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THE ANSWER OF THE GARDENER. He went, at sunset, on his rounds. (Oh, but the child was sweet to see. The one who in the orchard played.) He called: "Was planted you a tree. The boy looked at it for a while. Then at the radiant wicker below. And said, with wonder in his smile: "Why don't you put the leaves on, though?"

IN TWO HALVES. THE STORY OF A DIVIDED BANK NOTE. THE FIRST HALF.

Wet and dreary. It is midwinter; the scene is Kirkington, on the London and North-western; the time one-quarter to eleven; just for the night mail has flashed through without stopping. The railway officials are collecting preparatory to going off duty for the night. "Where's Dan?" asked one of the crowd upon the platform.

Jack Newbiggin got back to the personage he found that his host had accepted an invitation for them both to dine at the "Big House," as it was called, the country seat of the squire of the parish. "I have been fighting your battles all day," began Mrs. Stillwell, the hostess, who was seated at dinner next to Jack.

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Jack Newbiggin was by profession a conveyancer, but nature had intended him for a new Houdini, or a wizard of the North. He was more than half professional by the time he was full grown. In addition to the quick eye and the facile wits he had the rare gifts of the suave manner and the face of brass. He had even studied mesmerism and clairvoyance, and could upon occasion surprise his audience considerably by his power.

They entered the miserable dwelling together. The children—eight of them—were all skrimshanking over the floor, except one, a child of six or seven, a bright-eyed, exceedingly beautiful boy, the least—were not nature's vagaries well known—likely to be born among and belong to such surroundings, who stood between the legs of the man himself, who had his back to the visitor, and was wincing over the scanty fire.

"Here, little one; do you see this gentleman?" He's a conjurer. Know what a conjurer is, Tommy? Catching up a mitre of four or five from the floor. "No, not you, nor you, Sarah; nor you, Jacky."—"You're just for all their names."

"This is far too valuable," he said courteously, "too much of a treasure, to be risked in any conjuring trick. An ordinary modern watch I might replace, but not a work of art like this." And he handed it back to Sir Lewis, who received it with ill concealed satisfaction. It was as much pleased, probably, at Jack's expression of possible failure in the proposed trick as at the recovery of his property.

"Another watch, however, was pounded into a jelly and brought out whole from a cabinet in an adjoining room. "Oh, but it is too precious," Sir Lewis Mallaby was heard to say, quite gravely. The continued applause was loudly disapproved of. "This is the most precious watch I have ever seen, and it is the commonest imposture. These are things which he has coached up in advance. Let him be tried with something which upon the face of it he cannot have learned beforehand by artificial means."

explains some of the simple processes, hoping to explain the man's attention. "That's what I thought, sir, or I'd have given you a lot to do. I've been ill want of a real conjurer many a long day, and nothing less'll do. See here, sir," he said, as he took a small carefully folded paper from between the leaves of the Bible, "do you see that?"

There was the linen! I've kept it. See here; all marked quite pretty and proper, with lace round the edges, as though its mother loved to make the little one smart. Jack examined the linen; it bore a monogram and crest. The first he made out to mean J. M., and the crest was the plainly two hammer cross and the motto, "I strike!"—not a common crest—and he never remembered to have seen it before.

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"Try him, Sir Lewis, try him yourself," cried several voices. "I scarcely like to level myself so much fully or encourage so pitiable an exhibition. But he seemed to be conscious that further protest would be in Jack's favor, so he said: "Can you tell what I have in this pocket?" He touched the left breast of his coat.

"But do you?" asked several of the bystanders, all of whom were growing deeply interested in this strange proceeding. Sir Lewis Mallaby confessed that he did, and produced the—ordinary—ordinary Morocco leather purse and pocketbook, all in one.

There was much applause at this harmless and successful deception of what we called at one stage to lead to after-act, perhaps to a quarrel. But Jack Newbiggin was not satisfied. "As you have dared me to do my worst," said he, "listen now to what I have to say. Not only did I know that was only the half of a note, but I know where the other half is to be found."

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BUDGET OF FUN. HUMOROUS SKETCHES FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

Romance of a Phonograph—A Great Similarity—Why He Was So Earnest—Theory and Practice, Etc., Etc. He loved a blushing maiden. But his soul was full of grief. So he spoke into a phonograph. The words he'd have her hear.

A Great Similarity. "Whenever I see Barkins I think of the trade winds," said Larry the. "Why so?" queried Bionce. "Oh, he is always blowing about his business."

Why He Was So Earnest. "Are you really engaged to Mr. Hawkins, Ethel?" "Ethel—"Yes, I hardly know whether I love him or not, but he was so earnest that somehow I could not refuse him."

A Wise Suggestion. "My dear, why do you change cooks so often?" "Because you are always complaining of the food." "Well, I won't kick any more. Just hang on to one individual and give my stomach a chance to get acclimated."

A Literary Butcher. "What a beautiful library you have! I really envy you." "Retired but her—"Yes; and just look at the binding of them books." "Retired Butcher—"Just so, and I killed them all calves myself with furnished leather."

Trimming His Sails. "Do you carry two watches, Jack, or is that double chain a bluff?" "Jack—"No bluff, Gus; I carry a Waterbury in one pocket and a Jurgensen in the other."

A Man of Invention Genus. "You say you want a bureau made on a new plan?" "Citizen—"Yes, sir. I want it made with legs so that I can get my head and shoulders under it."

Looks Black for the Witness. "Yes, sir," said the witness, "he fell out of the sixth story window. There were six of us in the room at the time; there was no quarrel; we were all friends, and there had been no drinking. He was sitting in the open window talking, and suddenly lost his balance and fell out."

She Was All Right. "That Mrs. Ostentatious is outside, sir," said the clerk, entering the private office. "She wants to open an account with us."

RELIGIOUS READING.

Striving. There is no rest without the toil; The path is strewn with thorns; The covard takes it never.

A Common Christian Thought. Christians remembering their sinned kindred dead, and hoping that they also are remembered by them, may find it a consolation to the time of their own departure from earth, when the present separation of souls between them and those who have died, will be removed.

National Enthusiasm. One cannot contemplate without deep interest the enthusiasm of a great nation, and it is well while to study the progress of a general election canvass in the United States. One should observe the attention of the entire land. Everywhere there are clubs, meetings, processions, badges and banners.

The Shut In Society. The Shut In society, mention of which has been so often made in these columns, is doing a good work among invalids, for to take one's thoughts from one's own sufferings, and become interested in the welfare of another is one of the surest means of becoming happy.

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Her Last Request. "It's all over, I'll. Carl refused me this morning. 'Top on your way down town and get me a two-ounce bottle of laudanum. It's my last request.'"

Within the Gates. Flender Youth—"I am very anxious, sir, to enter the noble profession of journalism, to become master of the great questions and mighty truths of civilization, to mold public opinion in the right way."

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A Gigantic Iron Horse. A giant locomotive is being constructed in Boston. It is for use on the Atchinson Road, and has two cabs, one over the boiler for the engineer, and the other in the usual place for the fireman. The driving wheels are of paper, with steel tires. The wheels are supported by a pair of puny little iron axles which are supported by a pair of puny little iron wheels.

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