

A CONJURER AT HOME. TRICKS OF LEGERDEMAIN.

A writer in Belgravia describes a visit to the "magician" Hermann, at his private residence near London...

The dinner passed off handsomely; the viands were of the best in the season; the wine was of the choicest; conversation was brisk, if not brilliant...

Herr Hermann, who was seated at the head of the table, had Skeptic placed at his right hand. This collocation, which was supposed to be accidental...

The conversation turned upon prestidigitators and their various feats of legerdemain. Herr Hermann—who, having passed many years in America...

TRICKS WITH CARDS.

Presently Herr Hermann rings the bell, and tells the man-servant, who answers it, to fetch some cards. The man retired, and came back with two packs of cards...

He took the cards in his hands, "There are eight of you," he said. "Each one has drawn a card and replaced it; and the eight cards, if you have well shuffled them, should be dispersed through the pack..."

"Trick No. 2 was even more astonishing and incomprehensible. "You know," said Herr Hermann, addressing the whole party, after some discussion had gone on about the sleight-of-hand performance...

"That, indeed, would be a trick above natural magic," I exclaimed. Skeptic filled his glass and winked at his neighbor, as who should say, "I know all about it..."

"Now, each of you two gentlemen," he went on, speaking to a two right-hand guests, "think of a card; I do not ask you to touch one..."

"The card," he said, "one of you thought of is there; the card the other thought of is absent." The gentlemen searched. One of the cards selected was not to be seen—the other was found. "So far so good," exclaimed Herr Hermann...

"The missing card reappears, and the card thought of that was present is not to be found. Search! And such was the case. The cards had come and gone at the bidding of the magician, who seemed to exercise a mental rather than a physical influence over them. Wonder was expressed in every countenance...

A moment's consideration of this trick must satisfy everybody of its extreme cleverness and incomprehensibility. The only possible solution that offers itself is in the supposition that the conjurer, by some process of his own, was enabled to follow the eyes of the gentlemen in their direction to the cards spread on the table...

Knowing the cards of course an expert practitioner would find no difficulty in manipulating them as he pleased; and getting rid of a card and returning it to the pack, contrived with whatever rapidity, is no extraordinary feat of legerdemain.

(To be continued.)

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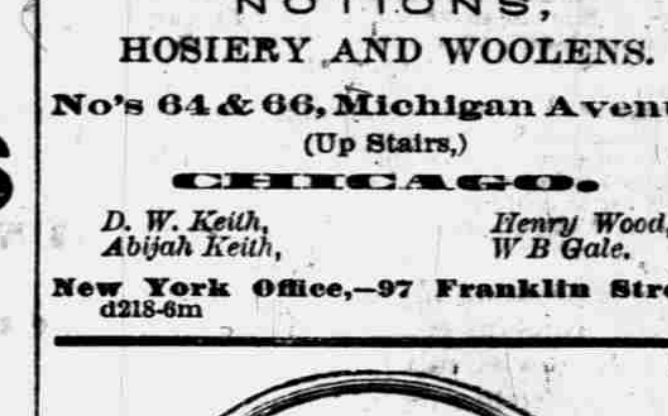
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