

A SURPRISING TRICK.

Yes, boys, read Simon-pure magic. Just such tricks as you have seen in the "magician" do; just such a trick as you have seen your humble servant do. Many of these you can do yourselves. When you know how; others require more practice than you ought to give to such nonsense, and others are so good and expensive. But there are some that any boy or girl, for that matter—can do with little rehearsing and slight expense.

The magic sack trick, which I had the honor of introducing into America in 1873, is as clever as it is simple. A muslin sack large enough to contain a boy of fourteen is handed out for examination, and after the audience are satisfied that the seams are secure and perfect, but that it is only open at the mouth, and the performer's assistant gets inside. The sack is gathered over his head, and the mouth tied with a silk handkerchief, and then with a tape, the knots of the latter being not only sealed in any way that comes best to the audience, but the ends, which are left long, given to some one to hold.

A screen is now placed between the audience and the boy in the sack, the ends of the rope of the top of the sack are pulled up through holes in the side.

It would seem impossible for the person thus secured, to be able to get out of the sack without cutting or untying the tape of handkerchief; and yet, O mystery of mysteries! in a few seconds the screen is taken down, and the boy is seen to have escaped through the sack, the sack is still tied up, the knots not tampered with and seals unbroken.

Surprising as this appears, there are many but three requisites for its successful accomplishment: first, an assistance upon whose secrecy and faithfulness the young conjurer can rely; for he will require his help for a great many tricks; secondly, two sacks, one made of very fine material so that they will fold into small compass; and third, unlimited impudence, assurance, or whatever you may be pleased to call it. When about to exhibit the trick the performer comes forward, holding a silk handkerchief in one hand and sack number one in the other. The assistant who is to be tied up, has the duplicate, or sack number two concealed about him, say in his vest, or some other suitable place.

As soon as he gets fairly into No. 1 he whips out the duplicate, and puts the mouth of it inside the mouth of No. 1. The exhibitor who is fumbling about as if to collect No. 1 over the boy's head, sees No. 2 and putting out one or two inches of it, at once wraps the silk handkerchief over the two so as to cover the part where they meet. This he does deliberately, as an appearance of haste would give rise to suspicion among the audience. As it is impossible to distinguish between the points of the two sacks, the exhibitor turns to the audience to see if they can see the mouth of No. 2, and if they can, he ties it up in such a way as to make it next to impossible for the young man to get out. But to make assurance doubly sure, I should like one of the audience to take a turn at tying the tape of No. 2, at once wraps the silk handkerchief over the two so as to cover the part between the handkerchief and the mouth of No. 2. The person selected from the audience draws the knot tight, seals them, and retains the end of the cord in his hand.

When the screen is placed in position for home exhibition, the exhibitor has a sheet over it makes an excellent substitute for a screen—the assistant gently pulls at the mouth of No. 1, which is readily drawn up under the handkerchief, and steps and leaving the handkerchief and tape closely wound around No. 2. It takes but a second to fold up No. 1, conceal it, and then to walk out from behind the screen to receive the applause of the audience.

This brief, but I trust clear, description can give but little idea of the effect produced by this very surprising trick. First, saw it exhibited by a man calling himself Le Duc, at Stockholm, Sweden, some twenty five years ago, and at that time, although I knew considerable about magic, it completely mystified me.—Henry Holt in Harper's Young People.

KNOWING THE NAILS.—The most painful of the diseases of the nails is caused by the improper manner of cutting the nail (generally of the great toe), and then wearing a short, badly-made shoe. The nail, when cut, grows too long and rather wide at the corners, is trimmed around the corner, which gives temporary relief. But it then begins to grow wider in the side where it was cut off, and as the nail grows, it presses against the corner the nail comes into the raw flesh, which becomes exceedingly tender and irritable. To treat ingrowing nails, proceed as follows: Heat the effort by dipping the nail into a solution of tincture of iron. It is found in the drug stores in a liquid form, which sometimes in a glass jar. There is immediately a moderate sensation of pain or burning. In a few minutes the tender surface is felt to be dried up, tanned or mummified, and it ceases to be painful. The patient who could not before put his foot to the floor now finds that he can walk without pain. By permitting the hardened, woodlike flesh to remain three or four weeks, the nail may be removed by soaking the foot in warm water. By wearing shoes of a reasonably good size and shape, all future troubles will be avoided.

SOME CURIOUS CALCULATIONS.—A rapid penman can write thirty words in a minute. To do this he must draw his pen through the space of a foot, sixteen and a half feet. In forty minutes his pen travels a furlong. We make, on an average, sixteen curves or turns of the pen in writing each word. Writing thirty words in a minute, one must make 480 turns to each minute; in an hour 28,800; in a day of only five hours, 144,000; in a year of 300 such days, 43,200,000. The man, therefore, who made 1,000,000 strokes with his pen in a year, is all remarkable. Many men—newspaper writers for instance—make 4,000,000. Here we have, in the aggregate, a mark 300 miles long to be traced on paper by such a writer in a year.

EVERY WOMAN who has been obliged to spend half a dozen times during the winter cleaning the mica in coal stoves, usually by taking them out and washing in soap-suds, will rejoice to know that there is an easier method of cleaning them, and that there is no need of taking them out or to let the fire burn low in order to do it successfully. Take a little vinegar and water and wash the mica carefully with a soft cloth; the acid removes the soot and, if a little pains is taken to thoroughly clean the corners and wipe it dry, the mica will look as good as new. If the stove is very hot, tie the cloth to a stick and so escape the danger of burning your hand.—N. Y. Post.

STRENGTHENING CORNS.—A. C. who has tried it, is authority for the following: Take one-fourth cup of strong vinegar, crumb finely into it some bread. Let stand half an hour, or until it softens into a good paste. Then apply, after retiring at night. In the morning the soreness will be gone, and the corn can be picked out. If the corn is a very obstinate one, it may require two or more applications to effect a cure. Scientific American.

It is said that rot in potatoes after they have been stored in the cellar can be effectually stopped by getting them out and scattering some air slacked lime over them.

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Take him to the top of a very steep piece of ground, stand his hind feet down the slope, throw the bridle reins over his neck, place yourself in front, and take hold of them on each side.

PEAR BEARING

It has often been said by those in a position to know that more money can be made from an acre of ground planted in choice fruit trees than out of almost any other crop.

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CLIPPINGS FOR THE CURIOUS

Gunmen used in the siege of Saragossa in 1808.

Artisan well of Lillers has been in constant flow ever since 1925.

Buffaloes in Dakota scratch their post-nasal foramen against the telegraph poles so vigorously that much inconvenience is caused to telegraph operators.

The obscure German town of Kilmberg-Main has become so rich from a large interest on a loan that not only are there no taxes, but every burgler is presented at Christmas with twenty-five dollars.

Japan, in honor of a deity having the head of a dog, the different streets of each town contribute to the maintenance of a certain number of dogs; they have their lodgings, and persons are especially appointed to take care of them.

An early account of New York, published in 1708, speaks of Dutch-belt mills for sawing timber, one of which would do more work in an hour than 50 men in two days.

The machine-made nail may be said to be of comparatively recent date when the antiquity of the handicraft art of nail-making is considered.

A correspondent of the London Globe says that it is the custom of the fishermen of Ceylon to whistle for their bait.

A CANARY BIRD STORY.—The story of the first introduction of canary birds into California is told thus: In 1835, Charles and Henry Reiche, two young Germans, having little less than the practical education that seems to be the rule among young Germans, were bird peddlers in San Francisco.

A BREATH OF FIRE.—Dr. J. C. Woodman, of Paw Paw, Mich., contributes the following interesting, though incredible, observations: I have a singular phenomenon in the shape of a young man living here, that I have studied with much interest, and I am satisfied that his peculiar power demonstrates that electricity is the nervous fluid of the human system.

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