

BY MEREDITH NUGENT.*

ANYONE can perform the soap-bubble tricks that are here illustrated, by the exercise of a little care. There is no secret whatever connected with the making of the solution, as nothing is used in its preparation but soap and water. Care, however, must be taken to follow the directions here given to the smallest details. Most people, for instance, will insist upon stirring up the solution after the latter is in proper condition, in spite of repeated warnings that such action always prevents desirable results. Bear constantly in mind that, when once the soapy water is in proper condition, its surface must not be irritated into a thousand little bubbles, and you will be able to perform not only the bubble tricks here pictured, but many others as well.

In giving a soap-bubble party every effort should be made to provide appropriate settings for the bubbles. The more elegant and beautiful the settings, the more jewel-like the bubbles will appear. They look perfectly exquisite on delicate glassware and against rich backgrounds. Avoid, as far as possible, the use of white tablecloths, white plates, etc., as these reduce the beauty of the bubbles to a minimum. The table or tables should be

decorated tastefully though brilliantly, and a chair provided for each guest. In front of each chair should be placed a bowl of the soapy solution, some straws, a funnel, a tin cornucopia, and other necessities for the evening. Then, too, it is a good idea for anyone intending to give a soap-bubble party to practise the soap-bubble tricks previous to the night on which the entertainment is to

be given, so as to be in a position to amuse the invited guests.

The chief bubble-blower should occupy a seat at the centre of the table, with a programme before him, while the other participants should follow his lead and do just as he does. In

this way a lively competition is induced by the endeavours of each bubble-blower to outdo the others.

The solution is made by rubbing pure white Castile soap into a bowl partly filled with water until a heavy lather has formed. Then remove every particle of lather, dip a clay pipe into the cleared solution, and start to blow a bubble. If you can blow one six inches in diameter, the solution is ready for the test; if it bursts before approaching that size, add more soap to the water. Then the solution should be tested as follows: Blow a bubble six inches in diameter so that it will hang suspended from the pipe, then dip your forefinger into the soapy water; upon withdrawing it try to push it through into the

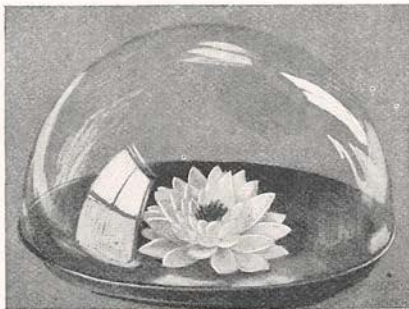
TO MAKE A FLOWER INSIDE A BUBBLE.



FIG. I.



FIG. II.



FLOWER INSIDE A SOAP-BUBBLE.

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bubble; if you can thrust your finger through into the bubble without the latter's bursting, the solution is in proper condition. If, on the contrary, the bubble breaks, the solution



RESTING UPON A FLOWER.

is not in proper condition, and more soap must be added to the water until a bubble can be made that will not break when this test is applied.

To make a flower inside of a bubble, pour the soapy solution into a plate or lacquer tray until the bottom is covered with liquid to the depth of one-eighth of an inch. In the centre of the tray place a water-lily or other flower, and over this a tin funnel. Then start to blow gently through the funnel while you are slowly lifting it at the same time (see Fig. I.). Continue blowing until you make quite a large film, and then proceed to disengage the funnel after having

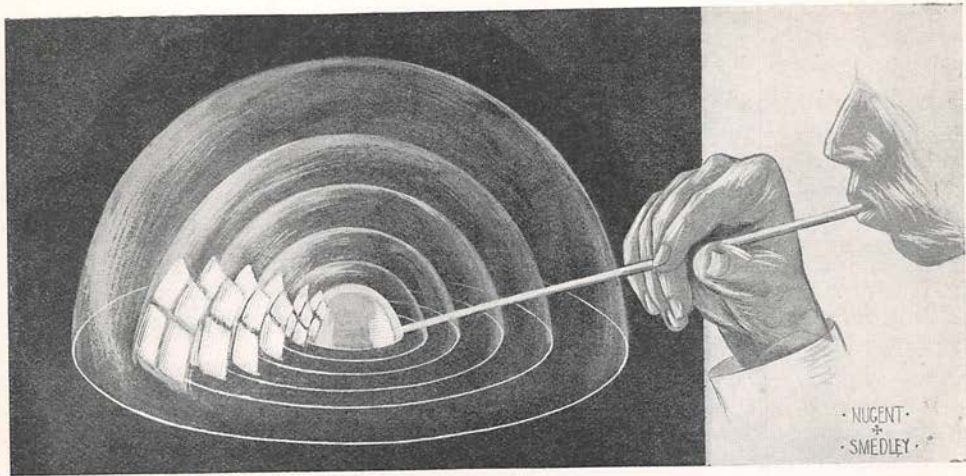
first turned it at right angles, as shown in Fig. II. Besides flowers, spinning-tops and other objects may be sphered over in the same way. This trick is one which always mystifies and delights small children, as well as older ones. The illustration given shows how the flower appears after the bubble is blown over it.

To make six bubbles inside of one another, dip the end of a straw in the soapy water, and after resting the wet end upon an inverted plate or sheet of glass, which should have been previously wet with the solution, blow a bubble about six inches in diameter. Then dip the straw well into the solution again, thrust it through into the centre of this first bubble, and blow another. Continue



MAKING BUBBLES AND NOISE.

in this manner until the bubbles have all been placed. Always be sure that the straw is thoroughly wet with solution for fully half its length before each bubble is blown. Ten



BLOWING SIX BUBBLES INSIDE OF ONE ANOTHER.

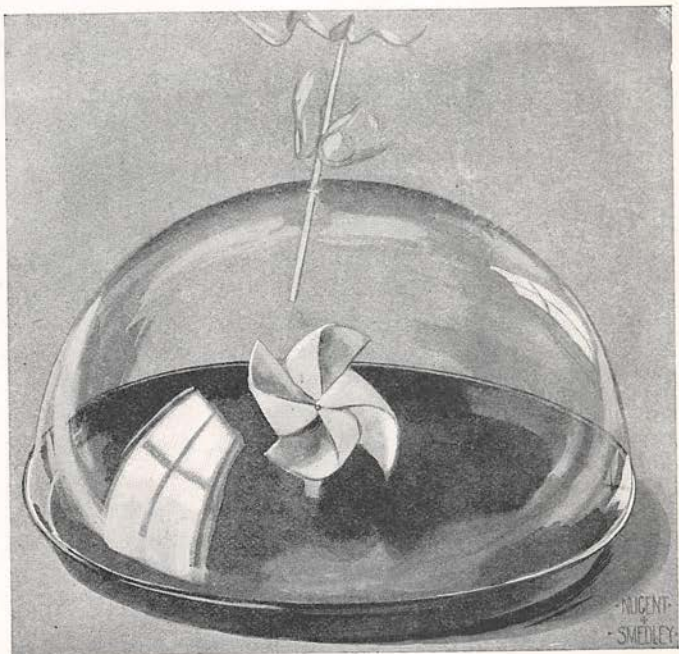
and even twelve bubbles may be placed inside of one another without great difficulty, if the person who is blowing them has a steady hand, and the solution is in proper condition. Of course, some practice is required before any of these results can be obtained.

To make bubbles and noise, dip the end of an ordinary tin fish-horn well into the solution and blow gently until quite a large bubble has been formed. Then four or five loud blasts may be sounded on the horn without injuring the bubble in the least. This is a very funny trick which never fails to arouse roars of laughter. The tin horn might be given to the youngest child in the room after the trick is performed.

To make a bubble rest upon a flower, dip a dahlia or other stiff-petalled flower—an aster of a brilliant colour, for instance—into the solution, and then with a pipe or funnel blow a bubble upon the top of it. This is one of the simplest and prettiest of all the soap-bubble tricks, although it appears the most difficult to those who are watching it being done. The illustration reproduced on the previous page gives a good idea of this flower trick.

To blow a pinwheel

around inside a bubble, fasten a paper pinwheel to a short stick of wood, and attach this to the centre of a dinner-plate with sealing-wax; then, after covering the bottom of the plate with solution, proceed to place a bubble over the pinwheel as in the flower trick. As soon as the funnel is withdrawn, quickly dip a straw into the soapy water, gently thrust it through the bubble, and then blow upon the paper wheel, when it will rapidly revolve. This is rather a difficult trick, and a little practice will be



TO BLOW A PINWHEEL AROUND

required before it can be performed satisfactorily.

A little smoke-bubble may be made to appear within a large transparent bubble by blowing a fair-sized bubble from a clay pipe or small funnel so that it will hang suspended. Then dip a straw into the soapy water, push the wet end of it through into the hanging bubble, and blow very gently. Almost immediately a small bubble will fall from the straw, and as soon as this happens blow with slightly increased force, when the little bubble will whirl around and around inside of the larger bubble, as shown in the illustration. By blowing smoke through the

straw a little smoke-bubble may be made, which will add a great deal to the effectiveness of this trick.

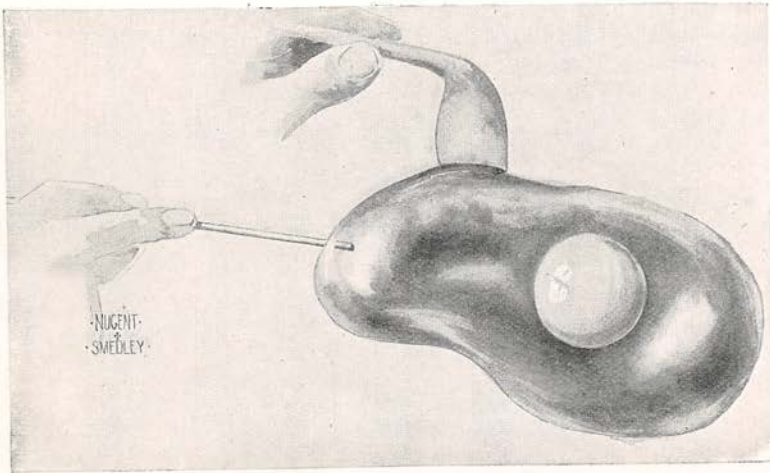
Remove all little bubbles from the surface of the solution before using it.

Never stir up the solution after it is in condition. If you do, little bubbles will form.

Take plenty of time in performing the different tricks. Hurry is nearly always disastrous.

Whenever convenient, use pure spring water for the solution.

Rub well the openings—inside and outside—of both pipes and funnels with soap before blowing bubbles from them.



BLOWING A LITTLE SMOKE BUBBLE.