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THE MAGIC ART.
Some Remarkable Stories of Illusions and Some Unexplained Tricks.
A Man His Own Double—Changing Before the Eyes of Many People.

PHILADELPHIA TIMES.
"It's rather a curious fact," said a gentleman and unprofessional prestidigitator, "that some of the shows and circuses that use so many adjectives in describing what they have got do not bring to this country a really fine troupe of magicians. It may be possible that they will not come, but it certainly would be a paying investment, as the people of the United States have no adequate idea of the tricks that are executed by some of the jugglers of the east. We are occasionally doled with the talking head and the accompanying looking-glass or automatic chess-player that anybody with any sense at all knows must contain a dwarf, but beyond these we have not seen a master-piece of the black art."

AN ILLUSION.
"As an example," said the speaker, "I direct your eyes upon my thumb," and this member was held up in the air within a foot of the listener's face.

ANOTHER ILLUSION.
"The next trick was equally mystical. All the party now stepped and moved about. In a few minutes they ceased and we observed that one was missing, though no one saw him go. A moment after the whirling was repeated and another was found to have disappeared, and so on until fifteen minutes past the hour was seen. More lights being given, a noise was heard at the door, and upon some one going to it, there stood the mystic five clamoring for admission. That ended the performance for the night, and I sat up the rest of it, or well into the morning trying to figure out how it was done.

THE PHASOS SERPENTS.
"It was this. You remember the old Phasos serpents that were much in vogue some years ago. They looked like vipers, but when they were struck they began to grow and required out to snakes six or ten inches long. I had a lot of these made of a large size, so that when they developed they were of the exact size of my fingers and of the same color, which was then a dark brown. I had little cups on the end of each finger to conceal them, and when I tried the trick, which was in the evening in the public room, I stepped over to the candle that stood on the floor and deliberately but my fingers into the flame. This caused a stir among all assembled, as they expected to see them burn, but I said as heat made the plants grow, so it would my fingers. Then each finger began to lengthen, slowly squirming out, inch by inch, crossing each other and twisting in the mysterious way these objects do, until finally they were all fully ten inches long, presenting such a horrible appearance that the entire party started back and a number of the natives left the room. Seeing that I was going too fast to last, by a quick movement I knelt on my knees and made my fingers assume their natural appearance. To say the natives were astonished hardly expresses it. They begged for the secret, and before I left I exchanged it for the trick I showed you on the thumb nail."

THE MAGICIANS AT WORK.
"After I had finished the doors were closed and only those admitted who paid a regular admittance fee—a small sum—and soon the apartment being filled the magicians began their performance. The audience sat on the floor about the table, so they had no way of concealing themselves or of hiding anything. At their request I examined them and satisfied myself that they had nothing about them. Then one of the women stepped into the enclosure, the rest remaining behind the spectators, who formed a close ring about her. The light was now shined down a little and in a moment the woman's face began to be illumined by a ghastly light that extended quickly over her whole body. She then began to move round and round, uttering a low, murmuring sound the while, gradually quickening the pace until she was whirling about like a top. A moment of this the light that had shined upon her seemed to be whirled off her by the clouds it began to assume human form. We saw the arms, hands and legs all moulded, and finally a face and head-gear. She next called for a light, and the candles being relighted, there stood an utter stranger, a native seemingly evolved out of cloudland. He stepped forward and grasped me by the hand, his hands were moist, as if with perspiration, and he was a very healthy spirit. After he had talked and drank a glass of rack he took his place beside the woman again and began to whirl about."

THE FADING FIGURE.
"The lights were dimmed, but not so that we could not see, and in a few moments the figure began to fade, soon assuming the appearance of a pillar of light and then attaching itself to the woman and seemingly being absorbed by her. All this was done in a very

BOOKS OF THE OPERA.
The History of Librettos, and How They are Sold in Theaters.
San Francisco Examiner.

Without doubt the libretto is one of the boons of modern society. To Frederick Rullman, a native of Alsace-Lorraine, who first set foot in America when six years of age, belongs the credit of issuing the first opera book fully translated into English that were ever presented to the American public. To-day he is worth fully \$30,000 and is the proprietor of the only libretto house in the world. The gentleman arrived in this city a few days ago and is a hale and hearty gentleman 66 years of age, whose only trouble is a disabled foot.

Rullman's theatrical career began as an errand boy for the old Pathe theater, New York. He published the first libretto thirty-eight years ago for the Alton combination, which was then playing at the Astor Place opera house. The sale of books was very large, and the idea met with such favor Rullman immediately began to systematically issue them. From the first it was deared that but twenty-five cents should be charged for the books. From the manager of every company which was to take out a stock of books an iron-clad contract was secured, and to Rullman was handed the only score as sung by that company. This was to be his exclusive right. An agent was appointed to charge the agents for the privilege as high as \$5,000 has frequently been paid for a season of 100 tickets. Every week each agent transmits by mail an account of the business, and when in need of more stock telegraphs to the New York office and receives by express his supplies.

In 1855 that Max Maretzek's opera company produced for the first time in America, at Boston, the tuncful "Il Trovatore." Rullman was present in person and conducted the sale of librettos. The sale was enormous, every book being disposed of, and the New Yorker realizing that some lively work was to be performed if he could get any. In the morning the following night a dispatch to New York ordered a printing house to run their presses to run all night; another to the binderies to take the wet sheets from the hands of the printer and allow nothing to interfere with having the books ready for shipment early in the morning. The following evening saw the Rullman to take the book to the Bostonians. The largest sale of books which has ever been made was during the first production of Norma in New York, when 4,000 librettos were disposed of, and 2,800 were sold on the occasion of the initial presentation of the Huguenots. The heaviest price ever paid for a high quality libretto was for the Rullman to take the book to the Bostonians. The largest sale of books which has ever been made was during the first production of Norma in New York, when 4,000 librettos were disposed of, and 2,800 were sold on the occasion of the initial presentation of the Huguenots. The heaviest price ever paid for a high quality libretto was for the Rullman to take the book to the Bostonians.

HOUSEKEEPERS that fail to acquaint themselves with the value of JAMES SWIFT'S SPECIFIC for the kitchen and laundry deprive themselves of the most convenient and useful article of the age.
Skating Rink, Beware.
Albany, N. Y., Special.

Mr. Murphy's skating rink bill was considered by the senate this afternoon and evening. It provides that during school hours children shall not be allowed to visit rinks unless attended by parents or guardians; that children under 16 years of age unattended shall not be allowed in rinks after 9 o'clock in the evening, and that children shall not be allowed to give skating exhibitions. When it was considered yesterday it was made to apply to cities of the state having more than 50,000 inhabitants. Murdock read a letter from Elbridge T. Gerry and others in support of the bill.

"It is one of the best bills of the session, as it respects a growing vice, and it must finally put an end to the cities of the state," said Senator Daggett.
"It will conduce more to the welfare of the common schools than any measure of the session," remarked Senator Robinson.
"It is similar to the old blue laws which it took 100 years to throw off," was the opinion of senator Titus.
"It is a good bill. In my district there is one of these rinks which is little better than a recruiting place for evil houses. I know of ten happy homes which have been ruined," commented Senator Cullen.

"Cullen only speaks for New York. Skating rinks outside that city are great nuisances. They have weakened the mind and body of the youth, and have other demoralizing amusements," answered Mr. Titus.
"The saloons are the only ones who who complain of skating-rink, because young men who used to spend their evenings at the rinks with their sisters and cousins, and neighbors' daughters," interposed Mr. Low.
"In Syracuse skating rinks are an injury to the morals of children. Flirting and coquetry and similar blandishments are practiced there. Skaters put their arms around one another in ways that are demoralizing," said Mr. McCarthy.
At this point the senate took a recess until evening. At the evening session the consideration of the skating-rink bill was laid over till to-morrow, at the request of its introducer, Senator Murphy. Its passage in the senate is conceded.

NOT APRIL FOOLS.
Mr. J. Morrison, Bellefonte, Penn., who purchased for his daughter Miss L. J. Morrison, and Mr. J. A. Briscoe, Vinland, Ind., each of whom held one-half of Ticket No. 14338 in the Original "Little Havana," (Gold & Co.), decided by Royal Lottery drawn at Havana, Cuba, April 1st. This number was drawn with the highest prize \$60,000, and agreed with the one drawing 100,000 Picos in the Royal. They have already been notified by the General Agent, Shuman Company 1212 Broadway N. Y. City, of their good fortune, and instructed to send tickets, which are payable without deduction, for collection, through any bank, banking or Commercial, House or Express Company. The prompt payment of these obligations on presentation, at any time after arrival of steamer bringing the Official List from Havana, will convince these gentlemen that they have not been fooled in their investment of a dollar in an item of chance, even if it was drawn on All-Fool's day.

A Boston Game of Poker.
Chicago Kambler.
The intellectual game of draw-poker has taken a firm hold on the dwellers in cultured Boston and the teachings of the Concord school of philosophy are for a moment forgotten. Our special correspondent writes us that he recently overheard several daughters of the Athens of America indulging in this pleasant pastime, when the following dialogue ensued: Anastasia—"Is't my aunt?" Clytemestra—"I'll bestirre your destitute of sight dead." Prosper—"Well, dear young card girl, will you remain a Patrick?" Millicent—"Well, I'll wager a half acre of checks." Anastasia—"I behold you and elevate you five." Prosper—"I fear that you are feling to possess more than you really have, but, nevertheless, dear, I call you." Anastasia—"I have a homogeneous trio of aces."—"And a Robert appended flush." Prosper—"Whille I hold a quartet of knaves." Millicent—"Well, cheer, then you take the ceramics."

A Fastng Girl.
In Cincinnati a sixteen-year-old girl recently died of a fast of fifty-two days. She had been attacked by some thing like paralysis, which rendered it impossible for her to take nourishment. The human system cannot thrive without good food and good ability to digest it. Weak and impaired digestion is rectified by Brown's Iron Bitters—better than any other tonic in the world. Mr. J. E. Froberg, Pomroy, Iowa, says: "I used Brown's Iron Bitters for dyspepsia and poor appetite, completely cured me." It will cure you.

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OMAHA!
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The remarkable growth of Omaha during the last few years is a matter of great astonishment to those who pay an occasional visit to this growing city. The development of the Stock Yards—the necessity of the Belt Line Road—the finely paved streets—the hundreds of new residences and costly business blocks, with the population of our city more than doubled in the last five years. All this is a great surprise to visitors and is the admiration of our citizens. This rapid growth, the business activity, and the many substantial improvements made in every department of Omaha real estate, and every investor has made a handsome profit.

Since the Wall Street panic, May, with the subsequent cry of hard times, there has been less demand from speculators, but a fair demand from investors seeking homes. This latter class are taking advantage of low prices in building material and are securing their homes at much less cost than will be possible a year hence. Speculators, too, can buy real estate's cheaper now and ought to take advantage of present prices for future profit.

The next few years promises greatest developments in Omaha than the past five years, which have been as good as we could reasonably desire. New manufacturing establishments and large jobbing houses are added almost weekly, and all add to the prosperity of Omaha.

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