded; when damp it will adhere to the glass. Pour in clear water to fill the space covered by the black silk, and place the fish in the water.

Commence the trick in public thus: Holding the spoon-handle slanting up and uncovering the hole in the handle, the ink which you have placed in the handle will run into the bowl of the spoon, and the spoon being held carefully

to the surface of the water, concealing the black silk, will give the spectators the impression that you fill the spoon from the glass bowl.

Pour the spoonful of ink on a white saucer, and show it round to convince the spectators it is ink. They will see it is undeniably ink, and they will conclude, if the spoon were properly lifted out of the bowl, that the glass bowl contains nothing but ink.

Borrowing a silk handkerchief, place it for a few seconds over the bowl, and feigning to be inviting fish to come to the bowl, exclaim "Change!" Then, placing your hand on the edge of the bowl near yourself, draw off the handkerchief, and with it take care to catch hold also of the black silk. The bowl when uncovered will exhibit the fish swimming about in clear water. While the spectators are surprised at the fish, return the handkerchief, having first dropped out of it the black silk on your side of the table. Decline giving any explanation, as people will not thank you for dispelling the illusion.

How to Swallow a number of Needles and Yards of Thread.—The trick is performed as follows: In the first place thread a dozen needles, put them in as small a compass as possible, and place them between the gum and the upper lip; you can speak without difficulty, and without any effort they will remain there. Let the needles be short ones, and take the end of the thread a little distance from the needles, and deposit it between the gum and the lips in such a position that you can always feel it and pull it out when required. Thus being prepared, of course unknown to your audience, you take your second dose of needles, placing them one by one on your tongue, seeming to swallow them, but depositing them on the other side of your mouth, between your gums and lip, which will effect-

ually conceal them, notwithstanding an examination of the mouth; afterward roll up between your fingers about a yard of thread; place this in your mouth, and with your tongue conceal it between your gum and lip. Take a drink of water, make a few wry faces, then place your finger and thumb in your mouth, securing the end of the thread upon which the needles are threaded, draw it out and exhibit it, taking an early opportunity of retiring to get rid of the needles concealed in your mouth. This is a most effective trick, and easily performed. Be careful not to swallow the needles.

To Make a Bird seem as dead.—Take any bird out out of a cage, and lay it on a table; then wave a small feather over its eyes, and it will appear as dead; but directly you take the feather away it will revive again. Let it lay hold of the stem part of the feather with its feet, and it will twist and turn about just like a parrot; you may also roll it about on the table any way you like.

To Make the appearance of a Flash of Lightning when any one enters a room with a lighted Candle.—Dissolve camphor in spirits of wine, and deposit the vessel containing the solution in a very close room, where the spirit of wine must be made to evaporate by strong and speedy boiling. If any one then enters the room with a lighted candle, the air will inflame, while the combustion will be so sudden, and of so short a duration, as to occasion no danger.

To Break a Stick placed on two Glasses without breaking the Glasses.—The stick intended to be broken, must neither be thick, nor rest with any great hold on the two glasses. Both its extremities must taper to a point, and should be of as uniform a size as possible, in order

that the centre of gravity may be more easily known. The stick must be placed resting on the edges of the glasses, which ought to be perfectly level, that the stick may remain horizontal, and not inclined to one side more than another. Care must also be taken that the points only shall rest lightly on the edge of each glass. If a speedy and smart blow, but proportioned, as far as can be judged, to the size of the stick and the distance of the glasses, be then given to it in the middle, it will break in two, without either of the glasses being injured.

To Set a Combustible body on fire by the contact of Water.—Fill a saucer with water, and let fall into it a piece of potassium the size of a pepper corn, which is about two grains. The potassium will instantly burst into flame, with a slight explosion, and burn vividly on the surface of the water, darting at the same time from one side of the vessel to the other, with great violence, in the form of a beautiful red-hot fire-ball.

To Eat a Dish of Paper Shavings, and Draw them out of your Mouth like an Atlantic Cable.—*Preparation.* Procure three or four yards of the thinnest tissue paper of various colors. Cut these up in strips of half an inch or three-quarters of an inch breadth, and join them. They will form a continuous strip of many feet in length. Roll this up carefully in a flat coil, as ribbons are rolled up. Let it make a coil about as large as the top of an egg-cup or an old-fashioned hunting-watch. Leave out of the innermost coil about an inch or more of that end of the paper, so that you can easily commence unwinding it from the centre of the coil.

Procure a large dish or basketful of paper-shavings, which can be obtained at little cost from any bookbinder's or stationer's. Shaken out it will appear to be a large

quantity. As you wish it to appear that you have eaten a good portion of them, you can squeeze the remainder close together, and then there will appear to be few left, and that your appetite has reason to be satisfied.

Commence the trick by proclaiming you have a voracious appetite, so that you can make a meal off paper-shavings. Bend down over the plate, and take up handful after handful, pretend to munch them in your mouth, and make a face as if swallowing them, and as you take up another handful, put out those previously in your mouth, and put them aside. Having gone on with this as long as the spectators seem amused by it; at last, with your left hand, slip the prepared ball of tissue paper into your mouth, managing to place towards your teeth the end you wish to catch hold of with your right hand, for pulling the strip out from your mouth. You will take care also not to open your teeth too widely, lest the whole coil or ball should come out all at once.

Having got hold of the end, draw it slowly and gently forward. It will unroll to a length of twenty yards or more in a continuous strip, much to the amusement of the spectators.

When it has come to the end, you may remark: "I suppose we have come to a fault, as there is a 'solution of continuity here, just as the strongest cables break off,' so we must wait to pick up the end again, and go on next year, when the Great Eastern again goes out with its next Atlantic Cable."

To Produce from a Silk Handkerchief Bonbons, Candies Nuts, etc.—Preparation. Have packages of various candies, wrapped up in bags of the thinnest tissue paper, and place them on your table rather sheltered from observation. Have also a plate or two on your table.

Memorandum.—It will be always desirable to have the table removed two or three yards at least from the spectators, and of a height that they cannot see the surface of it while sitting down in front of it.

Commence the trick by borrowing a silk handkerchief, or any large handkerchief. After turning it about, throw it out on the table, so as to fall over one of these packages.

Having carefully observed where the bag lies, place your left hand so as to take up the bag while catching hold of the middle of the handkerchief.

Taking the handkerchief up by nearly the centre, the edges of it will fall around and conceal the bag; make some pretended wavings of your wand or right hand over the handkerchief, and say, "Now, handkerchief, you must supply my friends with some bon-bons." Squeeze with your right hand the lower part of the bag which is under the handkerchief; the bag will burst, and you can shake out into a plate its contents.

Asking some one to distribute them among your young friends, you can throw the handkerchief (as it were carelessly) over another bag, from which you can in the same way produce a liberal supply of some other sweatmeats, or macaroon biscuits, etc., all of which will be duly appreciated by the juveniles, and they will applaud as long as you choose to continue this SWEET trick.

To keep a Stone in Perpetual Motion.—Put very small fillings of iron into aquafortis, and let them remain there until the water takes off the iron requisite, which it will do in seven or eight hours. Then take the water and put it into a phial an inch wide, with a large mouth, and put in a stone of *lapis calaminaris*, and stop it up close; the stone will then keep in perpetual motion.

To make a Card jump out of the Pack and run on the Table.—Take a pack of Cards, and let any one draw any card they please; put it into the pack, so that you may know where to find it at pleasure. Put a small piece of wax under your thumb-nail, to which fasten a hair, and the other end of the hair to the card; spread the cards open on the table, and desire the one chosen to jump out, which you may readily cause to do by means of the hair.

How to tell a Person any Card he Thinks of, and to Convey it into a Nut.—Take a nut, in which burn a hole with a hot bodkin, and with a needle break and extract the kernel. Write the name of a card on a piece of thin paper, and roll it up hard, and put it in the nut; stop the hole with wax, which rub over with a little dust, that the puncture may not be perceived, then let some one draw a card; you must take care it be that which is written on the paper; desire him to break the nut, in which he will find the name of the card he has drawn.

To Make a Cone or Pyramid move upon a table without springs or any other Artificial Means.—Roll up a piece of paper, or any other light substance, and put a lady beetle, or some such small insect, privately under it; then, as the animal will naturally endeavor to free itself from its captivity, it will move the cone towards the edge of the table, and as soon as it comes there, will immediately return, for fear of falling; and by thus moving to and fro, will occasion much sport to those who are unacquainted with the cause.

How to make an Egg, apparently of itself, leave the centre of the Room and traverse to a Saucer of Water placed in the Corner.—This is not adapted for public exhibition, as the process is tedious, but it is no less

wonderful. Blow the yolk out of an egg, and insert a leech within the shell, securing the end by sticking on a piece of tissue paper. Place the egg and leech in the centre of the room, and the saucer in the other end. In the course of time—it may be hours—the natural instinct of the leech leads it to the water, and by its efforts causes the egg to move to the edge of the saucer containing the water.

To Eat cotton Wool and blow Fire and Sparks out of your Mouth.—Obtain some cotton wool, such as the jewelers use to pack their jewelry; get a piece of old linen and burn it, damping it out when it is burnt black and reduced to tinder. If you don't understand, ask your grandparents how they used to make tinder to obtain a light previous to the invention of lucifer matches. Put a light to the tinder; it will not flame, but smolder. Fold it lightly in a piece of the wool, just as large as you can conceal in the palm of your hand, commencing eating in the same manner as in the Barber's Pole Trick, with the shavings. When you have satisfied yourself, and while feeding yourself with the wool, slip in the small piece of wool containing the lighted tinder; blow, and smoke and sparks will issue from your mouth, to the astonishment of the lookers-on. A very good system to practice many of these tricks, is to stand before a looking-glass.

To Make a peg that will exactly fit three different kinds of Holes.—Let one of the holes be circular, another square, and the third oval; then it is evident that any cylindrical body of a proper size may be made to pass through the first hole perpendicularly, and if its length be just equal to its diameter, it may be passed horizontally

through the second or square hole; also, if the breadth of the oval be made equal to the diameter of the base of the cylinder, and its longest diameter of any length whatever, the cylinder being put in obliquely, will fill it as exactly as any of the former.

Magic Money.—This conjuring trick is performed thus:—Procure two quarters and a half-eagle; conceal one of the quarters in the *right* hand; lay the other quarter and the half-eagle on a table, in full view of the audience; now ask for two handkerchiefs; then take the gold-piece up, and pretend to roll it in one of the handkerchiefs; but, in lieu thereof, roll up the quarter, which you had concealed, and retain the gold coin; give the handkerchief to one of the company to hold; now take the quarter off the table, and pretend to roll that up in the second handkerchief; but put up the half-eagle instead; give this handkerchief to another person, and beg him to “hold it tight,” while you utter, “Presto! Fly!” On opening the handkerchiefs the money will appear to have changed places.

The Magic Knife.—This trick, which is at once simple and clever, has not before been published. Ask one of your audience for a pocket-knife, and stick two small square pieces of white paper on each side. Give the knife to your audience to be examined, and then take it in the left hand, palm upward. Let the handle of the knife be clasped between the thumb and forefinger, and the blade extended outward from you; the handle will then lie on the palm of the hand toward you. With practice you will be able, by a rapid turn of the wrist, to pass the knife from one side of the hand to the other, always keeping the same side of the blade upward, while to your audience it will appear that you reverse it at every turn. Wipe the bits of paper off one side, turn the knife as

directed, pass your fingers again across the blade, leading your audience to believe that you have wiped them off the second side also. Both sides of the blade will now appear to be perfectly clean, but in fact you have only removed the two pieces off one side. By rapidly turning the knife you may cause the bits of paper to appear and disappear at command. All that is required is a little dexterity in the turn of the wrist, which may be acquired by practice.

To bring Colored Ribbons from your Mouth.—Heap a quantity of finely carded wool upon a plate, which place before you. At the bottom of this lint, and concealed from the company, you should have several narrow strips of colored ribbons, wound tightly into one roll, so as to occupy but little space. Now begin to appear to eat the lint by putting a handful in your mouth. The first handful can easily be removed and returned to the plate, unobserved, while the second is being “crammed in.” In doing this care should be taken not to use all the lint, but to leave sufficient to conceal the roll. At the last handful, take up the roll and push it into your mouth, without any lint; then appear to have had enough, and look in a very distressed state as if you were full to suffocation; then put your hands up to your mouth, get hold of the end of the ribbon, and draw hand over hand, yards of ribbon, as if from your stomach. The slower this is done, the better the effect. When one ribbon is off the roll, your tongue will assist you in pushing another end ready for the hand. You will find you need not wet or damage the ribbons in the least. This is a trick which is frequently performed by one of the cleverest conjurors of the day.

A Cheap way of being Generous.—You take a little common white or beeswax, and stick it on your thumb. Then, speaking to a bystander, you show him a dime, and

tell him you will put the same into his hand ; press it down on the palm of his hand with your waxed thumb, talking to him the while, and looking him in the face. Suddenly take away your thumb, and the coin will adhere to it ; then close his hand, and he will be under the impression that he holds the dime, as the sensation caused by the pressing still remains. You may tell him he is at liberty to keep the dime ; but on opening his hand to look at it, he will find, to his astonishment, that it is gone.

To Make Fire Bottles.—The phosphoric fire bottles may be prepared in the following manner : Take a small phial of very thin glass, heat it gradually in a ladleful of sand, and introduce into it a few grains of phosphorus ; let the phial be then left undisturbed for a few minutes, and proceed in this manner till the phial is full. Another method of preparing this phosphoric bottle, consists in heating two parts of phosphorus and one of lime, placed in layers, in a loosely stopped phial for about half an hour ; or put a little phosphorus into a small phial, heat the phial in a ladleful of sand, and when the phosphorus is melted, turn it round, so that the phosphorus may adhere to the sides of the phial, and then cork it closely. To use this bottle, take a common brimstone match, introduce its point into the bottle, so as to cause a minute quantity of its contents to adhere to it. If the match be rubbed on a common bottle cork, it will instantly take fire. Care should be taken not to use the same match a second time immediately, or while it is hot, as it would infallibly set fire to the phosphorus in the bottle.

Artificial Thunder.—Mix two drachms of the filings of iron with one ounce of concentrated spirit of vitriol, in a strong bottle that holds about a quarter of a pint ; stop it close, and in a few moments shake the bottle ; then,

taking out the cork, put a lighted candle near its mouth, which should be a little inclined, and you will soon observe an inflammation arise from the bottle attended with a loud explosion.

To guard against the danger of the bottle bursting, the best way would be to bury it in the ground, and apply the light to the mouth by means of a taper fastened to the end of a long stick.

The Magic Flask.—Take a glass bottle; put in it some volatile alkali, in which has been dissolved copper filings, which will produce a blue color. Give this flask to some one to cork up, while indulging in some pleasantry, and then call the attention of the company to the liquid, when, to their astonishment, they find the color has disappeared as soon as it was corked. You can cause it to reappear by simply taking out the stopper, and this change will appear equally astonishing.

How to let Twenty Gentlemen draw twenty Cards, and to Make One Card Every Man's Card.—Take a pack of cards: let any gentleman draw a card and put it in the pack again, but be sure you know where to find it again; then shuffle the cards, and let another gentleman draw a card, but be sure you let him draw the same card as the other gentleman drew, and continue till ten or twelve, or as many as you may think fit, have drawn; then let another gentleman draw another card, and put them into the pack, and shuffle them till you have brought the cards together; then showing the last card to the company, the other will show the trick; by this means many other feats may be done.

How to Double Your Pocket Money.—The only preparation is to have four cents concealed in your left palm.

Commence the trick by calling forward one of the spectators, and let him bring up his hat with him.

Then borrow five cents, or have them ready to produce from your own pocket should there be any delay.

Request your friend, while he places them one by one on a small plate or saucer, to count them audibly, so that the company may hear their number correctly. Inquire, "How many are there?" He will answer, "Five." Take up the saucer and pour them into your left hand, (where the other four are already concealed.) Then say, "Stay, I will place these in your hat, and you must raise it above your head, for all to see that nothing is added subsequently to them." You will have placed these nine cents in his hat unsuspected by him.

Borrow five cents more. Appear to throw those five into you left hand, but really retaining them in your right hand, which is to fall by your side as if empty.

Afterwards get rid of four of the five cents into your pocket, retaining only one in your right palm.

Hold up your closed left hand, and say, while blowing on it: "Pass, cents, from my left hand into the hat. Now, sir, be kind enough to see if they have come into your possession. Please to count them aloud while placing them in the saucer." He will be surprised, as well as the spectators, to find that the cents in his hat have become nine.

You may then put on a rather offended look, and say: "Ah, sir! ah! I did not think you would do so! You have taken one out, I fear." Approaching your right hand to his sleeve, shake the sleeve, and let the one cent, which you have in your own hand, drop audibly into the saucer. It will raise a laugh against the holder of the hat. You can say: "Excuse me, I only made it appear that you had

taken one. However, you see that the original money is now doubled."

To Catch Money from the Air.—The following trick, which tells wonderfully well when skillfully performed, is a great favorite with one of our best known conjurers. So far as we are aware, it has not before been published. Have in readiness any number of silver coins—say thirty-four; place all of them in the left hand, with the exception of four, which you must palm into the right hand. Then, obtaining a hat from the audience, you quietly put the left hand with the silver inside; and whilst playfully asking if it is a new hat, or with some such remark for the purpose of diverting attention, loose the silver, and at the same time take hold of the brim with the left hand, and hold it still, so as not to shake the silver. Now address the audience, and inform them that you are going to "catch money from the air." Ask some person to name any number of coins up to ten—say eight. In the same way you go on asking various persons, and adding the numbers aloud till the total number named is nearly thirty; then looking round as though some one had spoken another number, and knowing that you have only thirty-four coins, you must appear to have heard the number called, which, with what has already been given, will make thirty-four; say the last number you added made twenty-eight, then, as though you had heard some one say six, and twenty-eight and six make thirty-four, "thank you, I think we have sufficient." Then with the four coins palmed in your right hand, make a catch at the air, when they will chink. Look at them, and pretend to throw them into the hat, but instead of doing so palm them again; but in order to satisfy your audience that you really threw them into the hat, you must, when in the act of palming, hit the brim of the hat with

the wrist of the right hand, which will make the coins in the hat chink as if they had just fallen from the right hand. Having repeated this process several times, say: "I suppose we have sufficient," empty them out on a plate, and let one of the audience count them. It will be found that there are only thirty, but the number which you were to catch was thirty-four. You will therefore say: "Well, we are four short; I must catch just four—neither more nor less." Then, still having four coins palmed in your right hand, you catch again, and open your hands, saying to the audience: "Here they are."

Curious Watch Trick.—To tell at what hour a Person will rise in the Morning.—By means of this trick, if a person will tell you the hour at which he means to dine, you can tell him the hour at which he means to get up next morning. First ask a person to think of the hour he intends rising on the following morning. When he has done so, bid him place his finger on the hour, on the dial of your watch, at which he intends dining. Then—having requested him to remember the hour which he first thought—you mentally add twelve to the hour upon which he has placed his finger, and request him to retrograde, counting the hours you mention, whatever that may be, but that he is to commence counting with the hour he thought of from the hour he points at. For example: suppose he thought of rising at eight, and places his finger on twelve as the hour at which he means to dine, you desire him to count backwards twenty-four hours; beginning at twelve he counts eight, that being the hour he thought of rising, eleven he calls nine, ten he calls ten—(mentally, but not aloud)—and so on until he has counted twenty-four, at which point he will stop, which will be eight, and he will probably be surprised to find it is the hour he thought of rising at.

To Produce a Cannon Ball from a Hat.—This is a very old trick, though it still finds favor with most of the conjurers of the present day. You borrow a hat, and on taking it into your hands you ask a number of questions about it, or say it would be a pity for you to spoil so nice a hat, or make some such remark. This, however, is only a ruse for the purpose of diverting attention. Then, passing round to the back of your table—(where, by the way, you have arranged on pegs a large wooden “cannon ball,” or a cabbage, or a bundle of dolls, trinkets, etc., loosely tied together, so that they may be easily disengaged)—you wipe, in passing, one or other of these articles off the pegs—where they must be very slightly suspended—into the hat so rapidly as not to be observed.

Returning to the gentleman from whom you received the hat, you say to him : “You are aware, sir, that your hat was not empty when you gave it to me,” at the same time emptying the contents in front of the audience. Supposing you have, in the first instance, introduced the dolls and trinkets, you may repeat the trick by wiping the “cannon ball,” or one of the other articles, into the hat, and again advancing towards the gentleman from whom you received it, say : “Here is your hat ; thank you sir.” Then, just as you are about to give it to him, say : “Bless me, what have we here ?” and turning the hat upside down, the large cannon-ball will fall out.

An Aviary in a Hat.—This excellent but well-known trick requires the assistance of a confederate. A hat is borrowed from one of the audience, and turned round and round to show there is nothing in it. It is then laid on the operator’s table, behind a vase or some other bulky article ; after which, as if a new idea had occurred to you, perform some other trick, during which the confederate

removes the borrowed hat, substituting one previously prepared. This substituted hat is filled with small pigeons, placed in a bag with a whalebone or elastic mouth, which fits the inside of the hat. The bag containing the birds is covered with a piece of cloth, with a slit in the top. The operator, taking up the hat, puts his hand through the slit, and takes out the birds, one by one till all are free. The hat is then placed on the table, for the ostensible purpose of cleaning it before handing it back, and the confederate again changes the hats, having in the interim fitted the borrowed hat with a bag similar to the other, and also filled with pigeons. This having been done, you call out to your confederate, and request him, so that all your audience may hear, "Take the gentleman's hat away, and clean it." He takes it up, and peeps into it, saying: "You have not let all the birds away;" upon which, to the surprise and amusement of the spectators, you produce another lot of birds as before. In brushing the hat previous to restoring it to the owner, the bag must be adroitly removed.

To See a Future Husband.—On Midsummer-eve, just after sunset, three, five, or seven young women are to go into a garden, in which there is no other person, and each to gather a sprig of red sage, and then, going into a room by themselves, set a stool in the middle of the room, and on it a clean basin full of rose-water, in which the sprigs of sage are to be put, and, tying a line across the room, on one side of the stool, each woman is to hang on it a clean white handkerchief; then all are to sit down in a row, on the opposite side of the stool, as far distant as the room will admit, not speaking a single word the whole time, whatever they see, and in a few minutes after twelve, each one's future husband will take her sprig out of the rose-water, and sprinkle her handkerchief with it.

On St. Agnes' night, 21st of January, take a row of pins, and pull out every one, one after another, saying a paternoster on sticking a pin in your sleeve, and you will dream of him you will marry.

A bit of the bride-cake thrice drawn through the wedding-ring, and laid under the head of an unmarried woman, will make her dream of her future husband. The same is practiced in the North with a piece of the groaning cheese.

To Know what fortune your future Husband will have.—Take a walnut, a hazle-nut, and nutmeg; grate them together, and mix them with butter and sugar, and make them up into small pills, of which exactly nine must be taken on going to bed; and according to your dreams, so will be the state of the person you will marry. If a gentleman, of riches; if a clergyman, of white linen; if a lawyer, of darkness; if a tradesman, of odd noises and tumults; if a soldier or sailor, of thunder and lightning; if a servant, of rain.

To Give Eggs a variegated Appearance.—Cut up a couple of handfuls of different colored rags into small strips, mix them together indiscriminately, and completely envelope the egg in them; then tie the whole in a piece of cloth and boil them for three or four hours.

The wet Sleeve.—Go out, one or more, to a south running spring or rivulet, where “three laird’s lands meet,” and dip your left shirt-sleeve. Go to bed in sight of a fire, and hang your wet sleeve before it to dry. Lie awake; and some time near midnight an apparition, having the exact figure of the grand object in question, will come and turn the sleeve, as if to dry the other side of it.

To Produce beautiful Fireworks in miniature.—Put half a drachm of solid phosphorus into a large pint Florence flask—holding it slanting, that the phosphorus may not break the glass. Pour upon it a gill and a half of water, and place the whole over a tea-kettle lamp, or any common tin lamp, filled with spirit of wine. Light the wick, which should be almost half an inch from the flask; and as soon as the water is heated, streams of fire will issue from the water by starts, resembling sky-rockets; some particles will adhere to the sides of the glass, representing stars, and will frequently display brilliant rays. These appearances will continue at times till the water begins to simmer, when immediately a curious aurora borealis begins, and gradually ascends, till it collects to a pointed flame; when it has continued half a minute, blow out the flame of the lamp, and the point that was formed will rush down, forming beautiful illuminated clouds of fire, rolling over each other for some time, which, disappearing, a splendid hemisphere of stars presents itself; after waiting a minute or two, light the lamp again, and nearly the same phenomenon will be displayed as from the beginning. Let the repetition of lighting and blowing out the lamp be made for three or four times at least, that the stars may be increased. After the third or fourth time of blowing out the lamp, in a few minutes after the internal surface of the flask is dry, many of the stars will shoot with great splendor, from side to side, and some of them will fire off with brilliant rays; these appearances will continue several minutes. What remains in the flask will serve for the same experiment several times, and without adding any more water. Care should be taken, after the operation is over, to lay the flask and water in a cool, secure place.

the spades, clubs, and hearts—and really as easy as regards the diamonds—for on close inspection it will be seen that the margin between the point of the diamond and the edge of the card is much smaller at one end of the card than the other. Place the narrow margins at the top, and the trick is ready.

Request one or two of the company to invert any of the cards in your absence. They will naturally turn a diamond, never suspecting the difference of margin; the change of spades, &c., being too apparent a matter. On your return you at once detect the changed card or cards. Should any one discover the trick, defy the *detector* to tell which card is turned during his absence. When he leaves the room turn a spade or heart *completely round*, leaving it exactly as it was before; then summon the would-be-conjuror, whose perplexity will afford considerable amusement.

The Ring and Stick.—This trick is very puzzling, and requires but little preparation or practice.

Get two brass curtain rings; keep one of them in the coat sleeve, offer the other to the company for examination—procure a light walking-stick, and secretly slip the ring from the sleeve upon the stick, covering it well with the left hand. Hold the stick in the centre with the ring concealed, and invite two persons to hold the ends of the stick. While engaging the attention by some apparent necessity for having the stick either higher or lower—a little higher at one end, a little lower at the other, etc., etc.—give the stick a smart tap with the examined ring in your right hand, and withdraw the left hand rapidly, making the ring on the stick spin violently.

It will appear that the ring in the right hand has passed miraculously upon the stick; how, no one can tell, the ring being solid, and the stick guarded at both ends. The

right-hand ring must be secreted in the sleeve or pocket after the effect is produced; but no great haste is required, as every one will be too intent upon examining the ring on the stick to watch the operator.

The Hat Puzzle.—Request any person to mark upon the wall the exact height of an ordinary silk hat, supposing the hat to be placed on its crown on the floor. Exhibit the hat before its height is marked, and it is curious to observe how entirely different are the ideas of half a dozen persons upon the subject—the greater number marking high enough for two or three hats.

The Restored Handkerchief.—A hat, a newspaper, a handkerchief, a pair of scissors, and a plate, are required to carry out this illusion. Place a hat on the table at the back of the room, that is, *away* from the audience, but in sight of them. Borrow a handkerchief, and dexterously substitute another in its place. This is easy enough to do. Proceed as follows:—

Secrete a common handkerchief between the lower edge of the coat and waistcoat, the lower button of the coat being fastened, that the handkerchief may not fall. Having obtained a lady's handkerchief, holding it in the left hand, turn sharply round, and, in the act of turning, draw the concealed handkerchief from the coat, and pass the borrowed handkerchief from the left to the right hand, so that the two handkerchiefs are brought together. Pretend to look for some mark in the borrowed handkerchief, but *really* be crushing the borrowed handkerchief into small compass, and spreading out the false one.

Then lay it *on the edge* of the hat, exposing well the false article, and dropping the real one into the hat, at the same time bidding the company observe that the handker-

chief never leaves their sight. Then fetch a pair of scissors, or borrow a pen-knife. Take the false handkerchief and cut out the middle. Ask some one to hold the middle tightly in his hand; some one else to hold the edges in the same manner. Leave the room to fetch a plate, taking the hat away at the same time. Lay the real handkerchief flat between two pages of a newspaper, fold the paper and return with both paper and plate to the company. Now set fire to the edges of the destroyed handkerchief; let the fire burn itself out in the plate. Spread the paper out on the table, all but the last fold, which conceals the other handkerchief. Place the cut centre on the paper; empty the ashes from the plate upon the centre; fold up the paper and crush it as much as possible, so that the folds or creases may not betray anything. Lastly, pick the paper to pieces until the restored handkerchief is gradually developed; pull it out, and throw the paper all into the fire. A little practice will render this illusion very startling in its effect. Care must be taken, in borrowing the handkerchief, to secure one as much like the *property handkerchief* as possible.

Excellent Trick with Shilling-pieces.—In a plate the operator has twenty-four shillings. He holds the plate in the left hand, having another eight shillings in the hand or fingers, covered by the plate. He asks one of the company to count the pieces one by one on the plate, first pouring the twenty-four pieces into his hands. He counts twenty-four. Then he takes the plate in the right hand, quickly pouring the pieces into the left hand, and thus mixing the concealed eight pieces with the rest, making thirty-two in all. He asks the same person to hold the pieces in one hand and the plate in the other; then he desires him to drop several pieces on the plate. When eight have

fallen, the operator takes them away. The person holding the balance believes himself now to have only sixteen pieces. The operator takes the eight pieces in a pile, and rolls them up in a piece of newspaper, which should be torn from a crumpled paper especially placed beforehand. Having folded the eight pieces in paper, he announces that he will make them disappear from the paper, and appear in the hand of the person holding the plate and coins. At this moment the operator discovers that the wrapping has burst, and, returning to the crumpled paper, rids himself secretly of the package altogether, leaving it, of course, in the mass of paper, while he tears off another portion, and pretends to re-wrap the coins. He then commands the money to disappear, shows that it has obeyed; and upon the gentleman holding the coins counting them one by one on the plate, he will, of course, discover that there are twenty-four, as in the first instance. The operator must remove the unused newspaper before any one thinks to examine it? or, at all events, remove the package containing the eight shillings.

A Rope Trick.—Procure a rope the size of a clothes' line, and about twelve or fifteen feet long.

Ask some one to tie your wrists together with a handkerchief; then get him to draw the rope through the arms, and hold the two ends tightly. Bid him stand as far away as the double ropes will permit. The performer is now to drop the rope from his arms, without untying the handkerchief.

To accomplish it, he must pull tightly against the person holding the ends of the rope.

This enables him to draw the rope well in *between* the wrists, until, on slacking the rope, the fingers can easily reach it and draw it *through* the handkerchief, until suffi-

cient is through to permit one hand to slip through the noose of rope which is formed by this last movement. A slight pull from the assistant causes the rope to fall free of the hands and arms.

An Impossibility.—Request any one to stand with his back *against* the wall—the heels being close to the wall; drop a handkerchief at his feet, and defy him to pick it up without moving his feet.

To Make a Cane or Poker stand in the middle of the Room.—Get two black pins, and a piece of black silk thread about a yard long. Tie a pin on each end, and fasten the pins into the cloth of the trousers under each knee; thus the walking about is not interfered with, and the line hangs loosely between the knees. Sit down at some distance from the company, and spread the knees to tighten the silk. Take the stick or poker, and rest it against the silk, and it will remain stationary, even at a great angle. The operator should pretend to make magnetic passes with the hands, as though the effect were due to magnetic influence.

The Trick of the Inexhaustible Bottle.—This is so well known, that it requires but little description. It is an ordinary-looking bottle from which, after having been proved to be perfectly empty, many kinds of wines and spirits are produced in apparently inexhaustible varieties and quantities.

The bottle is made inside with four tubes, into each of which, by means of a small funnel, different sorts of liquors are poured. By keeping the fingers over the apertures on the outside of the bottle, the different liquids are retained in the bottle; but the instant the fingers are removed, the air rushes in, and allows whatever is in that

particular tube to escape. Care must be observed, in pouring out, that the head of the bottle be kept down in the wine-glass, to avoid showing that the liquid flows but in a small stream. The glass should be thick at the bottom, holding but a small quantity, and yet appearing to contain much more.

The Dice Trick.—To perform this trick satisfactorily you must try to impress your audience with the idea that the dice actually dissolves, and goes through the hat.

For the performance a hat is required, which you may borrow from one of the company.

Removing the cover, the true and false dice are placed together in the hat.

You then state that you are going to take the dice out of the hat; but this you do not do in reality, as you take only the false dice out, leaving the true dice in.

The "Twenty Cent" Trick.—Borrow twenty cents from the company, which display on a plate, having previously prepared five cents in your *left hand*, which you keep concealed. Then take the cents from the plate in the right hand, and mixing them with the concealed five, give them to one of the company to hold. Ask the possessor to return five to you, which he will do, supposing he then retains only fifteen, although, in reality, he of course has twenty. Now have another cent palmed in your right hand, so that when giving the five cents to another person to hold, you may mix it with that sum, and place the *six cents* in his hand. You may now ask him, as before, to return *one*; when you take it remind him he has only four, and you must now proceed with the most marvelous part of your illusion. Taking the one cent you have just received in the right hand, *palm* it, and pretend to place it

in the left. Then, striking the left hand with a rod, bid it fly into the closed hand of the person holding five, or, as he supposes, the *four* cents. On unclosing the hand, the cent will of course appear to have been transferred thither, and great amazement will result. Now, taking the five cents, make a more dexterous pass into the left hand, whence you bid them fly into the closed hand of the person holding the supposed fifteen, and whom you now ask to return you the full sum of twenty cents, much to his own wonder and that of the company. If executed with care and dexterity, no illusion can be more effective.

To Make an egg stand on one end on a table or Looking-Glass.—To make an egg stand on end on any polished surface seems very extraordinary, yet is to be done even on a looking-glass. Now, from the form of an egg, nothing is more liable to roll, and on nothing more than a looking-glass. To accomplish this trick, let the performer take an egg in his hand, and while he keeps talking and staring in the faces of his audience, give it two or three hearty shakes; this will break the yolk, which will sink to one end, and consequently make it more heavy, by which, when it is settled, you may make it, with a steady hand, stand upon the glass. This would be impossible while it continued in its proper state.

The Magic Cups.—Procure two tin cups without handles, quite plain, straight sides. With the bottoms sunk a quarter of an inch. On the bottoms spread some glue, and completely cover the glue with some kind of bird seed, only so as not to be seen when standing in an ordinary position. Have ready a bag filled with the same kind of seed as you used in covering the bottoms. Put the cups on the table; also two hats. Put one cup then into the bag, appear to fill it, and take it out turned bottom up-

wards, when it will look as if it had been filled. Put it in that position under one hat; in doing so turn it over. Then take the other empty cup, put that under the other hat; and, in doing so, turn that over, which of course must be invisible to the audience. Then remove the hat, and the cups will appear to have changed places.

The Bogle Bodkin.—Take a hollow bodkin, (or if you prefer it a dagger) so that the blade may slip into the handle as soon as the blade is turned upward. Seem to thrust it into your forehead, (or if a dagger, into your bosom,) then after showing some appearance of pain, pull away your hand suddenly, holding the point downward, and it will fall out, and appear not to have been thrust into the haft; but immediately afterward, throw the bodkin or dagger into your lap or pocket, and pull out another plain one like it which will completely deceive the spectators.

To Put a Ring through one's Cheek.—Have two rings exactly alike, one of which has a notch which admits your cheek. When you have exhibited the perfect ring, you change it for the other, and privately slip the notch over one side of your mouth; in the meantime, you slip the whole ring on your stick, hiding it with your hand; then desire some one to hold the end of the stick, whip the ring out of your cheek, and smite with it instantly upon the stick, concealing it, and whirling the other ring which you hold in your hand over around about the stick. The celebrated Chinese ring trick, of linking from seven to nine rings together, is done on the same principle as the above, that is, one of the rings is split, all the others are solid, and are examined by the company; two or three are made solid by linking, and by means of the split ring they can all be joined in various ways.

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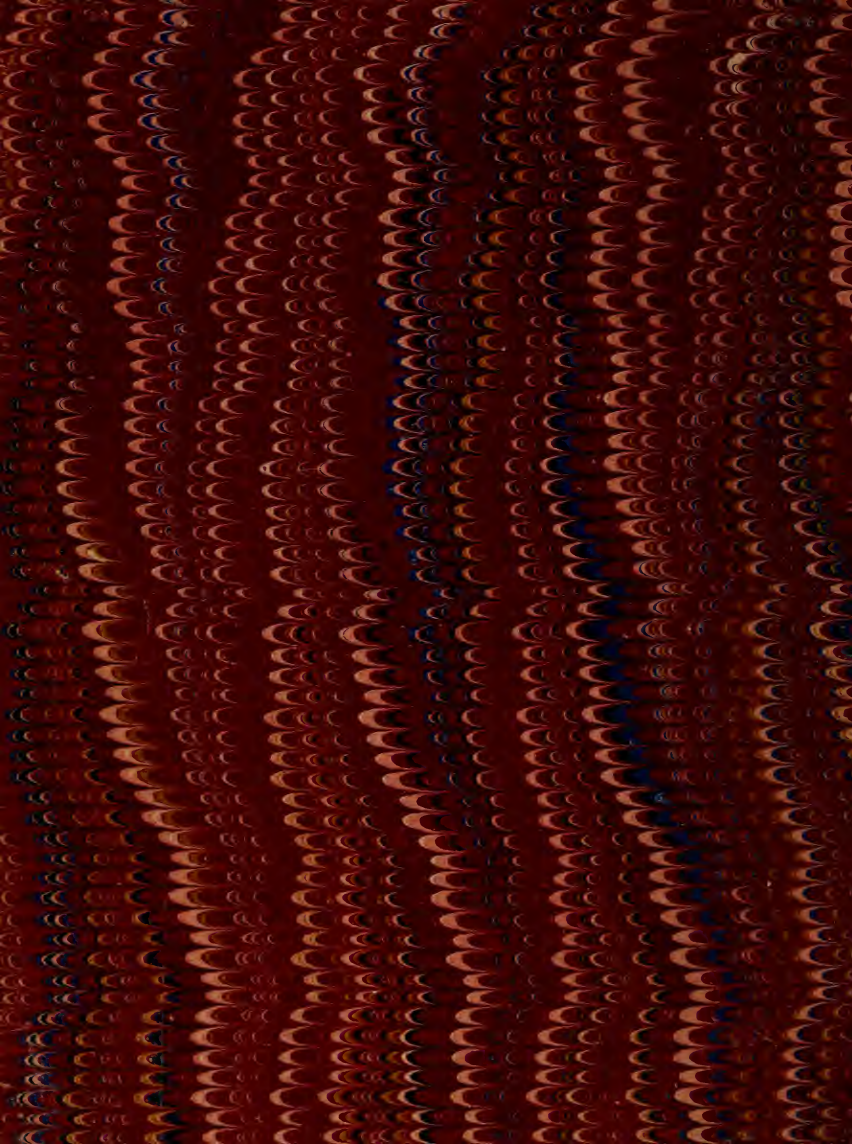
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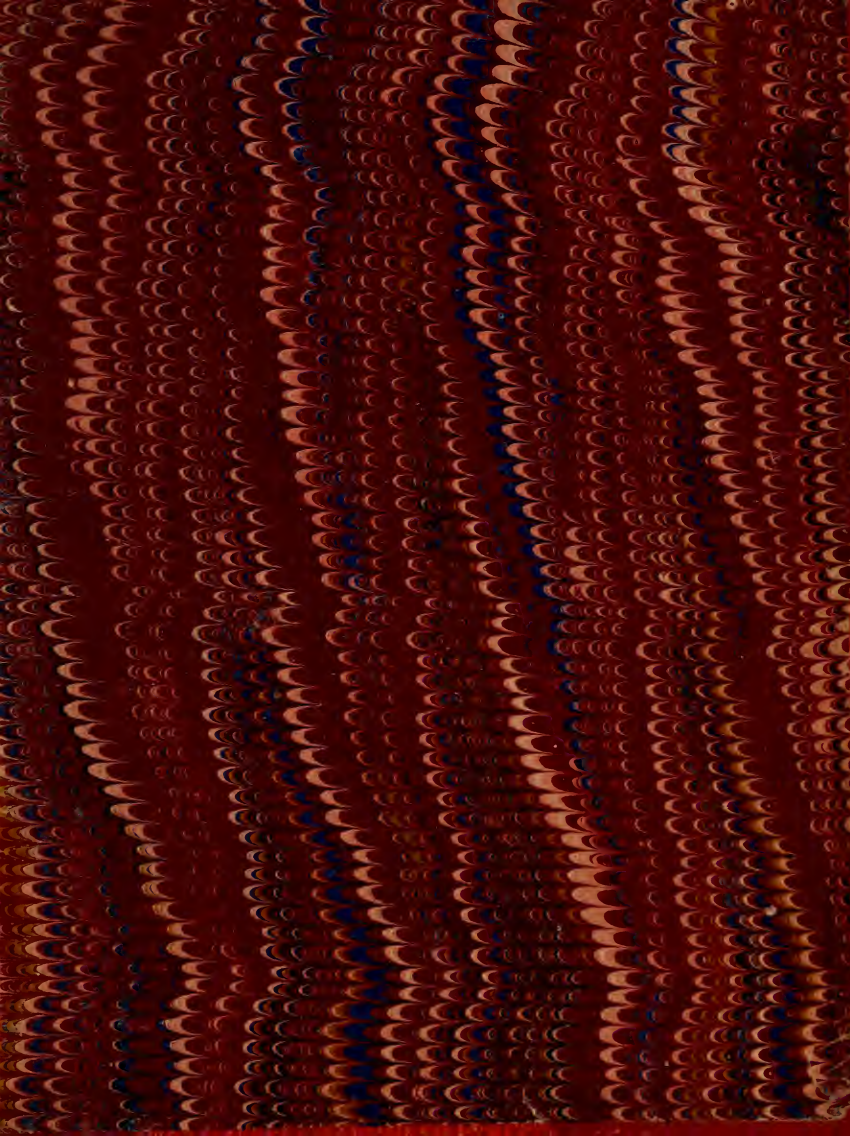
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