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FIRESIDE AMUSEMENTS.

THE GRACEFUL LADY.—Having procured a number of small twists of paper, or lamp-lighters, one of the players commences the game by reciting a certain formula, which is to be repeated with an additional remark by each of the players in their respective turns.

If an omission or mistake is made, the one who makes it will have to receive a twist of paper in the hair, and drop the title of graceful lady, or gentleman, and called the one-horned lady or gentleman; or if they have more than one horn, they must be called according to the number. The one who begins the game will politely bow to her neighbor, and say, "Good morning, graceful lady, ever graceful, I, a graceful lady, ever graceful, come from that graceful lady, ever graceful, to tell you that she has a little bird with golden feathers."

The next one then takes up the play, addressing her nearest companion, "Good morning, graceful lady, ever graceful, I, a graceful lady, ever graceful, come from that graceful lady, ever graceful, to tell you that she has a little bird with golden feathers and a long red beak."

The next one says in turn, "Good evening graceful lady, ever graceful, I, a graceful lady, ever graceful, come from that graceful lady, ever graceful, to tell you that she has a gold bird with little feathers and a long red beak tipped with green."

You'll see there are two mistakes here, so the player must have a couple of horns in her hair, and the next one proceeds with, "Good morning graceful lady, ever graceful, I, a graceful lady ever graceful, come from that two-horned lady, ever two-horned, to tell you that she has a little bird with golden feathers, a long red beak tipped with green, and brilliant diamond eyes."

And so the game proceeds, producing more horns as it becomes more complicated. Nothing can be too ridiculous for the graceful lady to possess, as it adds to the enjoyment of the game.

PARLOR MAGIC.

THE RING AND THE HANDKERCHIEF.—This may be justly considered one of the most surprising deceptions; and yet it is so easy of performance, that any one may accomplish it after a few minutes' practice.

You previously provide yourself with a piece of brass wire, pointed at both ends, and bent round so as to form a ring,

about the size of a wedding-ring. This you conceal in your hand. You then commence your performance by borrowing a silk pocket-handkerchief from a gentleman, and a wedding-ring from a lady; and you request one person to hold two of the corners of the handkerchief, and another to hold the other two, and to keep them at full stretch. You next exhibit the wedding-ring to the company, and announce that you will make it pass through the handkerchief. You then place your hand under the handkerchief, and substituting the false ring, which you had previously concealed, press it against the centre of the handkerchief, and desire a third person to take hold of the ring through the handkerchief, and to close his finger and thumb through the hollow of the ring. The handkerchief is held in this manner for the purpose of showing that the ring has not been placed within a fold. You now desire the persons holding the corners of the handkerchief to let them drop; the person holding the ring (through the handkerchief as already described) still retaining his hold.

Let another person now grasp the handkerchief as tight as he pleases, three or four inches below the ring, and tell the person holding the ring to let it go, when it will be quite evident to the company that the ring is secure within the centre of the handkerchief. You then tell the person who grasps the handkerchief to hold a hat over it, and passing your hand underneath, you open the false ring, by bending one of its points a little aside, and bringing one point gently through the handkerchief, you easily draw out the remainder; being careful to rub the hole you have made in the handkerchief with your finger and thumb, to conceal the fracture.

You then put the wedding-ring you borrowed over the outside of the middle of the handkerchief, and desiring the person who holds the hat to take it away, you exhibit the ring (placed as described) to the company; taking an opportunity, while their attention is engaged, to conceal or get rid of the brass ring.

DECORATIONS OF HOUSES.

PAPER HANGINGS.—In consequence of an apartment never being too light—for we can always diminish superfluous light—paper hangings should be of a light color, that they may reflect, not absorb, light.

We prescribe all dark hangings, whatever be their color, because they absorb too much light; we prescribe also red and violet hangings, because they are exceedingly unfavorable to the color of the skin. For this latter reason we reject the light tones of the red and violet scales. Orange is a color that can never be much employed, because it fatigues the eye too much by its great intensity.

1. Among the simple colors, there are scarcely any which are advantageous, except yellow and the light tones of green and of blue. Yellow is lively; it combines well with mahogany furniture, but not generally with gilding.

2. Light-green is favorable to pale complexions as well as to rosy ones; to mahogany furniture, and to gilding.

3. Light-blue is less favorable than green to rosy complexions, especially in daylight; it is particularly favorable to gilding, and it does not injure mahogany, and associates better than green with yellow or orange woods.

4. White or whitish hangings of a light grey (either normal green, blue or yellow) uniform or with velvet patterns of the color of the ground, are also very useful.

5. When we would choose hangings upon which to place a picture, their color must be uniform, and make the greatest contrast possible with that which predominates in the picture, if the hangings are not of a normal grey. I shall return to this assortment.

Hangings in the best taste are those,

1. Which present designs of a light tone, either normal or

of a colored grey, upon a white ground, or the reverse, and in which the pattern is at least equal in extent of surface to the ground; for a small pattern has a very poor effect, at least in a large room.

2. Patterns of two or more tones of the same or very near scales assorted conformably to the law of contrast.

Hangings of brilliant and varied colors representing real objects, forming patterns more or less complex, do not admit of pictures; and as such hangings should exhibit themselves distinctly, they must not be concealed by the furniture in any of their parts.

When we have to adapt a border to a single colored hanging, or to one presenting a dominant color, we must first determine whether we can have recourse to a harmony of analogy or to a harmony of contrast; in all cases the border ought to detach itself more or less from the hangings, which it is intended to surround and separate from contiguous objects.

Harmony of contrast is the most suitable to papers of a uniform pure color, such as yellows, greens, and blues; consequently we recommend for the dominant color of the border, the complementary of that of the hanging, whether this border represents ornaments, arabesques, flowers, or imitations of fringes or tissues. But, as a contrast of color ought not generally to offer a contrast of tone, then the general tone of the border must only surpass that of the hangings so far as to avoid a deadening effect. If a double border be required, the exterior border must be of a much deeper tone than the other and always narrower.

Among the colors suitable for borders we recommend the following as harmonious of contrast,

1. For yellow hangings, violet and blue mixed with white; if a fringe, of flowers garnished with their leaves, or ornaments.

2. For green hangings, red in all its hues; the painted gilt-yellows upon a dark-red ground; the border of gilt.

3. For white hangings, orange and yellow; the border of gilt moulding; these are much better on blue than on green.

Among the harmonies of analogy, I recommend the following:

For yellow hangings, a border of gilt moulding.

White or whitish hangings of normal grey, pearl grey, or very pale colored grey, of a uniform color, or with a velvet pattern of the color of the ground.

Although papers of this kind admit of borders of all colors, yet we must avoid too great a contrast of tone in a border containing pure colors; for the intense tones of blue, violet, red, green, are too crude to combine with these light grounds.

Gilt borders accord well with these grounds, especially with the pure or grey whites. If a grey present a tint of green, of blue, or of yellow, we must use borders of the complementary of these tints, taking many tones above, or of a grey, deeply tinged with this complementary.—*Chevreul on Colors.*

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