

him if he knew his 'piece' now, and that he answered yes.

When the young man next on the list had spoken, and while the band was playing, the child, to the brother's great surprise, made her way up the stage steps, and pressed through the throng of professors and trustees, and distinguished visitors, up to the college president.

'If you please, sir,' she said, 'will you and the trustees let my brother try again? He knows his "piece" now.'

For a moment, the president stared at her through his gold-bowed spectacles, and then, appreciating the child's petition, he smiled on her and went down and spoke to the young man who had failed.

So it happened that when the band had again ceased playing, it was briefly announced that Mr. — would now deliver his oration, 'Historic Parallels.'

'"Amid the combinations of actors and forces which"'—This she whispered to him as he rose to answer the summons.

A ripple of heightened and expectant interest passed over the audience, and then all sat stone-still, as though fearing to breathe, lest the speaker might take fright. No danger. The hero in the youth was aroused. He went at his 'piece' with a set purpose to conquer, to redeem himself, and to bring back the smile into the child's tear-stained face. I watched the face during the speaking. The wide eyes, the parted lips, the whole, rapt being said that that the breathless audience was forgotten, that her spirit was moving with him.

And when the address was ended after the ardent abandon of one who catches enthusiasm in the realisation that he is fighting down a wrong judgment and conquering a sympathy, the effect was really thrilling. That dignified audience broke into rapturous applause; bouquets intended for the valedictorian, rained like a tempest. And the child who had helped to save the day—that one, beaming, little face, in its pride and gladness, is something to be forever remembered.—*English Messenger.*

A PERTINENT QUESTION

Mr. Ives has a mind that delights in facts. One evening he laid down the paper, was silent for a moment, and then said:

'That's odd.'

'What is it?' inquired his wife.

'Why, here is a man who says it would take 12,000,000 years to pump the sea dry at the rate of a thousand gallons a second.'

Mrs. Ives sat thinking the matter over. Finally, she said:

'Why, Henry, where would they put all the water?'

A SLIGHT MISUNDERSTANDING

Mr. Smart was a very testy old fellow, and if there was one thing he hated more than another it was to be 'caught napping.' As a consequence he was always very suspicious of any deed or word the full meaning of which he could not grasp. Some time ago he paid a visit to the London Zoo, and being fond of animals, was greatly interested, and soon got into conversation with one of the keepers. A very interesting chat ensued. As Mr. Smart was about to leave, the keeper turned to him and asked:

'By the way, sir, have you seen our black-faced antelope?'

There, thought the old gent, was an attempt to 'have' him.

'No sir,' he replied, stiffly, 'I have not. May I ask with whom it was that your black-faced aunt eloped?'

A YANKEE DEFINITION

Rufus Choate once endeavored to make a witness give an illustration of absent-mindedness.

'Wal,' said the witness cautiously, 'I should say that a man who thought he'd left his watch at hum, an' took it out'n his pocket to see if he had time to go hum to get it—I should say that that feller was a leetle absent-minded.'

FAMILY FUN

TRICKS AND ILLUSIONS.

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

The Mysterious Suspension of a Glass of Water.—The performer shows an ordinary glass tumbler full of water. He next shows both hands free from preparation, and places either hand flat over the mouth of the tumbler. The latter is raised slowly quite flat and with fingers and thumb apart, and the glass of water is seen to adhere to the hand in the most mysterious manner, moving about in the air. To accomplish the trick you simply tie a length of thread round the glass. The thread passes over the mouth of the glass and down the sides, the two ends being tied together under the bottom. When the hand is placed on the top of the glass the middle finger is passed under the thread, which should be just slack enough for the purpose, and if the hand be now slightly arched it will be found that the glass may be securely lifted. It is well to select a glass the bottom of which has a sharp edge, as this prevents the possibility of the thread slipping. To obtain the best effect the empty glass should be handed round for examination first, and the loop of thread securely slipped over it as it is returned to the table. A jug of water should also be at hand for the purpose of filling the glass.

The Changing Card.—The effect of this trick is that a card, say the three of diamonds, changes, at the performer's wish, to the two of diamonds, and back again. The trick is a mechanical one and may be made with very little trouble. Take an old card of the diamond suit, and cut from it one of the diamonds. Attach a piece of fine silk thread to the top of this pip. Attach the other end to the top of the diamonds in such a manner that, when it is allowed to hang down, it will fall in between the other two pips, thus giving the impression, from a short distance, that the card has mysteriously been transformed from the two of diamonds to the three. The best effect is obtained by placing the left hand in front of the card, and making some mysterious passes whilst the right hand jerks the pip over from the back where it has been hanging.

Soap Bubble Tricks.—To make a flower inside a soap bubble, pour the soapy solution into a plate until the bottom is covered with it to the depth of one eighth of an inch. In the centre of the dish place a rose or any flower, and over this a tin funnel. Now blow gently into the funnel, slowly lifting it at the same time. Continue blowing until you make quite a large film, and then disengage the funnel, after having first turned it at right angles. This trick always mystifies and delights its observers. Another trick is to blow a bubble upon a flower—a stiff petalled flower is best, and one of brilliant hue. The coloring is often beautiful and delicate in the extreme.

To Distinguish Court Cards by Touch.—Have the cards shuffled, and at the same time call attention to the extraordinary development of the senses, smell and touch, by blind people. Inform your audience that you have paid some attention to the matter, and are now able to distinguish court cards by touch. Allow someone to blindfold you, then take the shuffled pack, and, feeling each card and holding it in front of you with its face to the spectators, place the court cards on one side and the other cards on the other side. The trick will cause no end of wonder, yet it is simplicity itself to work. A confederate is employed. He sits opposite the performer, the company being seated round a large table, and when a court card is held up a gentle pressure of his (the confederate's) boot tells the conjuror that he has arrived at a court card. The trick could be kept going for hours and the secret be still hidden.

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