

and he is going to want a partner some day, so he and the twins' father determined Jerry should be equipped for the place.

Mothers tell the story to their children, and 'As brave as Jerry Thomas' is a saying often heard in Carterville, for the cheap show of courage so often displayed to excite admiration is soon forgotten, while real bravery in the face of real danger for a worth-while object excites the lasting respect of every one.

Jerry's companions now know that he is and always will be sensitive to certain distasteful experiences, but that the finer, nobler courage of real manhood belongs to Jerry Thomas.

HIS FACE TO THE FOE

At a dinner party an English officer was placed with his back to the fire. He stood the heat for some time, but at last was obliged to ask for a fire-screen.

'A British soldier should always be able to stand fire,' said the host, a pompous old squire who thought everything belonging to him was perfection.

'But not at his back, sir,' was the response.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND

A large manufacturer had a customer of long standing who, on some plea or other, was in the habit of deducting a certain amount from the value of nearly every parcel of goods he received.

Recently, on receiving an order from this customer, the manufacturer sent off the invoice, which is usually dispatched at the same time as the goods. It was not long before he received a letter of complaint, stating that the goods were again unsatisfactory—exhibited several flaws in the manufacture, etc.—and that he (the customer) had no further use for them unless he were allowed 10 per cent. on their value.

The manufacturer replied with well-feigned indignation, and reluctantly agreed to allow the reduction, provided the money was paid at once.

A remittance arrived by return of post; but the point of the story is—the goods had never been dispatched.

Up to the present date that customer has had nothing more to say as to the unsatisfactory condition of articles ordered.

AGAIN, NOTT VERSUS SHOTT

The story of these gentlemen and their duel—a famous one formerly—is revived, and the tale is repeated. To be effective, it should be read aloud:

A duel was fought in Texas by Alexander Shott and John Nott. Nott was shot, and Shott was not. In this case it is better to be Shott than Nott. There was a rumor that Nott was not shot, but Shott avows that he was not, which proves either that the shot Shott shot at Nott was not shot, or that Nott was shot notwithstanding.

It may be made to appear on trial that the shot Shott shot Nott, or, as accidents with firearms are frequent, it may be possible that the shot Shott shot Shott himself, when the whole affair would resolve itself into its original element, and Shott would be shot and Nott would be not.

We think, however, that the shot Shott shot shot, not Shott, but Nott. Anyway, it is hard to tell who was shot.

THE BRAYING OF AN ASS

A Commonwealth politician tells a good story of himself about the first political speech he ever made. He says:

'I jumped up and began, "Gentlemen, Herodotus tells us—,"'

"Which ticket is he on?" yelled the man with the red shirt.

"Herodotus tells us," I resumed, "of a whole army that was put to flight by the braying of an ass."

'Then the crowd applauded, and I felt fine. Then the young man's voice rose above the din.

"Young man," he called, "you needn't be afraid of this crowd. It's been tested."

FAMILY FUN

TRICKS AND ILLUSIONS.

(Special to the *N.Z. Tablet* by MAHATMA.)

A Puzzling Domino Trick.—A complete set of dominoes is required for this neat little trick. The performer secretly secures one, which must not be a double number. The remaining dominoes are taken to the other end of the room, and placed according to the rules of domino games. The performer then offers to tell the two numbers forming the extremes of the line, which of course he has not seen placed. The numbers of the extreme ends of the domino line will be the numbers of the domino which has been secreted by the performer. If you repeat this (a very inadvisable proceeding with any trick) you must exchange the stolen domino for another.

Odds and Evens.—This is an excellent little trick and in effect is as follows:—The performer halves a pack of thirty-two cards, and has several cards chosen from each half. When noted, the cards are returned by the drawers themselves, who thoroughly shuffle them with the rest. The performer then takes each half, and immediately picks out the chosen cards. The secret depends upon the separation of the odd cards from the even ones prior to presenting the trick, thus forming two portions which, while apparently made up of mixed cards, are readily distinguishable the one from the other. The ace, seven, nine, and knave may be considered as odd cards; and the eight, ten, queen and king as the even ones. After the cards have been chosen, the operator has merely to make an exchange of the two halves, thereby handing the even cards to the person who holds the odd ones, and *vice versa*. The remaining portion of the trick follows as a matter of course.

An Effective Method of Discovering a Chosen Card.—Hand the pack to be shuffled, and when returned, secretly note the bottom card. Now lay the cards in five or six heaps on the table, and request a bystander to look at the top card of either heap, and having done so, to replace it. This done, take up the heaps in such a manner that the original bottom card, which constitutes your 'key' is brought immediately over the chosen card. The pack may now be cut any number of times with very little fear of separating the two cards. Should they by chance become separated, it will be at the point of cut, which leaves them at the top and bottom of the pack respectively; but even this may be obviated by cutting an even number of times. In other words, should the first cut separate the cards, the second must naturally bring them together again. To find the chosen card, then, the performer has simply to deal all the cards on the table, and watch for the 'key'; When this appears, he knows the next is the one required, and makes a statement to this effect; but, before turning it up he asks for the name of the card, thus proving that he does not expect any sympathy on the part of the drawer.

Restoring a Torn Card.—Place two cards, which must be alike in suit and value, at the top of the pack. Ask someone to take the top card, tear it to pieces, and burn them in a candle flame. Before burning them, however, he is to give you one of the pieces to hold. When the card is burned to ashes you tap the pack with your wand, and ask someone else to take the card which is now on top of the pack. This is discovered to be of the same suit and value as the card which was destroyed and burnt, but minus a corner. The performer gives the piece of card which he has held throughout the experiment to the company, and they find to their astonishment that it exactly fits the torn corner. The explanation is absurdly simple. From the second card tear off a corner and conceal it in your hand. The backs being all alike no one will notice that this card has been tampered with. When the spectator hands you the piece of the card which he has torn up you deftly substitute it for the piece you have torn from the duplicate card. You now hand the card and piece to the company to see that they fit.

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