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The young man's book of amusement

Halifax, 1848

The Magic Spider

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The Incombustible Handkerchief.

Mix the whites of eggs and alum together; then smear a handkerchief with it, all over. Wash it in salt and water, and when dry, fire will not consume it.

To Freeze Water by Heat.

This trick can only be performed in the winter. Set a quart mug upon a stool before the fire, throwing a little water upon the stool first. Then put a handful of snow into the pot, having privately conveyed into it a handful of salt. Stir it for about ten minutes, and the congelation will be effected.

The Magic Spider.

Take a piece of burnt cork, as big as a pea, and cut it to the shape of a spider; make its legs with threads of hemp; put a grain of lead into the cork to give it some weight: then hang this artificial spider by a bit of gray sewing silk (that is not twisted) between two bodies, the one electrified and the other not; or between two bodies endowed with different electricities: it will go and come between these two bodies, and the movement of the legs will be seen as plainly as if it were a living spider.