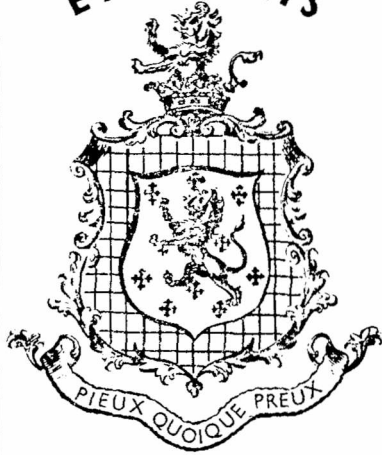


AL BAKER'S BOOK

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— WILL ALMA —
M.I.M.C. (LONDON)



TO MY FRIENDS, MAGIC LOVERS:

I want to dedicate this book, not to one person, but to the many friends that I have made on my travels around the United States.

For the true lover of the Art I have only sincere admiration, and it has always been a pleasure to meet and know them. Among both the professionals and amateurs are some of the finest types of men I have ever known.

Looking back over a span of years I realize the many fine points and ideas that have come from amateurs and those who didn't profess to "know it all."

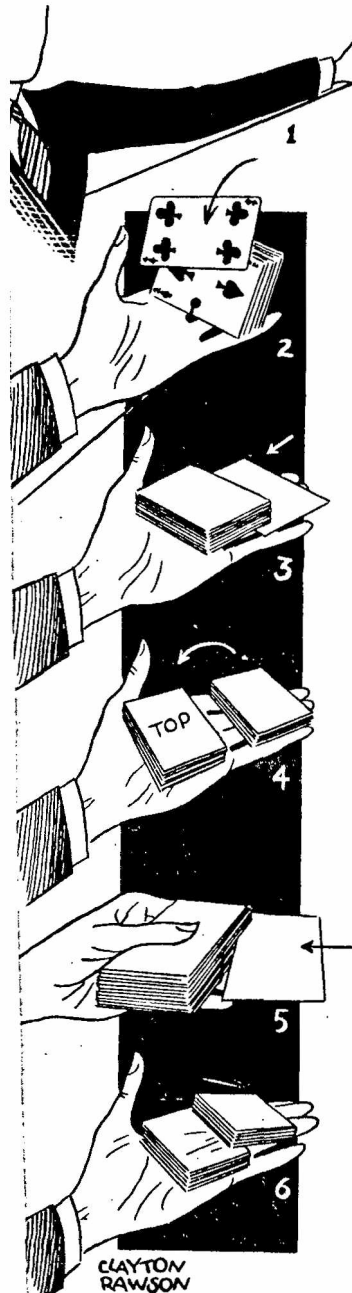
Showing a trick is comparatively easy to putting it clearly in print, and I want to thank Annemann for his judicious use of the blue pencil, finding spots where I could write less and tell more, and in general, being a marvelous deleter and paraphraser.

To John Northern Hilliard, whom I consider the greatest writer on Magic as an Art, I want to extend my sincere thanks for the encouragement that caused me to start and finally finish my maiden effort, to wit: Al Baker's Book.

Al Baker.

*To David Bell
With Best Wishes from
Al Baker.*

AL BAKER'S PACK THAT CUTS ITSELF 1



This effect was originated by me some years ago and was carefully guarded for a long time. I performed it for such well known magicians and clever card experts as T. Nelson Downs, Nate Leipsic, Horowitz, Eddie McGuire, Bill McCaffrey, Dai Vernon and Max Holden, a shadowgraphist. They all agreed that it was something entirely different and new, and excerpts from old issues of the Sphinx attest to their sincerity.

Like all good things, it became a mark for imitators to shoot at but so far they have missed by a wide margin. I therefore take great pleasure at this time in placing before you the first real description of the effect as I do it myself.

To prepare for this the performer takes a needle full of very fine black silk thread. Push the needle through the coat about three inches below the left armpit. On end of thread is a large knot or small bead which is pulled tight against inside of coat. Extend arm almost straight out and cut off thread at finger tips. This is the correct length and at this end is placed a small pellet of magician's wax. By reaching under coat and pulling the bead down, the wax end will be pulled up against the outside of coat and thread can be carried for an indefinite period without fear of it being in the way.

Borrow a deck and ask a spectator to shuffle it and while in his hands to remove a card. He then passes the pack to another party who does the same. While this is being done, performer crosses arms for a second and right fingers grasp the wax end, and draw it out, holding wax end between right thumb and finger. Asking for return of pack which he accepts in extended left hand, performer requests that the selected cards be shown to audience. While this is being done, performer sticks the wax to lower side of bottom card as shown in Fig. 2, and then removes top card, transferring it to bottom on top of wax which is now between the two bottom cards.

Pack is now laid face down on left hand with wax at side nearest audience, the thread running down between the two middle fingers and along back of hand.

Performer now takes first person's card in right fingers and pushes it under the deck to bottom as in Fig. 3. He then cuts about two-thirds of the pack and lays on hand near wrist as in Fig. 4. The front or bottom heap is now picked up and placed on top of rear pile and deck squared. To audience the deck has merely been cut and the replaced card lost. The second card is taken the same way and pushed into the lower half of deck as per Fig. 5, it striking the thread and pushing this back also. Deck is now squared again, hand opened flat as in Fig. 6, and the second party is asked first to name his card.

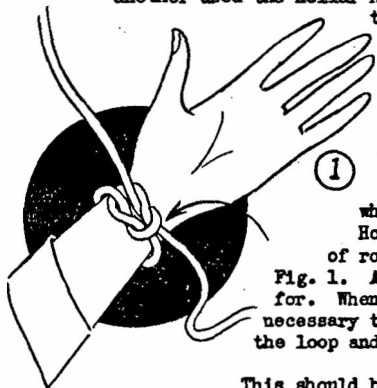
By slowly and steadily extending the arm, the pack will be seen to cut itself towards the audience, and if performer continues to extend arm, the portion that has cut itself will return to its original position on top of deck, leaving the selected card protruding at front. Performer then has spectator remove card.

By repeating the same moves, the second selected card will be found in the same manner and this is also removed by spectator himself.

After the return of upper half the last time, the position of upper half will not coincide exactly with the lower. Cut pack at this spot which brings the two cards with wax between to bottom of pack. Remove bottom card and the left thumb will be resting on wax which the thumb nail pushes off, allowing thread to drop away and deck is free to be handed out at once. Reaching into inside of coat for a handkerchief or anything else, the right hand pulls bead down which puts the thread away for any future use.

THE ONE MAN "LIGHTS UP" SEANCE

I hardly think there is any performer who hasn't at some time or another used the Kellar Rope Tie or one of its variations. However, all of those methods required the doing of something while hands were behind the back. I therefore think that my method, evolved over thirty years ago, is a distinct improvement for the reason that the entire tying is done in full view of the audience without the least thing being done to arouse suspicion.

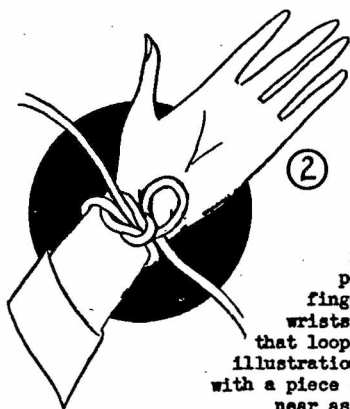


Use about a four foot length of sash cord which has seen enough use to remove its stiffness. Hold left wrist out with palm of hand upward. Center of rope is placed around wrist and a flat knot tied as in Fig. 1. At this point is a very important feature to look out for. When making the second tie of the knot it is absolutely necessary that the end hanging down on inside of wrist be under the loop and lying tightly against the flesh. See arrow in Fig. 1.

This should be a square knot and a few trials will enable the performer to lead the tying as he wants it done. It must also be very tight and secure so that it cannot slip around wrist.

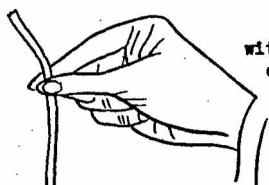
As performer at this point shows how tight and securely he is tied, the right fingers take rope about two inches below knot, make an inside loop, and with no effort at all it is jammed under the knot as illustrated in Fig. 2.

From this point the performer holds loose end of rope up casually and it appears to audience as in Fig. 3. Now upper length falls over side of hand towards audience, and the heel of right hand is placed tightly against loop as the wrists are brought together.



Spectator is requested to bring the two ends around right wrist and tie another hard knot, forming virtually a tight fitting handcuff of rope. By holding the loop tightly between the heels of the hands, there is positively no danger whatever of the loop being lost, no matter how tight the last knot is tied.

By merely withdrawing right hand the release is affected and freedom secured. To return to the original position, right hand goes through loop, third and fourth fingers curl back and grasp lower part of loop, the two wrists are brought together, and rope rolled between wrists so that loop is brought to same position as it was at start. The illustrations will make this process clear. By going over this with a piece of rope in hand, the performer will find that it is not near as complicated as it may sound.

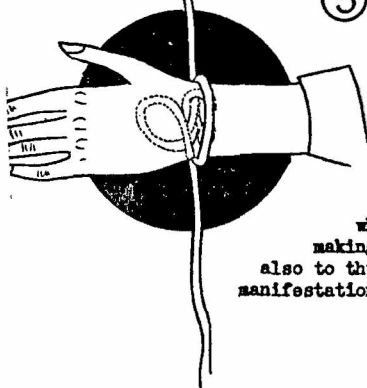


A suggested routine is to have an ordinary chair with back of same facing audience. The magician's coat, or one borrowed, is hung over the back and acts as a screen. Bells can be rung, tambourines shaken, slates written upon, and both hands can appear above top of chair widely separated, almost instantly re-appearing securely tied.

You will be surprised how quickly you can get back into loop and when the proper twist is made the rope will appear to be cutting right into the flesh.

Another point is that the fingers need not be held tightly together as in the other methods because the loop is away back near the wrist and being much smaller is perfectly hidden.

At finish have spectator untie the outside knot and you separate wrists by a downward sliding motion which practically dissolves the loop. I do not advise making an escape from the rope at the finish and this applies also to thumb ties, or any manner of restraint used when spirit manifestations take place.



A CARD AND A NUMBER 4

I have kept the following effect out of print for many years because I can truthfully say that it has been one of my favorite tricks. As an opening number on your club program you will find that it has an excellent effect upon your audience, and with a good opening, any act is 75% sold at the start.

Two decks of cards are used, one of which the performer hands a spectator to place in his pocket for the time being. Taking the second deck the performer asks anyone to name a number from one to fifty-two. We will assume that it be 23. The performer asks spectator to take a card from the deck which is spread out and one chosen. Now the performer states that he will show a strange sympathy between the two decks of cards. He will actually cause the same card as the one drawn, to locate itself at the number named in the other deck which spectator at other side of room still has in his pocket! And, impossible as this may seem to be, the number is counted to in the other deck and the same card is there!

Undoubtedly the reader will at once assume that this feat is extremely complicated or hard to perform, but such is far from being the case. The two decks are both arranged in the same order. The performer may use his favorite arrangement such as the 'Eight Kings' etc or the Si Stebbins stack, just as long as both decks are stacked alike.

The first deck is given spectator to pocket. Now a number is called out by someone else. As the performer advances for the selection of a card, he cuts the deck at approximately the number called for, and a glance at the bottom card will give the exact location of the one desired. This card, now at hand, is forced by the usual fan force and the trick is really over except for the buildup to the climax. The same card will be found in the other deck at the very number called.

Regardless of which of the above systems be used in stacking, the 13th, 26th, 39th and bottom cards will always be alike in value and one advanced in suit order. Thus, they form instantly recognized keys should they be cut to bottom. However, if practiced only a few times, the cut will never be more than two or three cards off either way, and continued use will make it a one or two card proposition.

Again, for instance should the party call 26, it is only necessary to cut the deck in half to have the correct card at top. Likewise, should the number be 14 or 40, the performer cuts one-third or two-thirds off respectively.

I can only repeat again that this was a staple number in my program for years and that fact alone should make it apparent that it is really worthwhile and practical.

AL BAKER'S PET HAT TRICK

For the first time in print I am going to describe a fake hat that I have used for many years. It is a valuable accessory and will be found very useful for many other effects that the performer will think of.

The hat is to be made from a soft felt one and two are necessary in the preparation. The crown is cut from one and so that it can be inserted into the good hat and the band turned down over it. However, one-half of this insert on one of the long sides, has been cut down, so as to just clear the band and thus allow of its being opened and closed without hitting same. It will be

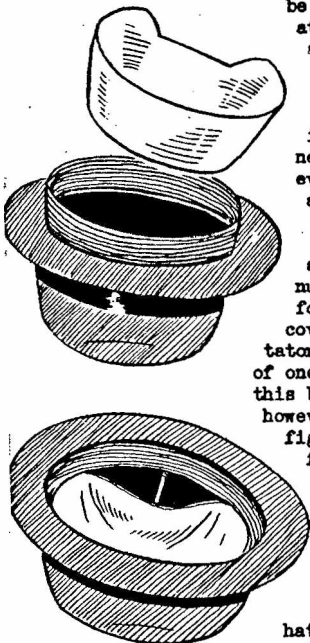
seen that because of the natural spring it will stay closed unless a match be used to keep it open. The illustrations will make the features of the hat clear and the performer will have no trouble in making same. Such a hat can be used as an ordinary one and brought into play at any time. I am describing one of my favorite effects with this hat.

The performer asks for the loan of three one-dollar bills. The spectators are asked to fold them up several times each way into a flat bundle. The hat is on table with the inner pocket open as illustrated. At the start the performer has in the hat proper three bills, the numbers of which he has memorized (which is best) or has written in ink on his left and right thumb nails. These are folded and a rubber band snapped around them. The hat need never be shown empty as will be seen later. Taking the folded bills one at a time from spectators, the performer snaps a rubber band around them and drops them one by one into the open pocket. As the third bill is dropped into the hat, it is picked up on the pocket side, the match being dislodged and the pocket closing against side. The hat is handed directly to a spectator who is asked to shake up and mix the bills well. The performer need never fear the handling of the hat as I have never had it even suspected, and for years wore the very hat that I was using at the time.

After the mixing, the spectator is asked to pick one out, and standing away from everybody open it up and look at the number. Now, although the bills have been exchanged, the performer does not know which the spectator has and this is discovered in an extremely subtle manner. The performer asks spectator to think of the first figure and then names the first figure of one of the three bills known. There is one chance in three of this being correct and if so, the number is continued with. If wrong however, the performer asks spectator to think instead of the last figure. The number will be one of the remaining two and the performer now names the last figure on one of these. If still wrong, the performer now asks spectator which of the figures he would rather think of and this time naturally, the performer is correct. Then the rest of the number is revealed. This is a method that appears very fair and there is never any suspicion that the performer is really fishing.

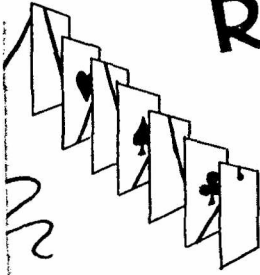
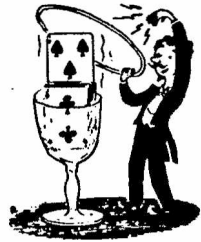
Another party is now asked to select a second bill from the hat and again performer attempts getting the first figure. If correct, all well and good, but if wrong, once more the last figure dodge is resorted to and the number on this bill also revealed. The last bill is handled in the same manner, except that this time no mistake is made as it is the only one left. With the clever and aboveboard exchange for the bills and the ruse for learning the identity of each, the performer will have a feat that appears like genuine direct mindreading of figures, and there is nothing to be detected and prove the contrary.

This hat may be used for the exchange of billets or questions if desired, and hat then tossed or carried off for assistant to secure the actual questions from secret pocket.



AL BAKER'S RISING CARDS

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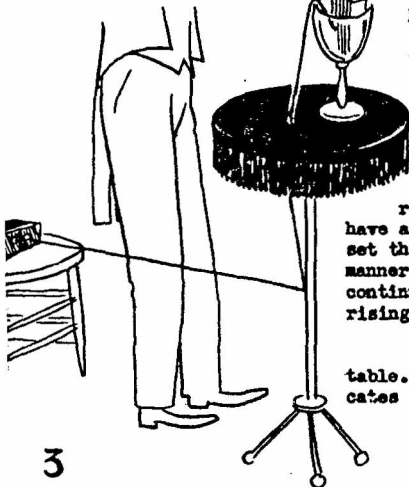
There have been many varied methods for the working of this old classic. However, it always seemed as though each method had one strong point not obtained by another. How often it has been that a magician, working at a club or lodge, has had to set his table in an ante room and then await a signal from the Master of the lodge to enter and proceed with the entertainment. This all too well known circumstance has made it impossible to arrange the threads, etc., but with my method all of these faults are eliminated.

If you will follow the directions carefully and keep to the presentation described, you'll be able to perform this ever popular trick under the most adverse conditions.

Preparation: You must have a small hole in your table top and a small eyelet in the table leg at about knee height. See B in Fig. 2. A piece of fine thread is pushed through eyelet and up through hole in table. I would advise the use of a large size darning needle for this. Remove needle and tie a knot in end of thread. Make a little tear in center of top edge of a card and put thread in this slit with knot against face side of card. Thread the cards to rise, under and over as in Fig. 1. Square this threaded packet neatly and lay them on table face up with the slit end towards hole in table. Let thread hang down as in Fig. 2 so that it doesn't quite reach the floor, and tie other end to dice box as illustrated, or any other heavy object that will be used in the performance. Lay a small silk over the threaded packet, place hoop on table beside glass and deck, and with other objects for the act you are all set.

We will suppose that you are entering from the ante room of a church or club. Set the table down and have a chair a few feet behind. As table is rather crowded set the dice box, glass and hoop on chair in an off hand manner as if room were needed. Then the entertainment is continued until such a time as you are going to do the rising cards.

Picking up the glass and hoop, they are placed on table. From deck three cards are forced (these are duplicates of those threaded to rise) and are shuffled back into



3



pack by spectators themselves. Walking to table, performer picks up handkerchief with left hand as right hand places deck face up on the threaded packet. This is done in one move and with no break in motion the right hand picks up glass which is shown and polished a bit with handkerchief.

The glass is now replaced on table in front of the pack. The deck is picked up and placed in the glass with face side towards audience, and now the position is as in Fig. 3.

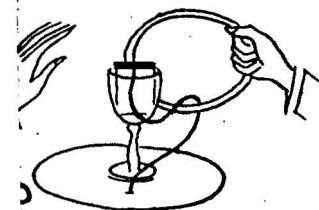
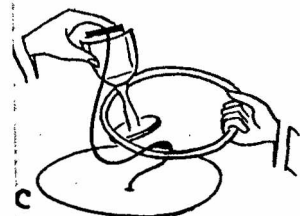
Picking up hoop, performer moves behind table until he feels thread tighten up against his left leg. Waving the hoop back and forth over the glass with right hand, and moving his left leg slightly, the performer causes the first card to slowly rise from the pack.

Moving forward again, the slack is taken up and once more waving the hoop over glass the second card rises.

Now standing directly behind table, the performer passes the hoop over glass in the following manner:

Place hoop over glass as in Fig. A and Fig. B. Then move it towards audience under glass as in C. Glass is set on table and top edge of hoop is tilted towards body, the left hand once more lifting glass through hoop, these moves being depicted in Figs. D, E and F. The hoop will now be clear of thread. All of this can be done very quickly and repeated if desired. The drawings make everything clear.

Now moving forward once more until leg picks up thread the hoop is waved again and the last card makes its appearance. Taking pack from glass, and tilting top of pack back towards body, the performer walks away from table on opposite side to which he approached same. By doing this, the knot will be pulled out of slit, the thread will be pulled out of table top and left lying on floor, and everything is clear for any inspection.



FEEL MY PULSE!

8

This is one of those strange appearing effects that creates a lot of talk and is actually accomplished by simple means plus showmanship.

The performer asks one of his audience to call out a row of five figures which are openly written down on a pad by performer. This is repeated with two others and the third person given pad to add the three rows and write down total which no one is allowed to see. Asking the assistance of a lady from the audience, performer states that he will attempt acting as a sort of battery, and that through this power the lady will be able to receive the thoughts of the other spectator and be able to reveal information that the performer himself does not know.

The lady grasps performer by his wrist and he slowly repeats the figures from one to zero. She is asked to keep her mind perfectly clear and after this to name any one of the figures that seems to impress her more than another. This is repeated, the lady naming a figure each time, and the spectator with pad acknowledges each number of the total as it is correctly revealed. The effect is impromptu and detection practically impossible.

The methods of handling the figures and pulse are my own, and in the case of the numbers, I have gotten away from the old 'nine' method for addition tricks because it has become too well known to be used by any up to date worker.

Taking the pad the performer steps to one party and asks for five figures. These are written down as given, letting spectator see them, and stepping back performer looks towards back of audience and asks, 'Will some other gentleman please call any five figures?' As these are called the performer apparently writes them under the first row, but really writes figures that when added to the one right above will total 10. Thus, if the first row were 56478, the second row written by performer would be 54632. After this, performer steps to another party near front and asks for the third row. This is written exactly as given, but the five figures are remembered, as, for example, if the number were 57485 the performer would say to himself, 'Fifty-seven, forty-eight, five. This is a much easier way of memorizing the row.

The pad is then given this party to add, and he sees his row of figures as given which completes the misdirection. To the audience, this part appears perfectly fair, and not one ever realizes that the performer already knows the total of the problem. However, it is known in this way. The last figure of the total will always be the same as the last figure of the key line. The figures to the left will be one more than those in the key line, and at the finish a figure 1 is placed in front. For instance, we will take the key or last line of 64183. Following the above rules, the total of the problem will be 175293.

The pulse holding effect is very subtle and accomplished very easily. While the party is holding performer's pulse, he keeps the thumb tightly pressed against the forefinger and when counting the thumb is allowed to slip back with a jerk about an eighth of an inch. The harder the pressure of the thumb and finger, the shorter will be the slip and the better the pulsation which is very clearly felt by the party holding pulse. This is done whenever the performer reaches the number in his counting and is naturally the one which impresses the lady most. Asked afterwards how she did it, the lady will

only say that she felt a vibration of some kind, and in many cases will not even realize what it was that made her pick those numbers.

Most readers will no doubt try this on themselves, but it is a physical phenomenon that won't work if one holds his own wrist. On someone else, however, it operates perfectly.

THE AL BAKER WRIST TIE

This effect was figured out in my home some ten years ago in company with that very clever and congenial performer, Mr. Richard Davis. Although this trick requires a bit of dexterity, when once mastered you will find that it is one of the most deceptive and pleasing of knot tricks.

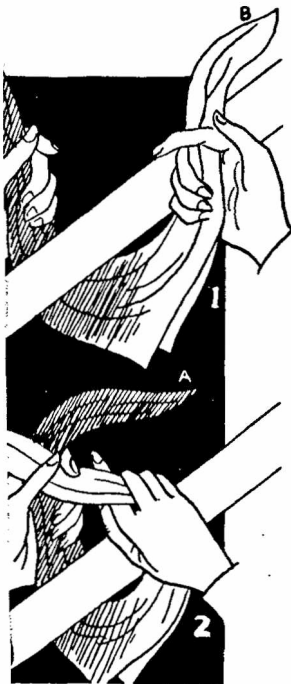
Performer takes a large silk, and twisting it ropewise with an end held in each hand, passes it around arm of spectator, tying an apparently fair knot. Spectator's arm is then held up so that all can see that silk goes fairly around. The second knot is tied and then performer suddenly with an upward jerk apparently pulls the handkerchief completely through the arm, it still containing the knot.

The handkerchief is put around wrist as in Fig.1. A represents left and B the right. The right end protrudes from thumb and fingers a little more than that in the left hand which insures the knot coming to the middle.

The right hand throws end over that in left as in Fig.2, and without releasing part held by right hand, the right forefinger goes under and through the loop formed in Fig.2, and grasps A with forefinger and thumb. Now it brings this corner right back through the loop to correspond with the position in Fig.3. It will be noticed that the left forefinger is still through the loop and the end B firmly held between tips of the first and second fingers.

This left forefinger is now turned so that it points towards floor with back of hand upward and finger remains in place while right hand pulls end A outward which makes the false knot.

I would advise doing this very slowly until you have become proficient and the moment the knot is formed the left hand moves away from it and fingers pulled out of loop in one move so that the spectators never realize that the finger could have been in loop at any time. The position of hands and handkerchief are now as in Fig. 4.

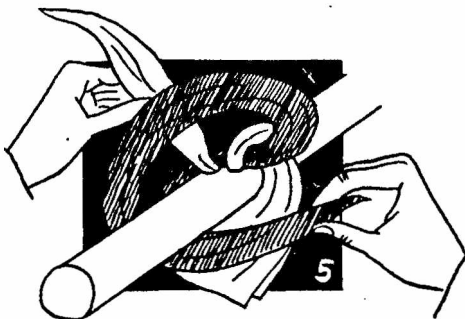




The right hand end is now passed around the wrist to the left, over and under and then the second knot is tied on top over the first. At no time during the process is the handkerchief released or let go of until both knots are tied.

Now a slight upward tug will release the silk and it apparently passes up through the wrist. The second knot will still remain to convince everyone that the handkerchief didn't have to be untied in order to pull it through the wrist.

A careful consideration of the drawings will make this entire routine plain and a few trials will convince the performer of the effectiveness of this trick.



THE IMPOSSIBLE CARD DISCOVERY

I've used this effect for newspaper men over a period of years and have found it to be an astounding mystery to those who have seen it.

Regardless of the method used, I want to impress my readers that, presented with the necessary sang-froid and address it becomes something that will be talked about.

Two decks of cards are used, one being a single force deck with cards all alike, and the other being a straight deck minus the card to be unknowingly forced.

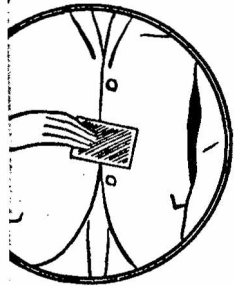
The force deck at the start is in the performer's left trouser pocket on its long side and with the back of deck towards audience or outside. From hereon I shall depict this in the exact manner it is presented before imaginary spectators.

'Now that the cards are mixed and shuffled I am going to show you just what you are expected to do. I want you to place the pack in your left trouser pocket so - (performer places deck in pocket alongside force deck but in a standing position) - then you are to withdraw a card from the middle of the pack in this manner, and without looking at it, hold it close to the body and place it in the right hand pocket so - (performer does this as he talked, with a card from the straight deck). Is everything clear?' (As this is said, performer brings force deck from left pocket, and the card from right pocket which is placed on bottom of force deck.)



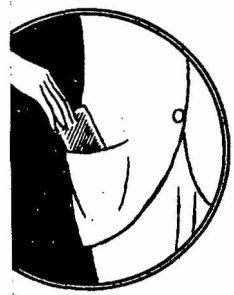
As spectator acknowledges clearness of instructions, performer hands him deck to place in pocket, which he does with back of cards towards audience.

Performer turns his back and directs spectator. When the withdrawn card is safely within other pocket, performer turns and asks for balance of the deck. And now comes a test of the performer's showmanship and offhandedness.



Taking the pack from the spectator he says, 'Did you do just as I directed? You placed the deck in your pocket in this manner? (Again puts deck in pocket alongside straight deck but on side) You withdrew one card only - you placed it in other pocket?'

As performer suits action of words and card nears other pocket, left hand draws straight deck from left pocket and as spectator acknowledges these questions, performer places card on deck and tosses same to table saying, 'All right then, I will now try to perform the test.'



Touching the spectator's right pocket with one finger the performer, after thoughtful deliberation, slowly names the card.

This test combines audacity, showmanship, subtlety and deliberation; four vital points that are necessary to any successful effect.

CARD'S OF THOUGHT

This is a variation of a very old trick, but in my method it has the added features that ten cards are given each spectator, and none of the cards named until the very end of the effect. To the initiate it can be made to seem like a modern miracle.

Effect: Performer takes a pack of cards and gives each of five spectators a bunch of them so that the entire deck is among audience. He tells them to shuffle their packets well and then look them over carefully, finally selecting one card which they are to place in their pocket. They also keep the remainder of their packet until the finish.

At this time the performer announces that by use of psychology and the study of expressions, he will endeavor to name the cards selected, all of which he then proceeds to do.

This effect requires some preliminary preparation but once it is done, the performer will have one of the finest club or parlor tricks extant, and always be ready to present same under any conditions.

Needed are five boards made of three-ply about four inches wide and long enough to accommodate ten cards in a row. The cards may overlap a little to conserve space as per drawing. In making this set of boards, shuffle a deck and lay out ten cards in a row on each board as they come, the only restriction being that they be alternated according to color only, it not making any difference whether the first card of each board be red or black.

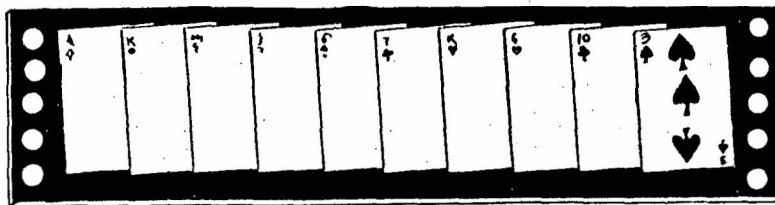
After the boards are thus constructed, take another deck and proceed to arrange them as follows: This deck is to be divided into five piles of ten cards each and the piles numbered from one to five. In the first pile put duplicates of the first and sixth cards on each board. In the second pile put duplicates of the second and seventh cards on each board. The third pile is made up of the third and eighth. The fourth pile made from the fourth and ninth and the fifth or last pile made from duplicates of the fifth and tenth cards on each board. Now assemble the five piles into one deck in order from one to five from the top down. It is obvious from the above that only fifty cards are in use, any two cards having been discarded. This completes the preparation.

If possible for performer to do so, false shuffle the cards at start and then state that you will handle the deck in a few bunches. It isn't necessary to state how many bunches or how many cards, but the five groups of ten cards each are given out in a haphazard manner. The performer is certain to note the order they are given out and mentally number these spectators from one to five.

They are then asked to shuffle their cards, select one after due consideration and place it in their pocket. At this time the performer states that he will try to fathom their card through a psychological routine and the five boards are produced so that they may see a duplicate of their selected card and aid the performer by means of this second mental impression.

These boards must have at each end, in the form of decorations, five thumb tacks or something similar. At one end these five tacks are pushable so they can be left in or out, the small difference not being apparent to anyone but the performer. The tacks at other end are only dummies. The illustration will make this simple feature clear, but even though simple it plays an important part.

Any board is now picked up and shown to the five spectators in their numerical order. As it is shown to the first person who received a packet, the performer's finger rests on the top thumb tack. The party is asked if he sees his card and the answer is to be simply 'yes' or 'no'. If he says 'no' the board is shown to the second party and at the same time the finger is shifted to the second thumb tack. We will surmise that this party says 'yes'. Upon hearing same, the performer merely presses this second tack in and proceeds to the third party, again shifting finger to the third tack. This routine is repeated with all five of the spectators and each time that one of them sees his card, the proper tack is pushed in.



The remaining four boards are shown separately in exactly the same manner to each of the five spectators or until such a time when all five have seen their cards.

After each board is shown it is laid on the table facing the performer so that all of the cards are in view. At this time the performer can make a short talk on his study of expressions when a person sees a card they are thinking of and how different people assume different attitudes, some even unconsciously changing the tone of their voice and betraying their very card while making an effort not to.

Now the performer asks anyone of the spectators to speak up and request the identify of his card. We will assume that the third man asks what card he has in his pocket. All that the performer does now is place his hand to forehead, and thus shield his eyes as he gives a side glance at the boards on table. He looks for one that has the third pin pushed down and when found, he knows that the selected card is either the third or eighth card on that board.

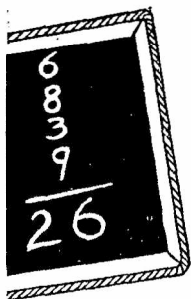
Now is to be seen why the colors were alternated in making up the boards. The performer knows that one of these two cards duplicates the one held by spectator but he does not know which, the red or the black. In a vague sort of way he says, 'It seems to be a red card. Is that right, sir?' If 'yes' he continues and names the card, asking spectator to remove same from pocket and show audience. If 'no' performer knows the card anyway and proceeds with the revelation as before.

This is repeated until all are named correctly. It will be found a surprising fact that quite often all five cards will be on two or three boards which shortens the time and presentation considerably.

In the original form I never used any push pins for the reason that I resorted to mnemonics and therefore every card in the pack had an individual number. I mention this because no doubt many of my readers know this arrangement. Those fortunate enough to have mastered this very useful knowledge can make the boards directly from the arranged deck. They will then discover that if, say number four sees his card in the third group, his card will be number 34 in the arrangement, and if the third man saw his card in the fourth group it would be forty-three; in other words, fourth board, third card. It is only necessary for performer to associate that card with the number of spectator, whether one, two, three, four or five. Then at the finish the five cards can be named purely from memory and without recourse to the boards at all. Those who have studied memory work will find that such

an application adds a fine touch to the effect, and those who haven't and do not care to, need not be concerned as the first method will be found to be quite all that can be desired.

AL BAKER'S ADDITION TRICK



It seems as though every magician's wife at some time or other, feels that she would like to play a part in the performance of her necromantic husband. The following is an old favorite of mine and I think it an ideal trick for cases of this kind, particularly so because it requires very little study and can be performed anywhere at a moment's notice.

Effect: The performer's wife is requested to leave the room. The performer takes a slate or pad and asks one of the spectators to give him a single figure which is duly written down. This is continued with others until four or five have been secured and written in a single column.

Slate is then handed a spectator to hold so that the figures cannot be seen. The performer leaves room by another exit so that when the lady is brought back she never has a chance to see the performer, or vice versa. Walking to spectator who holds the slate with the writing downward, she touches the back of slate with fingertips, and gives the correct total of the column. The slate can be covered with a handkerchief if so desired so that lady cannot even see it and be cued through some secret marking. The effect can also be repeated several times without any chance of detection.

Method: There should be at least ten people in the audience or gathering. Before the performance it is necessary for performer and wife to associate ten people with the figures from 1 to 0. The running order of the figures should not be too even but rather irregular, and after a few performances, a mere glance at a room full of people will be sufficient to lay out a plan of attack as it were.

The lady leaves the room. Performer takes slate and chalk, and going to anyone requests a figure. This is written and the process continued. As these are written down, the performer mentally keeps track of the total until such time when it arrives among the twenties.

It has already been arranged with lady that the total of first test will be in the twenties. In our example, for instance, the first number was 6, followed by 8, 6 and 9. The total, now having reached twenty or more, namely, 26, the performer dares not go further so merely hands slate to spectator who represents the number 6 to performer and wife, and asks that he keep it covered. Now performer leaves room and lady returns. At a glance she knows that spectator number 6 is holding slate and therefore that the total is 26. She climactically reveals this and retires again for a repetition of the effect. This time it is mutually known that the total will be among the thirties, and again she succeeds. If repeated again, the total goes back among the twenties.

You will find this a very clever test and one that the Missus and yourself will find well worth the little time necessary to master it.

ANOTHER ROPE IS CUT —AND RESTORED!

There have been both good and bad rope tricks invented during the past few years, but I include this one as being worthy of a place among the better ones, both because of its simplicity and practicability

A piece of soft rope about 10 inches in length is made into an endless loop by sewing the ends together with white thread.

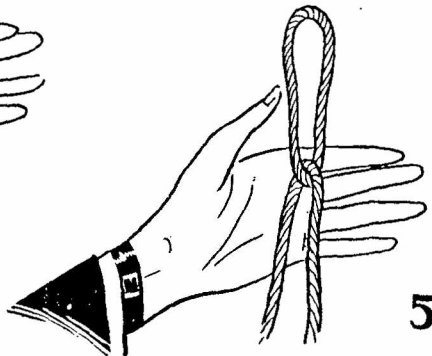
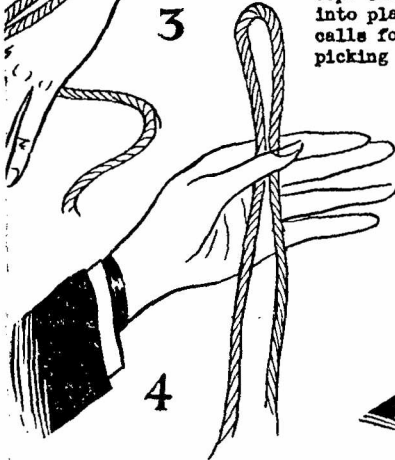
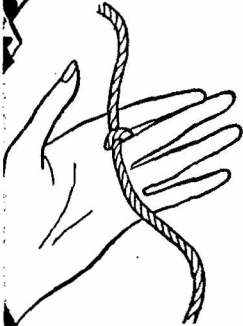
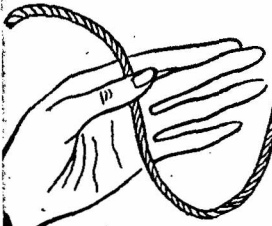
The long length of rope is threaded through loop and the sewn end is tucked under the band of wrist watch as per drawings. The loop runs behind back of hand and between first and second fingers, thumb hiding end of loop as in Fig. 1

Now rope can be casually pulled back and forth as palm of hand is held facing audience.

Rope ends are now evened up so that middle of same is in hand. Right hand grasps rope and loop at root of fingers and draws loop and all through now partially closed left hand and the rope is now offered for cutting.

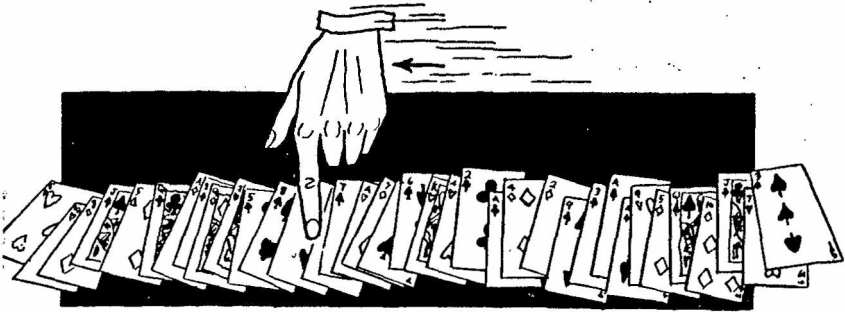
After cutting (really the loop) the ends are knotted together and gotten rid of by trimming away, sliding off, or any of the other well known methods.

The practical magician will realize that such a rope can be at hand on his table, picked up and pushed into place with a single move at whatever time his program calls for it, the mere turning to his table and apparently picking it up being the only interval necessary.



THE FINGER POINTS

16



This is undoubtedly the closest approach to genuine mindreading as is possible to get. Nothing is done that a magician or trickster could find fault with in any way. And most important, it can be done anywhere, at any time, and with any cards that are at hand.

The magician hands the deck to spectator to shuffle and at the same time asks him to just think of any card in the deck. The card is not touched or removed but just thought of.

Taking the mixed pack, performer spreads them across table with the faces up. The spectator is told to hold his right hand over the cards with the forefinger pointing downward and move it slowly from one end of the row to the other and back again. When he comes to his thought of card he is told to mentally say 'that's it,' but under no circumstances to hesitate or stop.

The performer, who has been standing at a distance, returns, picks up deck and places behind back. Spectator is asked the number of spots on his thought of card. The performer replies, 'I thought so,' as he lays a card face down on table. The spectator names entire card and the performer is found to be correct.

The secret is absurdly simple but it works, and with proper presentation and showmanship it appears to be a miracle to the uninitiated.

It is a psychological fact that a person, upon seeing his card and being requested to mentally say, 'that's it,' will hesitate the merest fraction of a second. It now comes the one point that has made the feat impossible of duplication by those even in the know.

I mentioned above that the performer stood at a distance and that is the secret. If he were close and right over the moving hand, the almost imperceptible hesitation would never be noticed. A little distance away, however, the action becomes magnified and the performer knows the approximate location within five or six cards at the very most.

In picking up the deck, the cards are cut at this group to bring them to top, and the performer instantly memorizes them in the following manner. Disregarding the suits, the values are remembered in order as a telephone number, or say, 98-406, zero always representing the ten spot. Picture cards are as easily remembered and a single attempt will prove to the reader how simple this process is.

With the deck behind back, it is simply necessary to ask the number of spots on the thought of card. If the spectator in this case replied, 'Four,' the performer would merely say, 'I thought so,' at the same time bringing the third or 'four' card to the front and laying it on table. Thus, when spectator at last divulges the identity of his mentally selected card, the performer has him turn it over and there it is.

THE MATCHMAKERS

17

This is an old effect of mine, and the apparatus employed is very much older than myself. This present day craze of jig-saw puzzles brings it back to mind showing that history always repeats itself in some form or other.

The trick calls for two Card Pedestals, an accessory well known to the old timers of magic but something seldom made use of in this generation and age of 'take a card.'

The construction of the apparatus is illustrated and the working of same is made very clear to my readers.

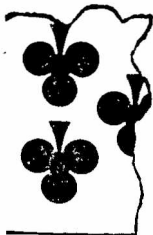
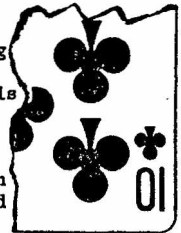
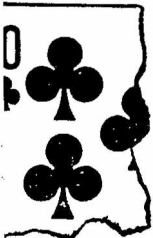
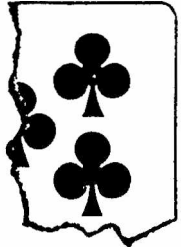
To prepare: Other than an ordinary deck, the performer has two extra duplicates, say the Queen of Diamonds and the Five of Clubs. The stands are at the opposite sides of the table. Take the Queen, fold her in half and tear on the crease. Placing the two pieces together fold these in half and tear once more, making four quarters. Taking three of the four pieces, these are placed face down on one card table and covered with the shell top. The remaining corner is placed in the right trouser pocket from where it can be quickly secured.

The Five is then put through the same routine, using the second stand, and the remaining corner also placed in right trouser pocket so that you always know which is which. The Queen and Five duplicates in the pack are placed on the bottom and you are ready.

The performer starts out by forcing the two cards on different people. He asks each one to fold their card in half very exactly and then tear it through on the crease. They are then to place the two halves together, fold again, and tear these also on the crease. It is very important that the performer impress upon them the idea of doing the tearing carefully so that the pieces will all look alike from the back.

The pieces are then placed face down on the table, and all eight mixed as one would shuffle dominoes. The spectator on right is asked to pick up any one piece, and without looking at it, lay it on the pedestal nearest him. The other spectator in turn is asked to do likewise. This is repeated until each has placed three pieces on his respective stand.

While this is being done, performer's hand has gone into right pocket and secured the corner of the Queen, which he holds finger palmed in his right hand. Addressing the spectator who is standing nearest the Queen pedestal, the performer asks him to hand him (performer) one of the remaining



two pieces. Now comes the crucial move. Extending his left hand, palm upward, the performer has spectator lay the chosen piece thereon. Performer brings his two hands together, fingers curled slightly around the pieces, and the thumb and forefinger of left hand take hold of the piece held in right hand. Right hand draws away slowly which brings corner into view and gives impression of it being drawn from the left hand, whereas it has really come from right.

Left hand drops to side as with right hand performer places the corner face out in front of the Queen pedestal. At the same time the left hand goes to left trouser pocket and leaves corner behind.

The same procedure takes place with the remaining corner on table and the Five corner from pocket. At this time the pedestals each contain three pieces selected at random by the spectators, and in front is one of the remaining quarters.

Performer now covers each pedestal, pressing it down to annex the shell top, and after a short discourse on the possibility of solving jigsaw puzzles by sense of touch, requests each gentleman to remove the cover of his pedestal.

It is found that each pedestal contains three pieces that fit together as one card, the fourth quarter in front supplying the missing corner. And once more the later day magicians have to call the old masters to their aid in order to perform a modern trick.

" SAY WHEN " !

This effect of the 'think stop' nature can be used in the same program with the 'Pet Hat Trick' number, and if used a little ahead of same, the use of the hat will make the later effect even more natural.

Two spectators select a card from the deck and after noting, return same. The performer shuffles the card and returns to the front. He states that he will locate these cards through the spectators themselves by means of intuition on their part. He explains that he will pass the cards, one at a time from the deck to the hat, and whenever the spectator feels an urge to say 'stop', that will be the card selected without fail. This is done with both spectators, and each time, regardless of when called upon to stop, the selected card 'happens' to be the actual one in hand.

This is a very strong effect even though accomplished by comparatively simple means. The deck used is set as follows: It is a two kind deck, or one made up of two different cards only. On top are placed about seven different cards and an indifferent card is also placed on the bottom. Near center of deck, the top card of the lower half of duplicates is a short card, and right above this is still another indifferent card. Thus, when deck is later cut at short card, this indifferent card will come to the bottom.

The hat is resting on table, a little to right of performer. With deck in hand, and giving same a false overhand shuffle if possible, two cards are selected, one of the forcing cards being given each spectator. These are returned among their own kind and now performer explains that the spectators will practically find them themselves without knowing where they are.

In explaining how he will pass the cards, the performer illustrates by passing one at a time the seven top cards of the deck over and dropping them into hat. In doing this the performer stands these cards on their sides against side of hat with the faces of cards against the hat backs outward.

Now having explained the procedure, he apparently removes them and places them on bottom of deck, but actually takes back only about three, leaving the rest behind. Now the actual effect is ready to start. Slowly the cards are taken from top of deck, passed across the intervening space and dropped into the hat face up on bottom. This is continued until spectator says 'stop.' The performer asks him to name card and it is turned around and shown to be the actual card selected.

Now comes a subtle point. Reaching into hat to regain the cards passed, two or three of the indifferent cards are tipped over onto the face up packet there, and this bunch is now brought out openly with face of packet towards audience, the performer remarking 'I am glad you stopped at that spot because if you had called out sooner you would have missed it.'

This packet is now placed on bottom of deck and same cut at the short card. Now the second spectator is asked to watch and once more cards are passed, the spectator calling 'stop' whenever he so desires. As soon as the card is verified as correct, the remaining indifferent cards in hat are tipped down upon the duplicates, and this bunch brought out as before. This subtle touch in showing the cards taken out of hat is a feature that waylays any suspicion that might arise. I can truthfully say, however, that I have never been called on this as the handling of the indifferent cards covers the use of the duplicates which makes the trick infallible.

AL BAKER'S BILLET MYSTERY

20

This trick is a favorite of mine and as there are a number of involved moves, I would not advise anyone doing it until he has each one mastered properly. I would also recommend that the directions be followed with envelopes and slips in hand. The moves thus learned will be found very useful in many other effects of a psychic or mental nature.

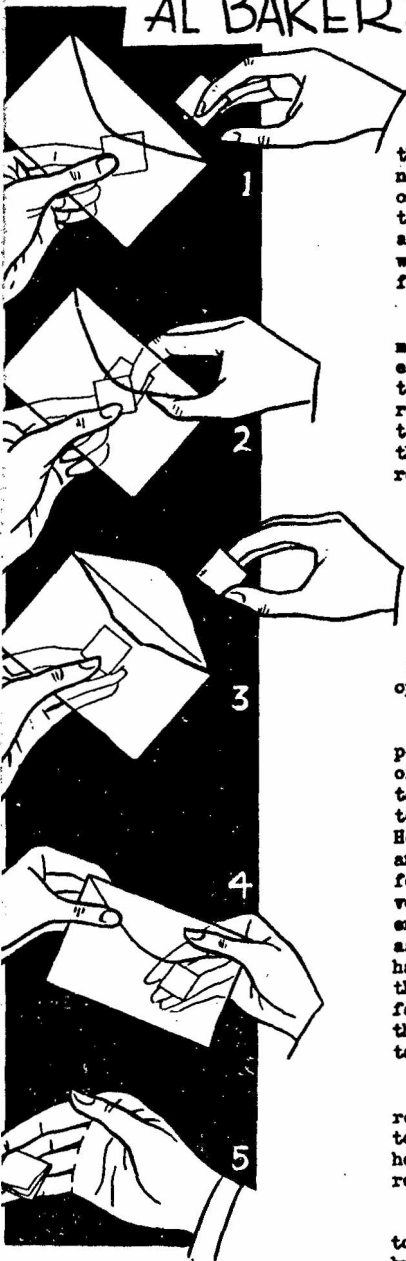
The performer gives a short talk on psychic matters and states that he is going to give an exhibition of a so-called medium giving a test to a client, or in the vernacular, 'giving a reading to a sitter.' The audience is requested to watch everything that happens and imagine that they alone are the one who is having a reading.

Performer has a card table and two chairs on platform or in the room. These are so arranged that audience will be facing them. A gentleman is asked to come forward and seat himself on one side of table, performer placing him so that spectator's right side is towards audience. Thus performer's left side is towards audience when he sits down opposite spectator.

There are a few envelopes on table and a pencil. Each envelope contains a folded piece of paper. Performer opens first envelope, takes out folded paper and asks the gentleman to think of something he had for breakfast. He is to write that down on paper, fold it and the performer places it openly in envelope, folds flap down and without sealing the envelope is thrown on table. Picking up second envelope, the paper is removed and performer asks gentleman to think of how much money he has in his pocket as near as possible, and this is to be written down as before. Performer places this in second envelope and this is also tossed with flap unsealed to table.

Picking up third envelope, performer removes billet and asks gentleman this time to think of some city, home town or locality he thinks a lot of, and the same routine is repeated for the last time.

Spectator is given one envelope and told to place it in his inside pocket and then told by performer that he is to do everything that





performer instructs him to do. Performer picks up one of the remaining envelopes and holding it to forehead says, 'This billet is pertaining to money - the sum is four dollars and eighty-five cents. Is that correct, sir?' This is acknowledged as being right and returning paper to envelope performer tosses it to him to check upon and keep.

Taking second envelope, performer removes billet and hands same to spectator who is told to hold to his forehead. Performer takes spectator's wrist and dramatically states that this is a city and then calls it as being Waverly, New York. Spectator is asked to open billet and again it is acknowledged as being correct. Performer now states that spectator has one envelope in his own pocket and asks that it be brought out and held to his head with the billet still inside. Taking the wrist of spectator again, performer says that it is 'shredded wheat,' and the last of the three thoughts has been revealed.

Method: There are a few points to bring out clearly at the start in order to explain this effect correctly. The billets are two and one quarter by one and three quarters inches, and instead of being of paper which has a tendency to rattle when being folded or manipulated, consists of very light paste-board similar to a cheap visiting card. Fold this in half and then in quarters, making heavy creases each way. Open and fold again in the same manner but in the opposite way and this will insure them opening regardless of the way folded by spectator.

The next step to learn is as follows: If the billet be held as in Fig. 5, you will find that thumb can be inserted in top fold as in Fig. 6, and by pressing thumb into fold and against forefinger, the paper snaps open in one move.

The next thing is to learn a very subtle switch of billets. If a billet be held behind envelope in left hand as in Fig. 1, and another billet held in right hand as also in Fig. 1, the right thumb can be inserted under flap as in Fig. 2, the right fingers dropping behind envelope. As right thumb opens flap upward, billet is exchanged behind envelope, and right hand comes away quickly with the exchanged billet as flap is left open, and the first billet containing writing is now on back of envelope in the same position as dummy was at start. The right hand now openly places the dummy billet into envelope and as right thumb folds flap down, the fingers go behind envelope and finger palm the concealed billet in right hand.

The envelopes used are nail nicked on the flap side in a manner so that they can be readily told apart as one, two and three. Each envelope has a folded billet inside at the start.

After spectator is seated, the performer picks up envelope number one, and placing it in left hand which has an extra dummy billet which is held against back as in figure one.

Billet is taken from envelope and handed man with request to write something he had for breakfast. Taking this back, the performer makes a switch as described before, and after apparently putting same in envelope, reaches the position where the actual written billet is finger palmed in right hand. Envelope is thrown on table and right hand now contains billet as in Fig. 5. The right hand is rested on table and thumb goes into position as in Fig. 6 as performer looks intently at man and asks him to now think of a sum of money. Second envelope is picked up with the left hand at this time and the right hand comes up behind same, the little finger of same coming under the flap to open same upward, and at the same time the billet is sprung open as was also described before. The position is now as in Fig. 7. Billet is taken out of envelope number two and handed spectator as performer reads the breakfast data. While spectator writes the money item, the left finger and thumb refold the billet on back of envelope as in Fig. 8, and the flap is closed down over the billet for time being as in Figs. 9 and 10. This enables the performer to freely handle envelope at this time and after a little practice these moves all blend into one and are smoothly done.

The gentleman has now written the sum of money and folded billet, and the left thumb pulls down billet a short ways so that flap can be opened. Performer takes billet from spectator with right fingers, and as he brings it behind the open flap which is kept open with knuckles of hand, the money slip is drawn back into finger palm in right hand, and finger tips take the breakfast slip and deliberately place this slip in envelope which is tossed to table. Thus, envelope one contains the dummy and envelope two the breakfast billet. The money slip is still finger palmed in right hand which now reaches into third envelope which has been picked up with left hand, and takes out the third blank which is handed spectator to write the name of a city. The same manœuvre is gone through with as was done the first time, and the money billet opened and left on envelope as in Figs. 6, 7, and 8, and this slip read while spectator writes on the last billet. After reading the billet on back of envelope, it is folded again as in Figs. 8, 9 and 10.

Taking the city slip back, it is exchanged for the money slip, just as the money slip was exchanged with the breakfast slip, and the money slip is openly placed in envelope three. Now number one has the dummy, number two has the breakfast and number three envelope the money billet, the city billet being in curled up fingers of right hand.

Picking up envelopes and mixing them to confuse the spectator, hand him number two envelope (breakfast) with the request to place same in his inside pocket. Now pick up number three envelope (money) and say, 'Here's what I want you to do.' As if to show him, performer reaches into envelope with fingers of right hand, and brings out billet, but not the one that was there, instead the one (city) that was curled up in fingers. Holding this to forehead, the performer says, 'This is a sum of money.' The amount is then revealed and to see if correct the billet (city) is opened towards himself and the name of city read.

Folding this billet again, fingers are reinserted into envelope as if replacing and it is brought out again finger palmed, the envelope being thrown on table in front of spectator. As this one contains the money slip, it can be verified.

Picking up the next envelope (dummy), the flap is opened, fingers of right hand are inserted, and they bring out the finger palmed (city) billet. This is handed spectator to hold to his own forehead and while he holds it there, the performer's fingers go into envelope in a careless manner and finger palm the dummy, at same time asking spectator to concentrate. Performer says, 'You have written the name of a city and it is Waverly, New York. The empty envelope is now thrown to table. The dummy is pocketed and performer asks spectator to take last envelope from pocket and think of what he had for breakfast, and this is then revealed correctly.

I know well enough that this description may sound complicated, and it is complicated, but if just tried and followed with the envelopes and billets in hand, the reader will quickly grasp the routine and moves. One fair test before an audience will prove its value and with three envelopes and four billets you can perform a test that will create an astounding impression. The performer who does master this will have an effect far away from anything being done by anyone else.

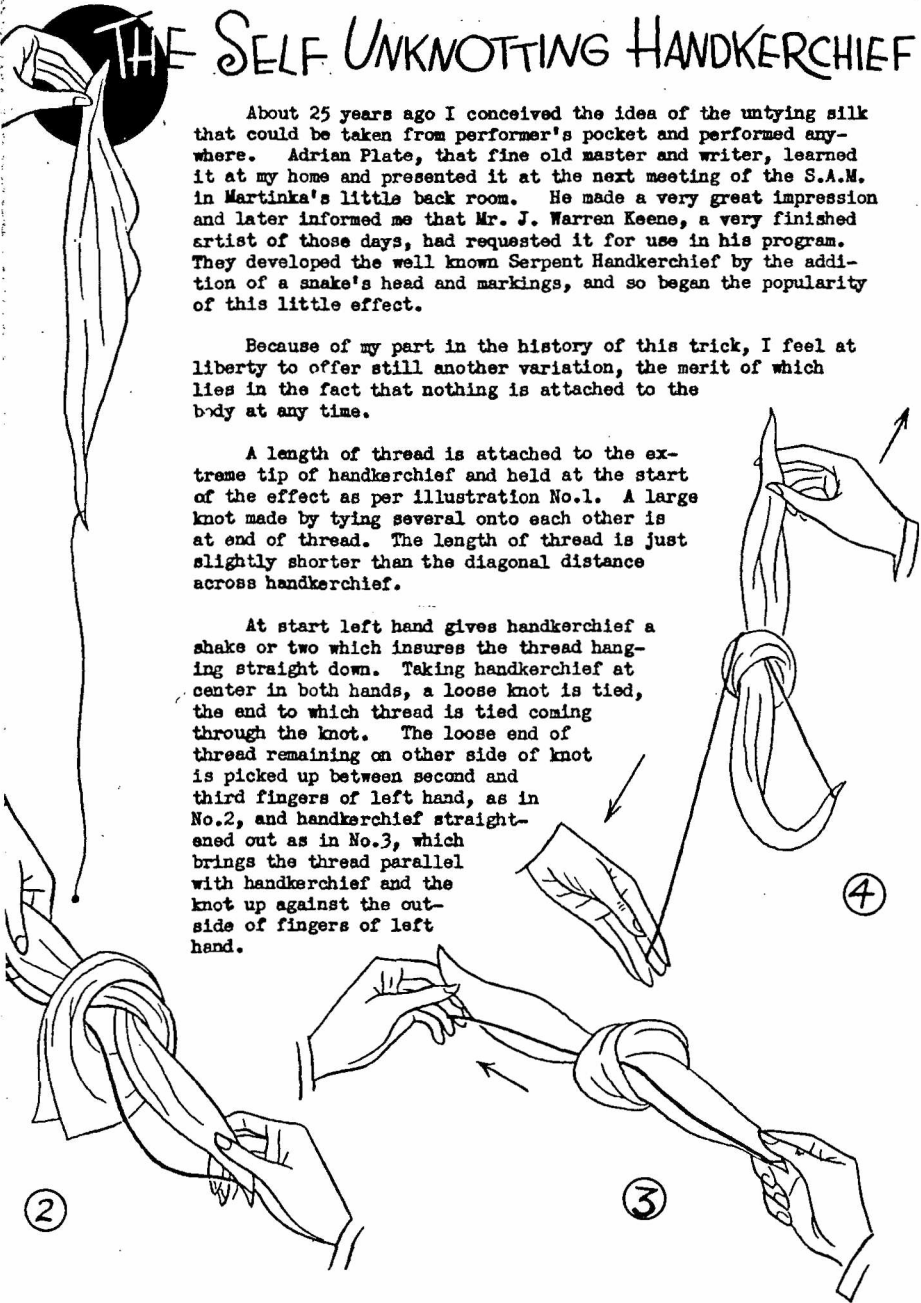
THE SELF UNKNOTTING HANDKERCHIEF

About 25 years ago I conceived the idea of the untying silk that could be taken from performer's pocket and performed anywhere. Adrian Plate, that fine old master and writer, learned it at my home and presented it at the next meeting of the S.A.M. in Martinka's little back room. He made a very great impression and later informed me that Mr. J. Warren Keene, a very finished artist of those days, had requested it for use in his program. They developed the well known Serpent Handkerchief by the addition of a snake's head and markings, and so began the popularity of this little effect.

Because of my part in the history of this trick, I feel at liberty to offer still another variation, the merit of which lies in the fact that nothing is attached to the body at any time.

A length of thread is attached to the extreme tip of handkerchief and held at the start of the effect as per illustration No.1. A large knot made by tying several onto each other is at end of thread. The length of thread is just slightly shorter than the diagonal distance across handkerchief.

At start left hand gives handkerchief a shake or two which insures the thread hanging straight down. Taking handkerchief at center in both hands, a loose knot is tied, the end to which thread is tied coming through the knot. The loose end of thread remaining on other side of knot is picked up between second and third fingers of left hand, as in No.2, and handkerchief straightened out as in No.3, which brings the thread parallel with handkerchief and the knot up against the outside of fingers of left hand.



Performer can now hold handkerchief in this position of No.3 and there is nothing that can be seen. The right hand drops its' corner so that handkerchief hangs down from left. Right hand then takes corner from left and the left hand still holding thread drops to side. A slight upward motion of the right hand now as in No.4 causes the handkerchief to visibly untie itself and the effect may be repeated if so desired.

I have found that the best handkerchief to use for this is a soft silken one of 18 or 23 inches.