

“Give me your word of honor, then, that you will never again touch card or dice-box, and there is the money which I have won. Take it; pay back the sum which you have taken from your employers, make what honest and true account you can to your mother, and remember as long as you live the night of the 10th of March, 1829.”

“The young man promised, and I never had occasion to doubt but that he kept his word.”

He not only puzzled and amused the ignorant, but the educated and the scientific, among the latter the celebrated Dr. Cramp-ton, of Dublin, forty years ago, who fled with his students from his dissecting-room, when the Signor, who was present, threw his voice into the body of a female subject, and protested against the sacrifice. At Limerick, one of the female servants stole some jewelry from one of the ladies, and the Signor was called on to point out the culprit. He called all the servants of the hotel together, told them of the theft, and said he knew the guilty one was in the room; but, to avoid all exposure, he would wait a few hours, to give a chance for the return of the property. At midnight the poor girl came to his room, gave back the jewelry, and on her knees begged forgiveness, and prayed she might not be exposed, as it was her first offence. He promised, kept his faith to her, and restored the trinkets to their owner. The incident added vastly to his fame. A rascally tax-collector was seen carrying off one of his rabbits, and the Signor proceeded to his house and demanded it. The scamp denied his crime, and a dispute ensued, when the rabbit broke from its concealment, exclaiming in a gruff tone, “You are a scamp, and the Lord have mercy on your soul.” “Who dares call me a scamp?” screamed the thief. “I do!” the rabbit answered. “You never paid a ha’penny for me, Ryan. Did you not bring me here last night from the hall? To-night I will call my imps from below, and take you to the deepest regions of fire.” The scoundrel took fright, and restored the rabbit as one “bewitched.” The whole community were relieved at the detection of the dishonest official. One day he frightened an exorbitant landlord into decency by making a parrot echo his own denunciation of the tyrant. He was introduced to ex-President Van Buren (often called “the Little Magician”) in New York, and exchanged compliments, which closed by Mr. Van Buren saying, “I have often seen our names coupled, as wielding the magic wand; but I resign to you the superiority. You, Signor, please and delight all ages and sexes, while my jugglery is for political purposes.” O’Con-

nell, the Duke of Wellington, and many of the nobility visited his rooms, just as Van Buren, Clay and Webster patronized him in this country. Once he saved his life by imitating a conversation with different voices, and mingling all with the barking of two dogs. This was when he lived near the New York Croton Works, while they were in course of construction, and when Fifty-third Street was beset by ruffians. His jokes were never cruel, as, for instance, his taking the bottle of whisky out of the hat of Governor Briggs, of Massachusetts, a noted temperance man, or his asking the Boston philanthropist, Josiah Bradley, to lend him his coat for one of his tricks, which the good old man did, to the infinite amusement of Daniel Webster, who sat in the audience. He was welcome at Harvard University, and played for the *alumni* and the *acolytes*. The great and graceful Justice Story came often to his exhibitions, and would take a seat among the boys on the front bench, enjoying himself to the full, “where he would laugh away dull care,” and, returning home refreshed, “would write till morning; for nothing so restores the brain as a good hearty laugh.” He met Millard Fillmore on a canal-boat in the West, and years after saw him in Washington, when Mr. Fillmore said, “Little did I expect, Signor, when travelling with you on the canal. I should ever become President of the United States.” His description of the great Automaton Chess Player, and of the two players—Maelzel, the inventor, outside, and Schlongberg within the figure—both masters of that scientific game, is full of interest. “Maelzel and Schlongberg were, in their time, the great living representatives of chess; their hearts and feelings were so identified with the game that they dreamed of it by night and practiced it by day. At every meal and in all intervals a portable chess-board was before them. They ate, drank, and played, while not a word escaped their lips. It was a quiet, earnest, mental combat, and the anxiety of every pause and move was defined in each countenance, their features revealing what the tongue could not express.” Schlongberg died of a fever, and poor Maelzel expired on his way from Havana to Philadelphia, and was buried in the ocean. The Automaton Chess Player was destroyed by fire with the Chinese Museum, and the Automaton Trumpeter is now the property of Mr. E. N. Scherr, the retired piano-maker of Philadelphia. He relates a pleasing incident of the illustrious John Bannister Gibson, Chief Justice of Pennsylvania, one of his best friends, who was surprised to find the Signor's wallet in his pocket, though he sat at a distance from him.