
IT was the last evening of the engagement of Alcorez, the French juggler, at the Elysium Music hall, and the house was crammed. The prestidigitator is not always a popular "turn;" he lacks piquancy and excitement, and very often originality; but Alcorez had got hold of one or two almost startling feats which current rumor gave him the credit of perilously stealing from Thibet. At all events his name on the bill was a feature, and he always took well.

The conjurer himself stood at the bar waiting his call, and drank sparingly with his admirers. He was in good spirits that night, for on the following week he was to start on a big American tour which was almost certain to result in further engagements and assure his future.

On the stage the Sisters de Leari were singing the third and last encore verse of their great success, "We Get There All the Same." At that early period they dressed as their grandmother. Thirty years later they will make up as nearly as possible like their grandchildren. Art demands such sacrifices from its votaries.

Alcorez made his final adieus and went behind to his dressing room. The Sisters de Leari gave place to a low comedian, then the curtain went up on Alcorez's table and appliances, his name blazoned in letters of gold upon a black background.

At different times and in all places there are sympathetic audiences and exacting audiences. Why, and what controls them, none can say. Simply they are there and have to be allowed for. As the juggler bowed, his experienced eye took in the sea of faces, and he smiled.

He generally began with a very simple trick that is as easy as it looks impossible, and older than the necromancers. He would borrow a watch, get a stranger from among the audience to come upon the stage and hold it, and then cause it to disappear and be found in someone else's possession. It is very absurd when you see how it is done, but it is capable of endless variations, and can always be made to raise a laugh, which is the conjurer's first object.

To-night Alcorez borrowed the watch. Almost before he had made the request a man from the front row of stalls stepped upon the stage to assist him. This alacrity was so unusual that Alcorez looked at the man curiously, and wondered that the face seemed so familiar to him. A word from the audience caught the juggler's ear and he turned quickly to the stranger.

"Sir, are you my friend, my accomplice, my servant? A gentleman in the audience distrusts me. Is it so?"

"Certainly not," said the stranger.

"Have you ever assisted me before and become familiar with my ways?" continued the conjurer.

There was just the suggestion of a pause, but the "no" was firm and emphatic, and Alcorez proceeded.

Generally it was easy to reduce the assistant to the necessary state of confusion at a very early stage, but the stranger did not indulge in any of the humorisms by which the volunteers lay themselves open. Alcorez, a little puzzled, placed the watch in a handkerchief, gave the ends to a stranger to hold, and crossed the stage.

There was still an almost unfailing ruse. Few men—those accustomed to powder least of all—can face a gun or a pistol without a tremor. This gives the conjurer a double advantage; by means of a weapon he can bring a too observant assistant into

GAVE A LONG, GURGLING SIGH.

such a condition of nervousness that he is unable to proceed, and he can, for a moment, startle a whole audience out of watchfulness by the sudden flash and report. Alcorez picked up a glittering revolver, raised it quickly, and drew the sight dead on the other's face.

"Are you ready?" he called sharply.

"Quite," unflinchingly replied the stranger.

Alcorez lowered the weapon.

"The danger is small," he said, with a lightness he was far from feeling at that moment, "but I like not to take a fellow creature unprepared. But then"—with professional facetiousness—"I have killed only one man as yet."

"There's luck in even numbers," said the other quietly. "Perhaps I shall be the second."

Alcorez shrugged his shoulders. After all, it mattered little. He could create a diversion and make the pass afterward.

He took up the revolver again, judged the sight well above the head, and fired.

The effect was instantaneous. The stranger pressed his hand to his forehead, gave a long, gurgling sigh, and sank down on the boards, while from the hall came the shrieks of women and the horrified shouts and threats of men as they surged from the doors and the stage.

Alcorez stood for a moment stupefied. In that short second a dozen possibilities whirled around one dull central fact—irretrievable ruin. Possibly he had mixed his cartridges; perhaps, even, some one had tampered with his pistol. Ah! after all the poltroon might have only fainted. He rushed across, bent down, and grew ghastly as he saw a red fresh streak on the fallen man's brow. Theatrical to the last, he faced the raging crowd and, tearing open his shirt, placed the weapon to his own heart and fired. A renewed burst of shrieks and cries greeted this. He neither fell nor moved, but stood with uplifted hands as if mutely calling on heaven to witness his innocence.

They carried the dying man into a dressing room and placed him on a couch, while Alcorez followed, sickly with terror and agitated beyond words. The manager was there already. "See if there is a doctor here," he said briefly to an attendant.

"There is no need," said the stranger suddenly, as he rose from the couch and stood firm. "I was not hurt." He took a cloth, wiped his forehead clean, and showed his hand smeared with fresh red paint.

There was a hushed pause, broken by the sound of Alcorez falling heavily to the ground. From the little group of men came a word:

"Coward!"

"Perhaps," said the stranger, unmoved, "but listen. Once before—months ago—I stepped upon the stage to assist that man. Never mind why. I went to help him, that is enough. He repaid me by making me a laughing stock for all present. As it happened, it involved more than either he or I knew at the time. I have taken the only means I could of humiliating him. Ask him how it feels. Now we are quits." And before anyone could move he passed out of the room and was gone.

He was more than quits. Alcorez's name appeared on the bills no more. His nerve was completely gone, and from that night his hand never again knew its cunning.

### Seizing the Opportunity.

Lord Coleridge sprang into eminence as a lawyer by adroitly seizing a simple incident while he was pleading the cause of a man on trial for murder. In the course of his long argument, a candle in the jury box flickered and went out, leaving the court room in darkness. He stopped speaking, and the silence in court for a moment was oppressive. The usher replaced the light, and Coleridge resumed his address. "Gentlemen of the jury, you have a solemn duty, a very solemn duty to discharge. The life of the prisoner at the bar is in your hands. You can take it—by a word. You can extinguish that life as the candle by your side was extinguished a moment ago. But it is not in your power, it is not in the power of any of us—of any one in this court or out of it—to restore that life, when once taken, as that light has been restored." The tone in which the words were spoken, the cadence of the voice, and the action of the orator, with the inspiration of the scene and the hour, produced a thrilling effect. The jury acquitted the prisoner, and Coleridge's fortune was made.—Argonaut.

### Heroic Measures.

One of our neighbors, an unusually learned clergyman, writes James Payne, was much given to Greek quotations. I was learning Greek at that time, and those sonorous lines of his to which the ladies listened with reverent awe, irritated me extremely. One of them asked me once, in a hushed whisper, the translation of these quotations. I gave her to understand, with an opportune blush, that it was scarcely meet for a lady's ear. "Good heavens!" she cried, "you don't mean to say—" "Pray, don't quote me in the matter," I put in pleadingly; "but I really—no, I really couldn't tell you," which was quite true. She went away and told all her lady friends that Mr. C—— indulged in quotations which were such that could not be translated to modest ears. It injured his character for a long time, but cured him of a very bad habit. It was my first appearance in the role of a public benefactor.

### Better Than Herbs.

Anxious Mother—There is a certain very eligible young man that I want my daughter to fall in love with. Do you deal in love philters?

Modern Magician—No, madam; but I can bring the match about in another way.

"Oh, thank you. What shall I do?

"Shut her up in a boarding school for a year and then arrange your plans so that this youth will be the first man she meets after she gets out."—N. Y. Weekly.

### Patriotism.

Lisbeth—I hear you have broken with Ambrose. What was the matter?

Jeannette—We fell out about literature. Ambrose is such a horrid Anglomaniac. He persists that Shakespeare is funnier than Bill Nye.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

### A Considerate Employer.

Publisher—You look lame. Been kicked out much?

Book Agent—'Bout forty times.

Publisher, kindly—Well, leave your encyclopedia here, and canvass with this sample bible until your back gets well.—N. Y. Weekly.

# SOME BRIGHT SMILES.

### SCINTILLATIONS OF WIT AND HUMOR.

**A Quarter of an Hour With The Humorists—Funny Things Gleaned From Bright Exchanges—Laughable Sayings.**

Castleton—Hello, old man, what's your face swelled up so for? Toothache?

Clubberly (groaning)—I should say so. Haven't had any peace for a week. You see, it's a hollow tooth, and the top broke off the other day, and I've had an awful time with it.

Castleton—Well, there's only one thing to do. You must have it out. Know of a good dentist?

Clubberly—No, do you?

Castleton—You bet! I know just the fellow. Back tooth?

Clubberly—Yes. Say, can I take gas?

Castleton—No, sir! He wouldn't give it to you, I know. Very particular. Heart must be exceptionally strong. Right side?

Castleton—Yes.

Clubberly—Just like mine. It will take about fifteen or twenty minutes to pull that tooth, old fellow.

Castleton (turning pale)—What! As long as that?

Clubberly (cheerfully)—Yes, sir. You see, he has first got to prepare the tooth; that is, he probes around the roots with an instrument to loosen it up.

Castleton—He does, does he?

Clubberly—Oh, yes. The prongs will be imbedded in the jaw bone, a piece of which usually comes out anyway, but he tries to avoid this. Oh, he's a good man. He's the kind of a man that never gives up. If that tooth of yours should break off still more at the first pull, he would keep right at it. He may have to take it out in two or three pieces, old fellow.

Castleton—Is he far from here?

Clubberly—Oh, no. Right around the corner.

Castleton—All right. But I want to step into a drug store first.

Clubberly—What for?

Castleton—I thought before I went around to that dentist of yours, old man, that I would take a good stiff dose of prussic acid.

—Tom Mason, in Harper's Bazar.

### A Young Man With an Idea.

—Life.

### Her Maiden Fears.

"George!"

There was an anxiety—just a little of it—in the girl's tone.

"What is it, love?"

"I read something in the paper today that alarmed me."

"What was it?"

"Niagara Falls is wearing away at the rate of more than twelve inches a year; and in the course of some hundreds of years it will be gone entirely."

"What of that?"

"You know it is such a delightful place for honeymoon trips.'

"Yes."

"I had set my heart on going there on our own bridal tour."

"Y-e-es?"

"We have been engaged four years now."

"About that length of time."

She laid her head on his shoulder and sobbed.

"In that time—boo-hoo! Fully fifty inches of the Falls have been worn away—boo-hoo!—and I'm afraid they'll be all gone before—before—Oh, dear! what am I saying?"

"Never mind love,'" said George, tenderly, as he kissed her cheeks. "Don't cry. We'll go before the Falls are worn away. How would next June suit?"

"That will do nicely, sweetheart."

And she was happy again.—Puck.

### Slaves of Fashion.

Far away towards the setting sun where the light of enterprise burns intensely by day and by night, the head of the family was engaged with his second plate of pancakes.

"My dear," he observed, "I have some news for you."

The goddess of the household leaned forward, in an attitude of attention.

"Yes," the husband proceeded, "the man who lives in that brick house around the corner is known to be the party who robbed the fast express of $100,000."

The lady gasped.

"Well," she said, fretfully, "I suppose I'll have to call on them now; but I just hate to. These newly-rich people put on such insufferable airs."—Puck.

### A Cigar Case.

### Always a Chance.

"You are almost a man. You ought not to go about asking people for help when you are able to earn a living by working for it. Can't you find a job of any kind?"

"Yes'm; I was offered a job the other day, but I didn't think the pay was big enough. All they would give me was $4 a week."

"You could have got $4 a week?"

"Yes'm."

"Well, that's a great deal better than nothing. If you could earn as much as that at the beginning and stick to your work faithfully you would be certain to get a raise some day wouldn't you?"

"Yes'm, I guess so. It was in a dynamite factory."—Chicago Tribune.

### The Slow Lover.

He had reached out as if he would catch hold of her, and she eluded his grasp. Again he made an equally feeble attempt and again she eluded him. Once more he made a feeble attempt, and she had no difficulty in escaping. This time she became indignant, almost angry.

"What do you mean, sir," she exclaimed, "by thus trying to kiss me?"

"I—I—I presume," he hesitated, "that I meant to kiss you."

She drew herself up proudly, then stepped near him and gazed down on him defiantly.

"Well," she said emphatically, "why in heaven's name don't you do it?"—Detroit Free Press.

### An Unfortunate Comparison.

"I liked your sermon very well, Dr. Fourthly," said a member of the congregation at the close of his service, "all but that part of it in which you spoke of heaven as consisting of several entirely distinct heavens, one above the other."

"What is you objection to that?" asked the Rev. Dr. Fourthly. "It is clearly taught in the Bible."

"Perhaps it is," rejoined the other dubiously, "but it seems so much like living in a South Side flat."—Chicago Tribune.

### Cloud Over the Honeymoon.

It was in the honeymoon, and she had adopted the bridal habit of putting a terminal "y" to her pretty words. So when her fond and admiring husband—who posed as a strictly temperate man—stood before her with a speck of dust on his coat, she said:

"Hubby, your best coat-y needs the vigorous use of a little whisk-y."

"Not half as much as I do," gurgled the thirsty sufferer, and an awful suspicion dropped in their midst like a chunk of lead.—Detroit Free Press.

### Too Much of a Strain.

Mr. Philanthro—My poor man, how did you lose your eyesight?

Billy Bluegog—In the Government service, yer honor.

Mr. Philanthro—In what branch were you working?

Billie Bluegog—I was engaged in lookin' fer marks of bullet wounds in pension applicants.

### Her Debut.

First Girl—When are you "coming out?"

Second Girl—Just as soon as I grow into mamma's dresses.

### Why She Read It.

Jack Dashing—Isn't that novel rather of the flesh, fleshy?

Penelope—Yes, but you know I'm a carnivorous reader.

### Hopeless.

Mills—What does Maxence do for a living?

Dills—His landlady and anybody else he can lay his hands on.

"Nothing New Under the Sun."

### They Got It.

Foggs—I think the police deserve a lot of credit.

Boggs—What for—drinks?

# FOR THE FAIR SEX.

### INTERESTING CHAT FOR THE WOMEN.

**Some Sound Sense About the Mother's Duty—Her Velvet Cloak—Out of Remnants—The Laws of Ireland—Household Hints.**

To keep one's mind on the weary round of household tasks all day long is ruinous to the temper and more wearing to the health than any amount of bodily labor. The Chautauqua course of reading comes to your very door and asks you to walk in its ways, and most inviting paths they are in which to tread, bringing a boundless store of information and leading you to look up into the blue heavens and down into the depths of the sea and out into God's world about you. When once one becomes interested in this or any similar course of reading, the question, "Is life worth living?" answers itself.

To those who object that all this takes time I would reply, so does everything that is worth doing at all. Yet when we really desire to accomplish anything, can we not always make or take the time to do it? A housewife and mother can, if she will, do all her own work, be dressmaker and seamstress, and send the boys to school, and sew on the father's buttons and yet not suffer her mind to rust; can keep up her music, attend lectures, belong to amagazine club and feel herself up with the times and as useful as anybody; maybe she can even join a grange and be a valuable working member. Of course to do all this some things must be given up; but to gain such a reward is worth the sacrifice of even several pies a week, or some other as great deprivation; nor will the farmer's family be the worse for it. It is not impossible to write or read while dinner is cooking and may be the essay will gain spice from the very surroundings. Singing and washing of dishes go well together and the former will neutralize the discouragement produced by the sight of a large number of the latter a waiting to be attended to A woman's ingenuity will compass almost anything she may undertake. I have in mind a sitting room in one corner of which stands the sewing machine, in another the organ and in a third an old secretary, at which the mistress of the house has passed many happy moments when not making music on either of the other two instruments, both of which show signs of daily use. To combine housework with self-culture does not take much time, nor much money, nor a teacher. It only requires a love of knowledge and a determination to acquire it. All the rest will come of itself.

And now, if the question arise, what effect will all this have upon the boys? hear the answer, tried and tested by actual experience. The home is the child's first school, and upon the atmosphere which surrounds him from infancy depends his future usefulness. This is true no less of his mental than of his moral character. In the homes of many farmers there is absolutely no reading matter, such, and during the few hours spent in the schoolroom, it is impossible for the teacher to counteract that dampening, depressing, narrowing influence which throws a wet blanket on the mind and keeps the boy stupid in spite of himself. But let him feel that all at home are interested in his progress, the father knows where he is in arithmetic and is ready to help him with a hard example, and mother is just ahead of him in history and can tell him the date which he has forgotten, and ten times out of a dozen he will take to his books without urging and absorb knowledge without knowing it. If mamma writes at a desk in one corner, little Johnny will tease for a desk in the other, and will want pencils and paper and all complete, and, before going to school at all, will have acquired the rudiments of a good education, and also a taste for books, which will go with him through life and will keep him out of bad company, will show him a profitable manner in which to spend his evenings, and help him in a thousand ways.

So mothers, if you wish to throw around your children a safeguard which shall introduce them into cultured society, and protect them from evil, do your best to make the home atmosphere favorable to their mental development, and such as shall encourage habits of reading and study. And to this end, make the most of yourselves. Read, read, read anything rather than nothing; but best of all, adopt some systematic course, whatever commends itself to your judgment, and, depend upon it, not only the boys and girls, but father himself, will fall into line, and verily you shall reap your own reward.—Alice M. Walker in The Outlook.

### A Magnetic Woman.

Mrs. H. R. Ludwig of Montague, Sussex county, N. J., possesses a gift of magnetism which gives her wonderful control over animals, birds, reptiles and insects. The most vicious horses, which are utterly unmanageable by any one else, become perfectly tractable and obedient under her voice and touch. Dogs, cats and other domestic animals, whether belonging to her or to others, seem to understand every word she speaks, and they do the most astonishing things at her order. Shy, suspicious and unapproachable as the wild fox is, he will not only not fly at the approach of Mrs. Ludwig, but will come to her at a word of command. Wild birds follow her when she walks about her farm, and frequently will not be driven away by her. One particular robin is so infatuated with her that it hovers about her house continually, although Mrs. Ludwig has taken it far away several times and tried to frighten it into leaving her. This lady says that birds and beasts have a language and that she understands it instinctively. It used to be said of Henry Thoreau of Walden that he would put his hand into a running stream and the fishes would come up to it letting him stroke them.—New York Sun.

### Her Velvet Cloak.

The woman who cannot afford a velvet frock or a velvet wrap this winter should decide to go into retreat. That is the only way in which she can escape heart-burning and jealousy. If she mingles with the velvet-robed throng which will crowd the streets this autumn, and is herself clad in mere broadcloth, she will be full of hatred, envy and malace.

The velvet capes are particularly gorgeous affairs. They sparkle with iridescent beads; they flutter with lace and are made soft with fur. They are most daring in color. Rich claret color, emerald, and olive-green and brown dashed with yellow, will make the thoroughfares gay. The velvet coats go a step further and combine two colors. One particularly effective coat was of dark green with a stuff collarette of lighter shade. The sleeves were dark blue. Down the front heavy cream lace was appliqued, and two rows of sable gave a boa effect. The

same design of lace and fur trimmed the bottom of the jacket and the sleeves. The remarkable wrap was saved from seeming like a scrap-bag combination by the extreme beauty and richness of its component parts. Such lace and velvet never go into scrap bags.

### Out of Remnants.

It was, according to the wearer's admiring friends, a most beautiful bodice. It was of pale blue crepe. The sleeves were puffed so as to form a sort of cascade to the elbow. The puffs were divided by bands of cream insertion. Van Dyke points of lace extended from the collar to the waist line, the narrow points giving a tapering effect to the wearer's plump figure. A stock collar of heliotrope velvet finished the bodice.

When it has been sufficiently admired the young woman who wore it made the encouraging statement that her last winter's ball gown, a scrap of

velvet and lace saved from three seasons before, were the material used. Whereupon all the others departed vowing to have lovely bodices before the week was over.

### Household Hints.

Flower scissors in steel or silver are now included in a set of scissors.

The potato masher made of wood answers the purpose very well, but it is apt to get soggy, the moisture penetrating the wood, and in the course of time rendering it unpleasant to use. A new masher made of porcelain with a wooden handle has been introduced lately.

The ultra fashionable chafing dish outfit is becoming as expensive as that for a 5 o'clock tea. The latest necessity for it is an alcohol flagon. These flagons which are tall and graceful, have a handle at one side and on the other a spout that makes it possible to fill the lamp conveniently.

Linen embroidery must be very lightly starched and made as smooth as possible when drying, and before ironing must be dampened down until every thread is limp but not wet. It should be laid on a soft, thick ironing cloth and ironed on the wrong side, pressing the work so that it will have a beautiful raised appearance when dry.

A grease eradicator is one of the articles that every housewife likes to have around. Here is one which is said to have made the fortune of one man before the secret was given to the world: Two ounces of ammonia, 1 ounce of castile soap shavings, one quart of salt water, one teaspoonful of salt-peter. Stew them up and—there you are.—Washington Star.

There are two or three common-sense rules that would save a would-be entertainer of heartache if only heeded. The sensible housekeeper never tries to make her dinners and teas more elaborate than her circumstances would consistently permit. It is always a source of annoyance to attempt to do things that are beyond the limitations of your cook or yourself.

Do not let any dish come on the table too often. The principal reason for which the dessert course is often looked upon as a tedious one is that it is generally so monotonous. The little dish filled day after day with the same kind of crystallized fruit, for instance, fully justifies the remark of a facetious host, who, on handing it to his neighbor, assured her that "it had been dusted.