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AN OPTICAL DELUSION.

The Story of a Martinet Colonel, a Captain and a Sword.

The colonel, a rigid martinet, is sitting at the window of his room when, looking out, he sees a captain crossing the barrack yard toward the gate. Looking at him closely, he is shocked to observe that, the rules and regulations to the contrary notwithstanding, the captain does not carry a sword.

"Captain!" he calls from the window. "Hi, captain, step up to my room for a moment, will you?"

The captain obeys promptly, borrows a sword of the officer of the guard, the guardroom being at the foot of the stairs, and presents himself to the colonel in irreproachable dress.

The colonel is somewhat surprised to see the sword in its place and, having to invent some pretext for calling his subordinate back, says, with some confusion: "Beg your pardon, captain, but really I've forgotten what it was I wanted to speak to you about. However, it can't have been very important. It'll keep. Good morning."

The captain salutes, departs, returns the sword to its owner and is making off across the barrack yard, where he again comes within range of the colonel's vision.

The colonel rubs his eyes, stares, says softly to himself: "How in thunder is this? He hasn't a sword to his waist!" then calls aloud: "Captain! Ho, captain! One moment, please!"

The captain returns, borrows the sword again, mounts the stairs and enters the colonel's presence. His commanding officer stares at him intently. He has a sword; he sees it; he hears it clank.

"Captain," he stammers, growing very hot, "it's ridiculous, you know, but—ha! ha!—I'd just remembered what I wanted to say to you, and now—ha! ha!—it's gone out of my head again! Funny, isn't it? Ha, ha, ha! Losing my memory. Never mind. I'll think of it and write you. Good morning."

The captain salutes, departs, returns

the sword to its owner and makes for the gate. As he crosses the barrack yard the colonel calls his wife to his side and says, "See that officer out there?"

"Yes."

"Has he got a sword on?"

The colonel's wife adjusts her eyeglass upon him, scans him keenly and says, "He hasn't a taste of a sword."

The colonel: "That's just where you fool yourself. Yes, he has."—London Graphic.

THE PICTURE CRITIC.

If He Doesn't "Quite Like the Face," That Settles It.

Some liberal minded people will admit to you that a slight preliminary training is required before a serious attempt is made to criticize music, but almost anybody with eyes is willing to embark buoyantly on the job of tearing a picture to pieces. This seems to be because the picture will stand without hitching. Moreover, it will patiently submit to all the verbal harpoons you find time and strength to throw, and the average friendly critic will find sufficient of both to make even a reasonably good painting look like a cross between a fourteenth century St. Sebastian and a hedgehog.

Music, on the contrary, is both prolonged and evanescent, and by the time the composition is finished and the applause has quieted down the critic has forgotten most of the good things he intended to say to its detriment.

But the picture stays, irritating you by its mere passive endurance to the point where after awhile you feel that if you don't say something to destroy its smug self complacency it will go on thinking that it's all right.

So then you begin to work over it, and you say: "Yes, I see now. It looked pretty good at first, but that arm is hopelessly bad, and I don't quite like the face." There's nothing

to be done if you don't "quite like the face," there's no answer to that proposition. It's a clincher. Rembrandt himself would have wilted and would probably have given up trying to be an "old master."—Everybody's.

The Word "Ale."

What could be more English than the word ale? It carries us back to the banquets of our dead ancestors in Wal-halla, and some of its compounds open up vistas into that old England which is fast disappearing, becoming a tale that is told, obsolete itself. Such are alebush, a tavern sign; ale conner, "an officer appointed in every court leet and sworn to look to the assize and goodness of bread, ale and beer." Ale-cost, the name of a kind of tansy used to flavor the rustic's home brewed, has a good old English look. Yet it bears witness to the mongrel nature of the speech of this mongrel nation, cost being from the Greek kostos, a savory herb of species unidentified. Alegar is eager or sour ale, used as vinegar.—Cornhill Magazine.

Wellington and Waterloo.

Heine, in speaking of Wellington's good luck at Waterloo, says: "This man has the bad fortune to meet with good fortune when the greatest man of the world is unfortunate. We see in him the victory of stupidity over genius—Arthur Wellington triumphant when Napoleon Bonaparte was overwhelmed. Wellington and Napoleon! It is a wonderful phenomenon that the human mind can at the same time think of both these names."

No Chance.

"Do you think his interest in art will ever amount to anything?"

"No," answered Miss Cayenne. "He is too well off to become an artist himself and not rich enough to become a connoisseur."—Washington Star.

Her Stolen Jewels.

"Yes, Mrs. Swellman has been robbed of her jewels, and Mrs. Sneeker is the guilty party."

"What? You don't mean to say she stole?"

"What else can you call it? She offered the cook \$6 and the maid \$5 a week, and now she's got them."—Exchange.

For Herself.

"Are you sure you love me for myself alone?" asked the romantic young woman.

"Well," replied the practical young man, "I don't think I love you for any one else."

A Luxury.

"My daughter," said the father, "has been accustomed to all the luxuries of wealth."

"Yees," said the count, bristling up; "zat ees what I am."—Christian Register.

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