

picion at once fell on the apprentice; and he searched his bed-room. There he actually found the jewels, in a hole which was in the wall, above an old chest!

Robert earnestly and firmly declared that he had not taken them; but his master rebuked him harshly, told him he deserved to be hanged, and dismissed him from his employment.

But, lo! on the next day another stone was missing, and the goldsmith found it in the same hole!

He now set himself in earnest to discover who it was that had concealed it there. To his amazement, a magpie which the apprentice had trained, hopped up on the working-table, took a stone in its beak, and carried it off to the hole in the wall!

The goldsmith was now grieved to the heart for the injustice which he had done to the poor lad. He took him back again, from that time forward treated him very kindly, and never again suspected anyone upon trivial grounds.

AN ANECDOTE

A mouse being chased by a cat fell into a vat of beer. The cat sprang to the edge of the vat and called: 'Aha, Mrs. Mouse, you had better have let me eat you, than drown.'

'Yes,' replied the mouse, 'if you will save me from this, you may eat me.'

The cat went to the edge of the tank and extended his paw, and the mouse landed and ran hastily into its hole.

'Come out,' demanded the angry cat; 'redeem your promise and let me devour you.'

'Oh, no,' said the mouse, 'when I made it I was in liquor.'

A NEW DISEASE

'What,' inquired the Sunday school teacher of her youthful pupils, 'what are divers diseases?'

Bashful or ignorant, the scholars clung tenaciously to the doctrine that little boys should be seen and not heard.

'Come,' pursued the teacher, 'can't any of you tell me?'

Then Johnnie's arm shot up.

'Well?' asked the teacher.

'Please, miss,' answered Johnnie, 'water on the brain.'

RAISING THE RENT

An old colored woman went into a Washington real estate office the other day and was recognised as a tenant of a small house that had become much enhanced in value by reason of a new union station in that neighborhood.

'Look here, auntie, we are going to raise your rent this month,' the agent remarked briskly.

'Deer, an' ah's glad to hear dat, sah,' the old woman replied, ducking her head politely. 'Mighty glad, fo' sho', 'case ah des come in hyah terday ter tell you all dat ah couldn't raise hit dis month.'

A STORY OF TRAFALGAR

When the British ships were bearing down to attack the combined fleets at Trafalgar, the first lieutenant of the battleship Revenge, in going round to see that all hands were at quarters, found an Irishman kneeling beside his gun. Surprised and curious, he asked, 'Are you praying?'

'I am,' answered the Irish tar.

'What for?' inquired the officer.

'That the enemy's shot may be distributed the same way as the prize-money—the officers to get the biggest share of it!'

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FAMILY FUN

TRICKS AND ILLUSIONS.

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

To Balance a Card on a Hat.—A card, freely selected and placed face downwards on the crown of a borrowed hat, rises slowly, standing balanced on one end and bows to the audience a number of times. This trick is very effective as well as mystifying. The secret is a human hair, one end of which is attached to the bottom button of the performer's waistcoat, while the free end has a small pellet of beeswax attached to it. The length of this hair should be such that when not in use the waxed end may be pressed on to the top button of the waistcoat. In this position it may be carried about always ready for the trick.

The Mesmerised Pencil.—The performer goes amongst the audience and asks for the loan of a lead pencil. As he cannot procure one exactly similar to the one required he uses his own. This pencil is placed across the performer's palm. Passes are made over it, and gradually it rises until it stands perpendicularly. The effect is very mysterious, but it is also very easy of accomplishment. To the end of the pencil the performer has attached a small, sharp hook. This is stuck in the palm of the hand near the ball of the thumb. The pencil is laid down flat and held down by the fingers. Gradually opening the fingers and stretching the hand, the pencil rises up. This movement may be repeated a number of times.

Egg Spinning.—An ordinary egg is kept spinning like a top, on a Japanese tray. The tray is held in the right hand, bottom upwards, the left hand placing the egg on the tray gives it a spin to the right. By now causing the tray to describe concentric circles—i.e., in the opposite direction to that in which the egg is spinning, the latter may be kept going indefinitely. The egg must be hard boiled, and the heavier it is the better will it spin. The tray should be smooth but not polished. The surface on which the egg is to spin could be finished off with fine emery cloth. The better effect is obtained when the egg is first laid on its side in the centre of the tray, and caused to get up and spin without the assistance of the left hand. To do this the right hand in addition to imparting the concentric motion to the tray causes it at the same time to oscillate slightly from side to side. The egg spins on its side with increasing rapidity, the extra movement eventually causing it to stand on one end. From this point the trick proceeds as above described.

The Disappearing Knot.—Two handkerchiefs are tied together by their corners, or two corners of one handkerchief are tied together and are mysteriously untied. The trick is a very old one but one that may be new to some readers. Two corners of a handkerchief, diagonally opposed to each other, are tied together with a common 'granny' or 'reef' knot, either of which may be pulled reasonably tight. The knot is then covered with the body of the handkerchief, which is given to someone to hold. The performer, taking one of the free ends, requests the holder to let go when he counts three. This is done and the knot has vanished. The secret depends upon the manipulation of the knot, prior to, and in the act of covering it with the handkerchief. Having tied a 'reef' or 'granny' knot, and in the act of apparently pulling the knot tight, one hand takes a corner and the other hand the body of the handkerchief, corresponding to the same corner, and a strong pull is given, with the result that the corner is pulled out quite straight, the opposite one being merely tied round it—i.e., the 'granny' or 'reef' knot is converted into a slip knot which, with one or two more tugs, is worked still nearer the opposite end. The knot is then taken between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, while the remaining three fingers grip tightly that portion of the handkerchief immediately under the knot. The left hand now throws the body of the handkerchief over it, and under cover of this the thumb and finger push the knot completely off the end, just before the assistant grasps it. The hard twists which still remain satisfy him that he holds the actual knot.

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