

MODERN CONJURING

Compiled by J.C. CANNELL
VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE MAGICIAN'S CLUB

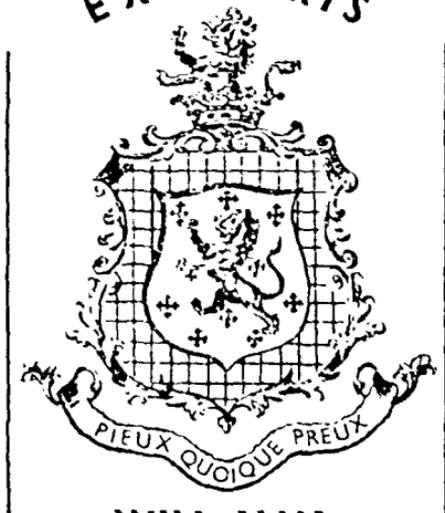


Tricks with
CARDS • COINS
HANDKERCHIEFS

WATER AND
LIQUIDS • PAPER
MATCHES



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MODERN CONJURING

BY

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Etc. Etc.

Illustrated by Innumerable Diagrams

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Modern Conjuring

Card Tricks

I

The Four Burglars

THE performer, taking up the cards, runs through them and takes out the four knaves. Whilst thus engaged he keeps up a running "patter" somewhat to the following effect :

"I will perform my first experiment, ladies and gentlemen, with the four knaves. I always commence with this trick, so that I can tell whether I have any control over the cards or not, for I invariably find the knaves the most intractable cards in the pack, and if I prove successful with them I know that I shall not have much trouble with the other cards. Of course, you can get a lot of utility out of the knaves even, if you catch them young enough, and I have four at home so tame that they will eat out of my hand. I will try what can be done with these strangers, but I am a bit dubious about the result, for they are a particularly truculent looking lot."

During this harangue the performer has found and taken out the knaves. Arranging them fanwise in his left hand he exhibits them to the audience.

"Here, then, we have the four rascals. Of course, you all know that there are only four knaves in the pack, and I want you to particularly observe that these *are* the knaves, not kings, and that they belong to this pack." Here he shows the backs of the cards. "Now

you have all heard the expression 'as thick as thieves,' well I will show you how that saying originated. These four desperadoes set out one moonless night to rob a house. For the purpose of 'reconstructing the crime,' we will suppose the pack here to be the house. In the first place they all got on the roof intending to gain entry by the sky-light." The conjurer closes the fan and puts the knaves, face downward, on the top of the pack. "However, on second thoughts, they decided that it would perhaps be wiser to have some one to guard against interruption, and so one of the precious beauties was sent down into the front garden to keep watch. Here he is, on duty." The top knave is taken off the pack and placed upright against the ash-tray. "The other three then got to work. Entering by the skylight, one of them made his way down to the cellars, whether in search of liquid refreshment or not I don't know. Observe his entry into the lower regions." He takes off the second card and inserts it about one-fourth of the way up from the bottom of the pack, and pushes it in until flush with the other cards. "The third burglar devoted his attention to the dining- and drawing-rooms in the *middle* storey of the house" (the third card is inserted about the centre of the pack) "whilst Bill Sikes, number four, confined his depredations to the bedrooms at the *top* of the house" (the fourth card is pushed in the pack about one-fourth of the way down from the top). "Now, whilst busily engaged in different parts of the house, as illustrated by their widely separated positions in the pack, the danger signal was given by their comrade below, and before you could say 'Jack of Trumps' the slippery rascals were all together on the roof again and quickly joined the other in the garden." He clicks the cards (expressive of the signal) and to the amazement of the company he takes off the roof (top of the pack) the

other three knaves, one by one, and places them with their fellow on the table.

Explanation.—The *modus operandi* of this effective little trick is very simple. Whilst the conjurer keeps the company amused with his opening patter, he is arranging the four knaves in the shape of a fan. When this is held up to the spectators' view they see the four knaves all right, but what they do not see is the fact that behind



FIG. 1.

the second knave from the left there are secreted three other cards, nicely squared up and flush with the knave, so that whether viewed from either front or behind there appears to be the one card only, namely, the knave. Fig. 1 illustrates the position of the three ordinary cards. The reader will now readily grasp the position. When the fan is closed and placed on top of the pack, the first card (a genuine knave) is put in the "garden." After this the next three cards, which we now know to be ordinary cards (*i.e.* not knaves), are

placed one by one in the "cellar," "dining-room," and "bedroom," respectively. This leaves the next three cards (which, of course, are the other three knaves which have never moved from that position) to be taken off the "roof," one by one, at the climax.

The performer should be careful not to let the audience see the faces of the three ordinary cards, but this can be easily avoided by holding the cards well down so that the backs only are seen, and by directing the company's whole attention to the positions where they are placed in the pack.

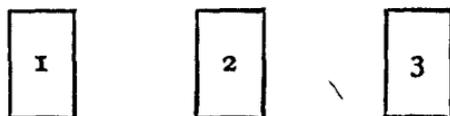
II

Divination

"The knaves proved more docile than I anticipated, and I will now try my powers of divination on these strange cards before proceeding to more important experiments to effect which that power is necessary." The performer puts the pack down on the table. "Will any gentleman—perhaps Mr. Jones will oblige—divide the pack into three heaps on the table? No need to deal them, sir, just cut them into three portions. Thank you. Now I will tell you what the top cards of these three heaps are without looking at them. Observe! This is the seven of clubs." He names the card first, and then picks up the top card of one of the heaps, and without showing it to the company proceeds: "Quite correct; the next is the ten of diamonds" (picks up the top card of second heap), "right again; and this is the King of hearts" (picks up top card of the third heap). "There you are, seven of clubs, ten of diamonds, King of hearts, just as I stated." He hands the three cards to a member of the company. "Will you please examine the cards carefully and assure the company that there are no

marks of any kind on their backs by which they could be identified? Are you satisfied or would you like a further proof of my power? Here goes!" He names the next three top cards in a similar manner, and again hands them to the spectators for examination.

Explanation.—At the conclusion of the "four burglars" trick, whilst the audience are discussing the climax, the performer unostentatiously gets a glimpse of the first and second cards on top of the pack and impresses them on his memory. We will suppose the first to be the seven of clubs and the second the deuce of hearts. He then puts the pack on the table and invites a guest to cut it into three heaps. The invariable method of doing this is to grasp the pack about two-thirds of the way down, take off the upper two-thirds and leaving the lower portion as one heap, then to drop half the cards in the hand on the table for the second heap, and finally to put down the top portion of the pack as the third heap, thus :—



number one heap being the bottom portion, number two the centre portion, and number three the top part of the pack.

Now, the top card of heap three (which originally was the top card of the whole pack) is known to the performer to be the seven of clubs, and this is the name he calls out first, but instead of taking up the actual seven of clubs (top card of third heap) he takes up the top card of heap *one*. This, of course, may be any card, and in the illustration above proved to be the ten of diamonds, but the conjurer smiles complacently as if well pleased with

his success, says, "Quite correct!" and calls out ten of diamonds as the name of the top card of heap two. He takes up this card (actually, in the illustration, the King of hearts), assures his audience that he is again successful, and states the King of hearts to be the denomination of the top card of the third heap. When he has taken up this card (actually, as we know, the seven of clubs) he has then in his hands all three cards that he has named, and he hands these to one of the guests for examination. He proceeds in exactly the same manner in naming the second lot of three cards. The present top card of the third heap was originally the second card from the top of the pack (for the first was removed in the former part of the trick), and is known to the performer to be the deuce of hearts. Accordingly the deuce of hearts is the first denomination called out, but the performer takes up the top card of the first heap. From that card he gets the clue for the title of the top card of the second heap, and so on, as before. Of course, the spectators are not shown the cards until all three are taken off, and to avoid being requested to show them before then the names should be called out briskly and with suitable patter.

Although, at first sight, the above explanation may appear somewhat complicated and involved, the reader will find no difficulty in comprehending the meaning if he will but follow each step carefully with the cards before him.

III

An Exhibition of Thought-Reading

"Marvellous, isn't it? The next item on my programme is a little experiment in thought-reading and for this I require someone's kind assistance. Now, is

there any gentleman here who prides himself on his 'stick-to-it-iveness' and powers of concentration? Don't all speak at once! What, no one? A lady, then? Come, don't be shy. Miss James? No? Mr. Jones? No? Then I shall have to select someone myself. If I am any judge of physiognomy Mr. Roberts there must have the will power and determination of a Napoleon and a Julius Cæsar combined. Will you oblige? Thank you. Now, first of all, take the pack into your own hands and thoroughly shuffle the cards so that there can be no deception. Thank you." The conjurer takes back the pack and puts out three heaps of cards on the table. "We have here three groups of cards, with ten cards in each group. Now, Mr. Roberts, I want you to select any one of these three heaps, take the cards into your own hands and mentally choose one of the cards, impressing it firmly on your mind. You have done so? Now shuffle the cards in any way you think fit, if you think there is any possibility of me knowing the position of the card by watching where your eye rested." He takes back the cards. "Thank you. You still retain a very vivid impression of the card you selected? Well, stick to it, for remember that both your own and my reputation are at stake. Observe! I put your cards between the other two heaps so that I cannot get at them from either the top or the bottom. Now, with a person of paltry and limited ideas I would attempt to bring the experiment to a conclusion after this one impression only, but with a man of Mr. Roberts' profound intellect, whose brain-cells must be influenced by many complex and ponderous thoughts daily, I dare not risk my chance of success with less than three impressions." Whilst pattering in this strain he has been dealing out the thirty (see p. 9) cards on to the table in three heaps again, exactly as he would in dealing out three of the "hands" for whist,

but taking care to place the cards regularly on top of one another without destroying the sequence. "You have received one impression, which I trust is a very strong one; now for the second. Is your card in this heap, sir?" The performer takes up one of the heaps, and, without looking at the faces of the cards, spreads them out fanwise and holds them up to his assistant so that he can get a good view of the cards. "No? In this one then?" He holds up a second heap in similar manner. "Yes? Well, does this second impression strike your—er—subconscious mentality like a sledgehammer?" (It may be hardly necessary to mention that the chosen card may happen to be in any of the three heaps.) "Good! You will observe, ladies and gentlemen, that all this time I have never seen the faces of the cards. Now to utilize the necessary interval before the third impression I will thoroughly re-shuffle the cards once more." He again places the heap containing the chosen card between the other two heaps and proceeds to deal out in three "hands" again, exactly as before. "Now, sir, this is the third time of asking. Is your card in this lot? No? In this then? No? Well, then, of course, it must be in the third heap" (it may happen to be in any heap). "Is that so?" He holds up the three groups fanwise, one after the other, as before. "It is there? Very well; take the cards into your own hands and whilst I have my back turned abstract the card you originally selected and put it face downwards on the table. Is it done?" The performer now faces his assistant. "You will admit that there is no possibility of me knowing what the card is at the present juncture? Very well, then! Please look steadfastly at my eyes and concentrate your thoughts on the denomination of the card you selected. Hum! Your card was a red card." Here the conjurer pauses impressively. "A diamond,"

(pause again); "one, two, three, three—your card was the three of diamonds. Am I right?" The assistant admits the impeachment and the card on the table is turned up and shown to the company in confirmation.

Explanation.—This trick is effected by an adaptation of a mathematical fact. The reader, however, will hardly be interested in a treatise on mathematics as to the "why and wherefore" but will probably be satisfied if he learns of the mechanical processes by which the desired result is attained. It appears to the writer that the best and simplest method of imparting this knowledge is to briefly recapitulate the sequence of actions leading to the climax. Before doing this it must be noted that a "terminological inexactitude" has been employed in the presentation of the trick as illustrated above. The trick is not, and cannot be, effected with thirty cards, but is performed with twenty-seven cards, that is, three groups of nine each. The statement that there are ten cards in each heap is merely the use or abuse of the "conjurer's licence," and is made to throw possible investigators of a mathematical turn of mind off the track. Having made this confession, we will proceed to an explanation of the *modus operandi*.

After the preliminary shuffling the performer takes the pack in his left hand, takes off *nine* cards with his right hand, puts them in box form on the table, and counts out two further heaps of *nine* cards each and places them also on the table. He directs the company's attention to the three heaps of *ten(?)* cards each. The assistant is allowed a free choice of one of the heaps, and when the card has been mentally selected, the group containing it is handed back to the performer, and is put *between* the other two groups. The twenty-seven cards are then dealt into three "hands," again as mentioned before, care being taken to preserve the sequence. The company's interest is meanwhile sustained by appropriate patter as

above. The heaps are then held up fanwise to the assistant and when he indicates which group (and it may be any) contains the chosen card, the heap specified is again put *between* the other two heaps. The performer emphasises the fact that he himself has not seen the faces of the cards, and on the pretence of utilising the requisite (?) interval by a thorough re-shuffling of the cards he again deals out three "hands." Again the heaps are held up fanwise to the assistant, but at this stage the performer, in spreading out the fan, must contrive unostentatiously to get a sight of the centre card (that is, the fifth from either end, as there are four cards on each side of it), for the middle card of whichever heap (and again it may be any of the three) is indicated as containing the chosen card is always the actual card itself. As soon therefore, as the assistant signifies which group contains his card, the performer knows what the card is, as it can only be the centre one, and of this he has obtained a previous glimpse in arranging the fan. To disclose the name of the card at this stage, however, would be a very crude ending, and to secure a more impressive and artistic climax the thought-reading bluff, as illustrated above, is brought into play.

IV

The Disappearing Ace

"These thought-reading experiments always put a big strain on my rather deficient mental equipment, so to relieve the tension I will now perform a little trick of a less complex nature, with the aces." Whilst speaking he has been running through the pack, and has found and taken out three of the aces. "I have here three aces, the ace of clubs, the ace of diamonds, and the ace of spades

He exhibits the three cards held fanwise in his left hand, and then puts them face downwards on the table. "Now this little trick is a good illustration of the hackneyed but true expression that 'the quickness of the hand deceives the eye,' and I want you to watch my hands very closely." He takes up the pack in his left hand and the first card of the three aces in his right hand, and without ostentatiously parading the fact he lets the spectators see plainly that it is the ace of clubs. "Observe! I will put the ace of clubs near the bottom of the pack, where it cannot be interfered with by 'palming' or any manipulation of that nature." He inserts the card in the pack about one-fourth of the way up from the bottom, and pushes it well home until flush with the other cards, and then holds up his hand to show that it is empty. "The ace of diamonds I insert right in the centre of the pack. Observe very closely where I put it, so that you may be confident that there is no possibility of getting at it either from the top or bottom. The ace of spades I insert near the top of the pack, so." As with the ace of clubs he lets the company see that it is a genuine ace that is being put in the pack. "Now the three aces are returned to the pack, my hands are empty," he shows his hands back and front, "I have nothing up my sleeve, and, in short, there is no deception whatever. Now, let me see, which ace was it that I put in the centre of the pack? Ah! yes, the diamond. Well, as the ace of diamonds was the card farthest away from any outside interference I will command that ace to 'Disappear!'" (he says the word sharply and authoritatively and at the same time 'clicks' the cards) "and I think you will find that it has obeyed my behest." He hands the pack to one of the spectators. "Will you please run through the cards and see if what I state is not correct? No ace of diamonds? I thought not. How can it be in the pack when it is here in my

waistcoat pocket ? ” He first shows his hand to be empty, and then turning back his coat, inserts the tips of his fingers in his vest pocket and slowly abstracts the missing card.

Explanation.—When the three cards are exhibited at the commencement of the trick, the middle card, although stated to be and appearing to be the ace of diamonds, is not actually that card, but is the ace of hearts made to resemble the ace of diamonds in the follow-

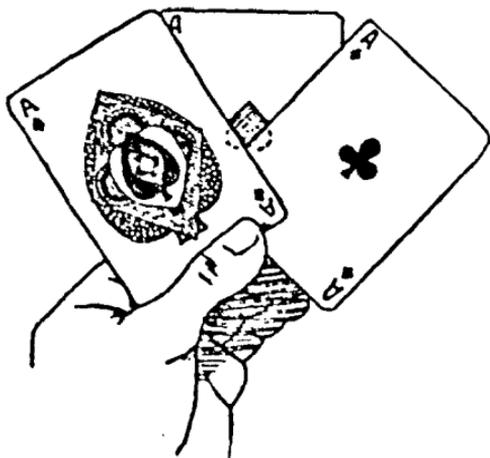


FIG. 2.

ing manner. The ace of hearts is turned apex upwards and the ace of clubs and the ace of spades are put on each side of it respectively, and cross the pip of the ace of hearts so as to conceal the bottom of the heart, and so that the angle of intersection is shaped like the bottom angle of a diamond, whilst the apex of the heart appears to be the upper angle of a diamond. Fig. 2 will illustrate the arrangement: If the reader will put this arrangement to a practical test he will find the illusion to be perfect, and, of course, th

audience not knowing the scope of the trick beforehand, will have no reason to suspect that the centre card is not what it purports to be. The reader will note that in presenting the trick it is recommended that the audience be given a full view of the club and spade prior to inserting those aces in the pack, but when putting in the false ace of diamonds the attention of the company must be directed solely to the fact that the card is being placed right in the centre of the pack "so that there is no possibility of getting at it either from the top or bottom." Notwithstanding the omission to show the face of this card, so unobservant of such small details are the majority of people, that from the fact of being plainly shown the other two aces, ninety-nine per cent. of the spectators would be prepared to make affidavit at the conclusion of the trick that they had seen the faces of all three aces before insertion in the pack.

Little further explanation is needed, for the reader will have rightly assumed that the genuine ace of diamonds was abstracted from the pack before commencing the performance, and has remained secreted in the conjurer's vest pocket until the appointed time for production. A more effective climax is to take the missing ace from the sleeve of a lady's blouse, but this entails a sister, wife, sweetheart, or friend being partially let into the secret, for, of course, the ace of diamonds has to be concealed in the sleeve beforehand, unless the performer can effectively "palm" a card, which it is assumed throughout this work he cannot do.

The "click" mentioned above (and also mentioned previously in the "four burglars" trick) is a little detail which adds dramatic effect at appropriate stages in many tricks, and is thus performed. The conjurer grasps the cards upright by the lower half in his left hand. With the thumb and forefinger of his right hand he bends the

upper part of the pack backwards, and then very quickly permits the cards to escape one by one from his fingers. (See Fig. 3.) The release of the cards

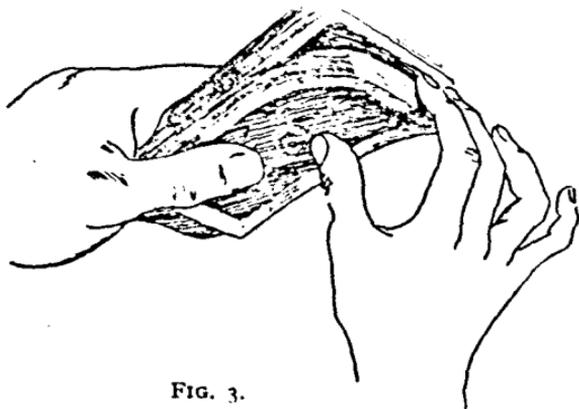


FIG. 3.

produces a sharp crackling sound which gives éclat to the trick when introduced at the proper moment.

V

Another Thought-Reading Trick

"A short while ago, with my humble assistance, Mr. Roberts gave you a proof of his remarkable mental powers of concentration, in a demonstration of thought reading, and if Mr. Smith will now command me should like to submit myself to him in attempting somewhat similar feat. First of all we will have the cards thoroughly shuffled, as I want everyone to be assured that there is absolutely no deception in these occult experiments." The performer puts the pack down on the table. "Now, Mr. Smith, will you please divide the pack into seven portions on the table? No need to deal the

just cut the cards into seven heaps. Of course, you all know that from the very earliest ages seven has been regarded as a mystical number, and to me, being the seventh son of a seventh son, it is particularly significant. Now, Mr. Smith, will you take up the top card of any heap you wish, look at it, and impress its denomination firmly in your memory? Replace it, please. This was the heap, was it not? Now, to avoid any suspicion of palming or other manipulation of the card, I will put three heaps above it, and three heaps below it, so that it is secure from any interference." He places three heaps on top of the heap of which the chosen card is the top card, and then collects the other three heaps together and puts them underneath. The pack is now whole and compact again, and he squares up the cards by knocking the edges on the table. "You will have noticed that I have not touched the card, and that I have not seen it, or in fact any card in the pack, and further, that it is flush with the other cards and not left protruding at all, but if any ultra-suspicious person thinks that I still may know its exact position in the pack, please cut the cards to obviate that possibility. Thank you. Will you also cut them, Mr. Brown? I hope you are all now quite satisfied that I cannot possibly know where the card is? Good! Well, I will lay the cards face upwards on the table so that Mr. Smith may see every card in the pack, and whilst I have my back turned I want him to take out the card he originally selected, but to be careful not even to touch any other card." Whilst speaking, the conjurer throws down the cards face upwards all over the table so that every card is visible, and then turns his back, and in that position continues, "Now, if Mr. Smith has taken out his card, will someone else kindly remove the remainder of the pack? Is it done? Very well, put your card face downwards on the table, Mr. Smith." He

turns and faces his assistant. " Now, look at me, please, and concentrate your thoughts on the card you selected. Hum! It is a court card " (pause), " a diamond " (pause), " think! think! I do not get a very clear impression. Ah! that's better! Your card was the King of diamonds." The card on the table is turned up and proves to be as stated.

Explanation.—After the preliminary shuffle and when returning to his table the performer unostentatiously contrives to get a sight of the bottom card, by passing the pack with any natural movement across his line of vision. We will suppose the bottom card to be the two of hearts. The number of heaps into which he invites his assistant to divide the pack is immaterial, but seven is a convenient number and permits a fair range of choice. The splitting of the pack into the smaller portions is invariably effected by taking the pack in the hand and dropping successive heaps from the bottom of the table. The assistant may let the heaps fall on the table in a straight line or irregularly, as his fancy dictates, but the performer must watch closely where the first heap, that is, the bottom of the pack, falls (it may be that this portion is left on the table for one heap without being picked up at all). The performer knows the bottom card of this group to be the two of hearts, and when the card which has been selected has been replaced on its own heap, the heap of which the two of hearts is the bottom card is the first heap to be placed on the selected card and thus the two of hearts is next to the chosen card. Two other heaps are then put on top and three underneath. The act of cutting *twice* does not interfere with the relation of the two of hearts and the selected card for even if the first cut should part them the second cut would bring them together again. The rest is obvious. When putting the cards out on the table the performer

watches out for the two of hearts, for he knows that the card following it will be the chosen card. The remainder of the presentation is bluff, pure and simple, designed to effect a dramatic and artistic conclusion.

It is a six-to-one chance against the assistant selecting the top card of the first heap (*i.e.* the heap of which the bottom card is known), but if he should happen to choose that one, the performer need not be disconcerted. Instead of saying "Replace it, please," he would say, "Now put it on top of any other heap," and proceed as usual.

VI

Hypnotic Selection

"Well, Mr. Smith, you performed that experiment very successfully, and you will have to commence business as a professional clairvoyant and thought-reader. What were you saying over there? You don't believe that it was thought-reading? Ah, well! People are always sceptical about things they do not understand. Take another branch of occult science, hypnotism, for instance. Notwithstanding the great advance made in our knowledge of that mysterious power, psychic force, there are still people who refuse to admit that the art of hypnotising is a genuine accomplishment, but if there are any sceptics here to-night, I will try to convince them that I myself have attained at least an elementary knowledge of the subject." The conjurer takes the pack and throws the cards face downwards in a line across the table, spreading them out so that a margin of the back of each card is visible. "There are here fifty-two cards from which to make selection, and I am going to impose my will-power on the subconscious minds of the individual members of this company, to compel you to pick out,

without seeing their faces, any cards that I may specify. There are two simple conditions only. Firstly, I must ask you to maintain strict silence whilst the experiment is in progress, as it entails great concentration on my part, and talking distracts me, and, secondly, the cards are not to be touched with the naked hand, but only through the medium of this pencil. I will commence with Miss James. Now, Miss James, here's the pencil; look at me, please; point to the King of spades! Yes, point to any card that *apparently* your own fancy may dictate, for I control your mind and hand. This one? Thank you!" He takes up the card touched and looks at it. "You are quite right, it is the King of spades. Give the pencil to Mr. Jones, please. Look at me, Mr. Jones; the seven of hearts! Thank you! Correct again. Now, Mrs. Smith, I know you wouldn't spoil my experiment, point to the four of clubs, please. This card? Quite right, you are very kind. Mr. Robinson, I am a bit dubious about you; you appear to be a very difficult subject to control. Just look at me, please. The seven of diamonds! This? Ah! good! Right again!" And so on with any number of persons, the performer taking up the cards as they are touched with the pencil and retaining them fan-wise in his hand without, at this stage, showing them to the company. And so he comes to the last person. "Now Nellie, I know you have a kind heart, will you pick out the ace of hearts? Thank you. Now, ye sceptics and scoffers, if there be no such thing as hypnotic influence, how do you explain the fact that each person selected the card that I *willed* her or him to do? What was your card, Miss James? The King of spades? Well, there you are." He gives her the card. "Yours, Mr. Jones? Seven of hearts? With pleasure," and to the amazement of the audience he is able to present each individual with the card that he bade her or him select.

Explanation.—The presentation of the trick as here shown requires the assistance of a confederate, but if an accomplice be unobtainable or undesirable the trick may be performed in a slightly varied form without one, as will be explained hereafter. The confederate is always the last person to be "hypnotised," and for that reason she or he should take a seat near the performer, and the latter should commence operations on the other side of the room, and work round to his ally in a natural sequence. If this precaution were not taken, and the accomplice were seated, say, in the middle of the company, the act of leaving her or him until last would appear suspicious, especially if the person be known to be an intimate of the conjurer. In the foregoing illustration the person addressed as "Nellie" is the confederate. Before commencing his programme the performer arranges with his ally that, in presenting this particular trick, when she is requested to point out a card, she must indicate one in a certain position agreed upon, say, the third from the end nearest her. The performer ascertains what this card is before commencing the trick—in the foregoing demonstration it was the King of spades—and this is the card which he bids his first subject to point out. Actually, of course, it is a fifty-one to one chance that this person will indicate some other card, but the performer takes up the card touched, glances at it, and without showing it, assures the subject that she is quite right, and proceeds to "hypnotise" the next person, calling out the name of the card already in his hand. The principle of the trick will be recognised as being the same as that employed in the "Divination" trick (No. II), in that each card taken up furnishes the cue to the title of the succeeding card. Thus, at the conclusion, when the confederate has furnished the genuine King of spades in response to a request for the ace of hearts, the

performer is able to present each subject with the card that she or he was "hypnotised" into taking, as he has then in his hands every card that has been named.

If the trick be worked without a confederate it is necessary for the performer to invent some feasible excuse for obtaining possession of the located card, (*i.e.* the card that he calls out first) before he can conclude the trick, after "hypnotising" the company. Some such artifice and patter as the following will effect this without arousing suspicion: "I may say, ladies and gentlemen, that besides drawing on my hypnotic powers this experiment puts a very severe tax on my memory, for, of course, I have to remember the exact position of every card that I call out. For instance, I know that this card is the six of hearts" (he takes up a card) "and that this is the deuce of spades." He takes up another card and then throws the two cards on the table to confirm his prognostications. The reader will readily and rightly assume that he gets the title of the first card from the card taken up when indicated by the last person to be "hypnotised," and the title of the second from the first, and further, that the second card taken up is actually the located card—the King of spades in the preceding presentation. He slips this card to the front of those held fanwise in his hand, throws down the two he has just mentioned (which are the last two in his fan) as a proof of his wonderful memory, and proceeds to present the other cards to their respective claimants, as before.

The conditions imposed as to silence and to touching with the pencil only, besides imparting an element of gravity and occultism to the trick, have also the more practical effect of preventing the company demanding to see the cards as they are indicated, or taking the cards up and looking at them.

There is one eventuality that may possibly occur that

it is well to be prepared for, and that is that some one may indicate the located card. This need in no way disconcert the performer, for the person doing so has simply played into the conjurer's hands by unwittingly filling the role intended to be enacted by the confederate or by the performer himself when no accomplice is employed. As soon as he secures this card, therefore, the conjurer merely concludes the trick at this stage, as if he thinks that he has given sufficient proof of his powers, for he has then in his hands every card that has been named.

VII

The Four Burglars Again

" Ah, me ! this use of psychic force takes it out of me and I must turn to lighter work. You will remember that my opening trick was one with the four knaves. I was a little dubious of my power over them at that time, and I had to keep them in strict subjection. I am now going to perform a similar but more difficult trick with the same four rogues—more difficult because I permit them to stray beyond my control." Whilst speaking he has found the four knaves and spreads them out fanwise in his left hand in view of the company. " At the conclusion of the former trick a signal of danger had brought the four beauties together in the garden. We will suppose the top of the pack to be the garden." He closes the fan and places it on top of the pack. " There they held a hurried council of war, and decided that the best plan would be to separate for the present and to meet together in the evening at their usual trysting-place, the ' Old Bull and Bush.' Accordingly one slipped away to the south " (here a knave is put at the very bottom of the pack in full view of the audience), " one, like a wise man, went to the east, oh ! my mistake, the wise men came *from*

the east, didn't they ? " (here a card is inserted near the bottom of the pack), " another went ' Westward Ho ! ' " (one is pushed in the centre of the pack), " whilst number four followed Doctor Cook to the north " (a knave is shown on *top* of the pack). " Now, you clearly understand the position ? The knaves are as widely separated as the four points of the compass, two being at the extremities of the pack " (he again shows the knaves at the top and bottom), " and the other two in different positions in the pack. Now I place the cards on the table, out of my control altogether, and the police may hunt and harry the burglars as much as they like. Will you cut the cards, please, Constable Smith, and you, Detective Brown, and you also, Inspector Roberts ? " He allows three gentlemen to cut the cards one after the other. " Now, although the desperadoes were so widely scattered before, and have since been so unmercifully harried by the entire staff of local police " (he indicates the three gentlemen who cut the cards), " you will be surprised to learn that not only did they evade capture, but not one of them was even a minute late in arriving at the ' Old Bull and Bush.' Here they are, all four together, in their own particular corner of the bar parlour." Taking up the cards he " clicks " them, and then dealing them slowly face upwards on the table shows that the four knaves are together again.

Explanation.—This is a variation of the first trick, needing only a slightly different arrangement of the cards. Although somewhat similar to the other, the reader need have no hesitation in presenting this trick on the score of repetition, for, besides being sufficiently different to be interesting, he will find that these two tricks with the knaves will prove to be the most popular in his repertoire, probably on account of the short preliminaries and startling climax, and also for the story told in the patter.

When the fan of four knaves is shown, *two* other cards only are concealed this time behind the second knave from the left, nicely squared up and flush with it. The first knave goes to the bottom, the second and third are apparently inserted in the pack, but actually of course, it is concealed cards that are so inserted, and then a knave is shown at the top. Now it is obvious to the reader that there are two other knaves on top as well, viz., the two that have not been disturbed since first put there. This makes three in all on top, and as the other is at the bottom, the first cut brings all four together, and even though the second cut *may* part them the third cut would bring them together again. If the second cut does not separate the knaves the third may do so, but the performer will know whether this unlikely event has taken place or not, by observing with a casual glance when he picks the pack up whether the bottom card be an ordinary card or a knave. In the former case he may conclude the trick in the usual way, for the knaves will be found together; but if there be a knave at the bottom there is a possibility that the knaves may be separated, and he must invent some excuse for securing another cut which will rectify the matter. He "clicks" the cards and professes to hear some comment on that manipulation. "Oh no! you are quite wrong. I have not interfered with the cards in any way. See! you may cut them again if you wish. Cut them, please, Mr. Robinson." If Robinson declines, saying that "it is all right," the performer may cut them himself with a careless gesture, remarking that "it doesn't matter if they be cut a hundred times."

The reader may prefer not to risk the separating of the knaves, and permit one cut only, but to the author's mind the trick is made more striking by permitting three cuts, especially as the possibility of the third cut parting the knaves is very remote.

Tricks with Ordinary Handkerchiefs

Parachute

This is a capital form of open-air sport with a pocket-handkerchief which may be made up in a few minutes.

To make a parachute, cut four pieces of string about four inches long and fix one piece to each of the four corners of a handkerchief. Next tie the four free ends

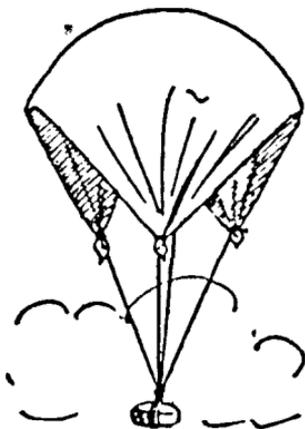


FIG. 4.

of the string together around a piece of brick or a stone. The exact weight will, of course, depend upon the size of the handkerchief employed, as well as the strength of the wind at the time of flying. As soon as the weight has been fixed into position, the parachute is ready for flying, as shown in Fig. 4.

To launch the parachute, bunch the handkerchief and weight together in one hand and throw them as high as

possible into the air. The handkerchief then slowly unfolds, as shown in Fig. 4, and descends gracefully to earth.

Doubling the Allotment

There are very few puzzles that may be demonstrated by means of handkerchiefs. Here is one, however, that will be found suitable for showing at a children's party between games.

First tie a knot in each of the four corners of a pocket-handkerchief, which is spread out on the table to its fullest extent, as shown in Fig. 5.

Then tell the following story: "There was once a man

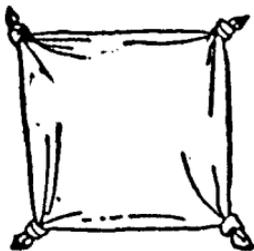


FIG. 5.

who had a square allotment in a field—will you please look upon my handkerchief as representing the square allotment, and the table as the field. There was a tree at each corner of the allotment. These knots (*point to the four knots*) will serve to indicate the position of the trees. The man asked the owner of the field whether he might enlarge his allotment. The owner of the field gave him permission to add as much land as he could to his allotment under the condition that: The trees must remain in their present position and continue to be on the edge of the allotment. In addition to this, the allotment had to retain its square shape."

Now ask whether any of the company can, by the addition of one or more handkerchiefs, enlarge the allotment in accordance with the stipulations laid down.

Solution.—The man actually managed to exactly double his holding, as indicated in Fig. 6. To demonstrate how it was done, borrow four handkerchiefs and fold each one diagonally. Place them against the four

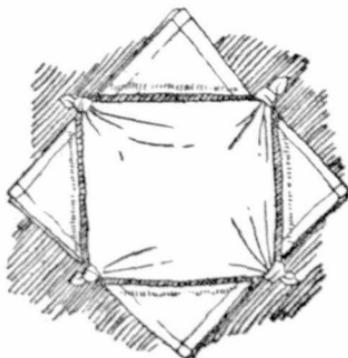


FIG. 6.

sides of the knotted handkerchief, as shown in Fig. 6, when it is at once apparent that this is just double the size of the original square.

The Puzzle Knot

This is an ideal item for a children's party or festive gathering. It is not a *trick*, because when it is shown the secret must necessarily be divulged, as with most puzzles. To those unacquainted with the secret, the solution is most puzzling, and their attempts to tie the knot under the stated conditions is often productive of a mirthful five minutes.

Effect.—A handkerchief is twisted rope-wise and laid flat upon the table. The company are now required to

pick up the handkerchief by the opposite ends in the right and left hands and tie a knot in the centre of it. This must be accomplished without releasing hold of either end, and it must be a proper single knot.

Solution.—At first sight this appears to be impossible, but it all depends upon the way in which the handkerchief is taken from the table. The performer simply folds his arms and approaches the handkerchief. He first bends over to the left so as to take up one end with the right-



FIG. 7.

hand fingers which are above the left arm. He then picks up the opposite end of the handkerchief with the fingers of the left hand which are pointing downwards and therefore easily pick up their end. The position at this stage is shown in Fig. 7.

The performer then merely draws his arms apart and the knot is formed in the centre of the handkerchief in accordance with the conditions laid down.

The Stretched Handkerchief

Of the several opening flourishes in connection with a borrowed pocket-handkerchief, the Stretched Handkerchief is certainly one of the easiest and most effective that can be employed. The performer requests the loan of a pocket-handkerchief and has one handed to him.

He holds it up squarely by two corresponding corners, as shown in Fig. 8. He then states that he is afraid that the handkerchief is not large enough for his purpose, and it will be necessary for him to borrow a larger one. "Of course," he continues, "I could make this one large enough for my purpose providing that the owner has no objection to my stretching his handkerchief until it is the required size." Permission having been given, he releases hold of the corner which is being held in his left hand, and with that hand he takes up the corner of the hand-

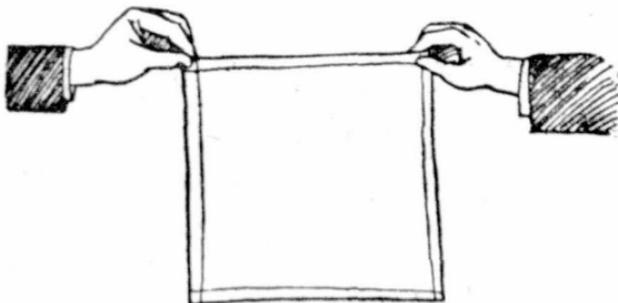


FIG. 8.

kerchief opposite the one which he is holding in his right hand. That is to say, he holds it diagonally. In the act of changing the corners, the performer gathers up a small portion of the handkerchief in each hand, unobserved by the audience. The handkerchief is then twisted over and over and pulled out several times. The spare portion of the handkerchief which is being held in the hands is gradually released each time that the handkerchief is pulled out. The effect of this seemingly simple little sleight is very marked, and it appears to them that the handkerchief is actually subjected to a magical stretching process. In reality a kind of optical illusion has been demonstrated since there are few people who can estimate or realise the diagonal length of a handkerchief as com-

pared with its square measurement. Stretched rope-wise

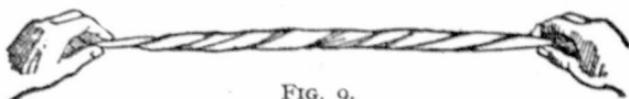


FIG. 9.

diagonally as seen in Fig. 9 it appears to them to be much larger than when first held up by the two corresponding corners, as seen in Fig. 8. In this way it will be found that a handkerchief twenty inches square will twist rope-wise to about thirty-four inches.

The Salamandic Handkerchief

This handkerchief "flourish" is a very effective one, but great care is needed to ensure a successful and convincing presentation. It will be found to be a useful introduction to the "Burnt Handkerchief." In the

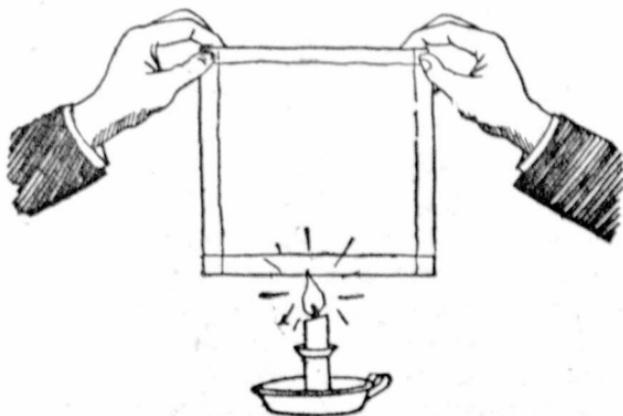


FIG. 10.

present case, however, the handkerchief is supposed to be immune from fire. It will therefore be necessary to give a touch with the magic wand "in order to neutralise this peculiar property," should it be desired to follow on with the "Burnt Handkerchief."

Effect.—Performer borrows a handkerchief and passes it through the flame of a candle. Contrary to expectation the handkerchief does not catch fire, and is not damaged in any way.

Working.—The handkerchief is held by the two upper corners and passed several times across the flame of a candle, as shown in Fig. 10.

The secret is that the handkerchief is not allowed to stop for one instant while in the flame, but is kept continually moving. This constant movement effectually prevents the flame from setting fire to the handkerchief. In fact, during its passage through the candle flame it is only slightly warmed. Given a little address and showmanship this is a very deceptive little sleight.

It is very important, however, that the performer should make certain that there is no scent on the borrowed handkerchief before putting it near the flame of the candle, as the solvent of all scents is a spirit and it is obvious that an undesired *finale* may result should the flame be applied to a recently scented handkerchief.

The Flash Handkerchief.

This flourish is quite opposite in effect to the "Salamandic Handkerchief" just described. It cannot actually be performed with a borrowed handkerchief, as the handkerchief used has to be chemically treated. It is possible, however, to secretly change the borrowed handkerchief for the prepared one and to lead the audience to believe that the actual borrowed handkerchief is being used. The presentation of the Flash Handkerchief has a somewhat startling effect upon the audience. It has the disadvantage, however, that it necessitates the destruction of a handkerchief each time it is performed, and is therefore only introduced on special occasions by amateur conjurers.

Effect.—A handkerchief is borrowed by the performer. He holds it in his hand and commands it to vanish. There is immediately a brilliant flash and the handkerchief is seen to have completely disappeared. The actual effect is seen in Fig. 11.

Working.—The performer goes amongst the audience to borrow a handkerchief. On his return to the platform he secretly exchanges it for a specially prepared handkerchief of his own, tucking the borrowed handkerchief under the bottom of his vest; to be produced later as he pleases. The prepared handkerchief must be of very fine

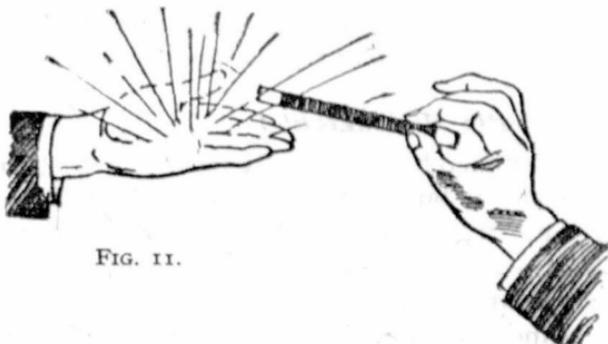


FIG. 11.

muslin or cambric. The finer the texture of the prepared handkerchief, the quicker will it flash off when ignited. It must first be immersed for a few seconds in a basin containing a mixture of nitric and sulphuric acids in equal proportions. It is then thoroughly rinsed in several changes of water for twelve hours until all trace of the acids has been washed out. After this, it is allowed to dry slowly. The flash handkerchief is then ready for ignition. This may be effected either by applying a light to any portion of the handkerchief, or it may be chemically fired in the hand. The latter method is far more effective than the former, and well repays one for the trouble and time taken to prepare. It consists in the

contact of sulphuric acid with a mixture of equal parts of sugar and chlorate of potash. The sugar and potash are ground *separately* into fine powder, and then well mixed together. The sulphuric acid may be purchased at conjuring depots, made up in small glass tubes, not much thicker than a needle. One of these tubes, together with some of the mixed powder is enclosed in a piece of flannel paper and inserted in the hem of the prepared handkerchief. A pressure of the hands breaks the tube and the escaping acid fires the powder; this in turn ignites the flash paper and handkerchief, which disappear, leaving hardly any trace. The borrowed handkerchief may then be "restored" by any of the methods given in this book.

The Acrobatic Handkerchief

This handkerchief flourish is rather in the nature of a juggling effect, but, performed as an introduction to a larger conjuring effect, has much to commend it.

Effect.—The performer borrows a handkerchief which he throws into the air. He then catches it on the point of his wand and proceeds to spin it round and round, the handkerchief being opened out flat all the time. Finally both handkerchief and wand, if desired, are handed for examination.

Working.—Performer must provide for the end of the wand a loose ferrule, fitted with a needle point which projects about a quarter of an inch. A of Fig. 12 shows the ferrule end and B the wand. The borrowed handkerchief is thrown into the air and caught on the end of the needle point. The wand is held upright and a circular motion made with the hand. The handkerchief threads itself out flat and spins round and round very rapidly, as shown in Fig. 13. It will be found that after a little practice, the handkerchief may be thrown off

wand and caught again and again without stopping the spinning movement. In handling the wand for examination after the demonstration, it is held by the performer with the ferruled end. The wand is then taken from him by a member of the audience, leaving the ferruled end concealed in the performer's hand, and rendering it impossible for the secret to be discovered by the examination of either the wand or the handkerchief.



FIG. 12.

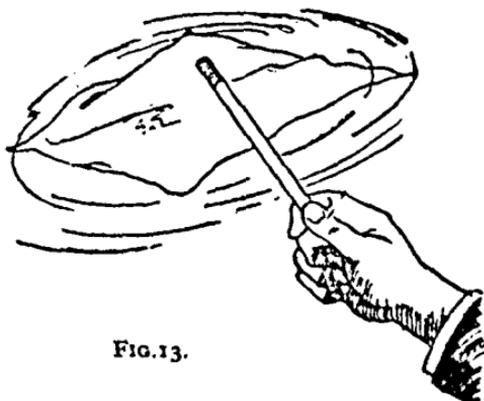


FIG. 13.

Handkerchief Knotting Act

Knot tricks with handkerchiefs may either be introduced incidentally before a complete trick, as a "flourish," or a series of them may be given as a demonstration of magical (or *juggling* if you prefer) knot tying with a handkerchief. Silk handkerchiefs are much better than cambric ones for knot tying purposes, as it will be found that the soft texture of the silk tends to slip more easily into the required positions. A large white silk muffler about two feet square is very useful for giving a special demonstration of knot tying. Some performers made a speciality of knot tying by means of a handkerchief of this size. Announcing: "Ladies and Gentlemen,

I shall now have pleasure in presenting to your notice series of subtle knot tying effects with this silk handkerchief," then give a performance of about ten minutes' duration. Given smoothness of manipulation and accompanied by an attractive waltz tune upon the piano, the entertainment is invariably well received.

Knot tying with handkerchiefs may be divided into three divisions: (1) Magical tying of knots; (2) Magical untying of knots; (3) Magical ineffectual tying of knots. It is not suggested that they should be presented in this order, if a complete act is to be given. The performer should suit his own style and requirements. It is, however, better to keep each division separate than to mix them together as a pot-pourri. Some easy effects in each division will now be described, and by means of the detailed descriptions and explanatory diagrams, the amateur should have no difficulty in acquiring this fascinating phase of handkerchief magic. He will find, however, that the art of knot tying with handkerchiefs will be more easily acquired if the knots are first practised with a stout piece of string or cord. When proficient in tying a knot with the cord, he will find it a simple matter to substitute a handkerchief for the cord and work the same effect.

Of the three divisions in connection with knot tying just set forth, the magical tying of knots will be dealt with first of all. A fairly easy and effective knot tie is the known as—

The Instantaneous Knot

To make this knot the performer takes the handkerchief by the thumb and forefinger of each hand, twists it rope-wise, and holds it by the two opposite corners, as shown in Fig. 14.

To the audience it appears as though there were n

difference in the manner that both ends were being held. Upon this manner of holding the handkerchief, however, depends the successful making of the knot. In each hand, the end of the handkerchief is held between the

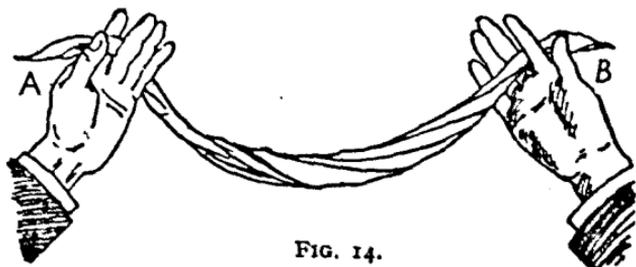


FIG. 14.

forefinger and the second finger. In the case of the *left* hand, however, the continuation of the end marked A in Fig. 14 passes *underneath* the other fingers. The opposite procedure is adopted for the *right* hand, where the con-

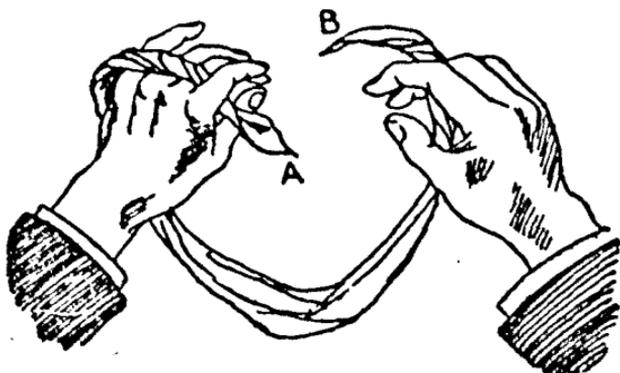


FIG. 15.

tinuation of the end marked B in Fig. 14 passes *over* the remaining fingers. The hands are then brought rapidly together and separated again, a knot suddenly appearing in the centre of the handkerchief. This movement is so wittily executed that it is impossible for the audience to

follow the *modus operandi* of the performer. As the hands are brought together they are turned over towards each other, the backs of the hands being uppermost. The left hand is held slightly above the right.

In this position the knot is easily made by grasping the ends A and B of Fig. 15 with the first and second fingers of each hand, and pulling the handkerchief out straight, as shown in Fig. 16.

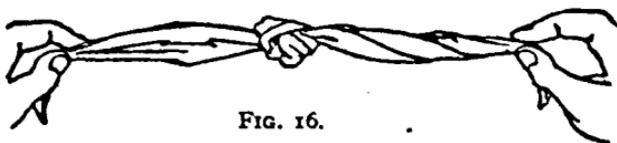


FIG. 16.

Some performers execute the Instantaneous Knot by throwing the handkerchief over the back of the head and making the knot in the act of throwing, when at the back of the head. All movement of the hands is thus quite covered, and when smartly worked this method is very effective.

One-Handed Knot

This knot is not an easy one to tie with a cambric handkerchief, but it is not difficult if a silk one is used.

There are two methods of tying the One-Handed Knot, of which the first method is by far the simplest and is just as effective as the second method. The latter is also given, however, as it provides useful knot-tying practice. The performer may, of course, please himself as to which method he adopts.

First Method

The handkerchief is twisted rope-wise and held across the right hand with the palm upwards. The ends of the handkerchief hang down over both sides of the hand.

the end nearest the thumb being slightly longer than the other end, as shown in Fig. 17.

Now a quick forward movement is made to bring the end marked A of Fig. 17 across the back of the hand, and in front of the end marked B. The end A is then caught between the ends of the first and second fingers, at the point marked C. This movement is clearly indicated

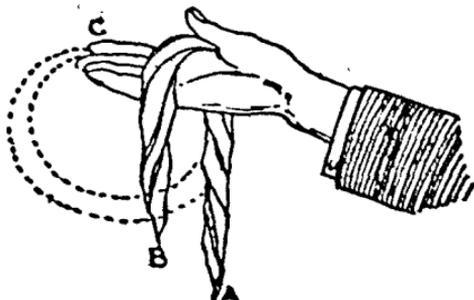


FIG. 17.

by the dotted lines of Fig. 17. As soon as the end marked A of Fig. 17 is gripped by the fingers, the hand is turned over, and while still retaining hold of the end marked A, the handkerchief is thrown outwards, and the knot appears in the centre, as shown in Fig. 18.



FIG. 18.

Second Method

The handkerchief is again twisted rope-wise and laid cross the palm of the right hand, but this time with

the palm of the hand towards the performer, instead upwards as in the first method. One end (marked B Fig. 19) is held against the palm of the hand by pressu

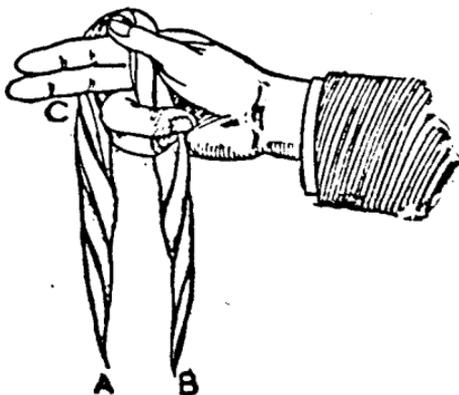


FIG. 19.

of the third and fourth fingers ; the other end marked hanging down over the backs of the first and seco fingers, as indicated in Fig. 19.

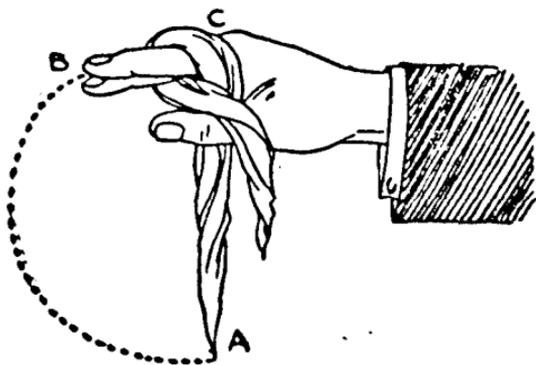


FIG. 20.

A half-turn is now made with the hand, and the right thumb passed under the handkerchief, at the position marked C in Fig. 19. This movement gives Fig. 20.

The end of the handkerchief marked A in Fig. 20 is now thrown upwards by a jerking movement of the right hand and caught by the first and second fingers at B, as indicated by the dotted lines seen in Fig. 20. Continuing the movement, the end marked A is drawn through the loop marked C. The handkerchief is then thrown outwards as in the first method, the fingers at B keeping firm hold of the end marked A. This forms the knot in the centre of the handkerchief, as shown in Fig. 18.

Double Instantaneous Knot

This knot is a very difficult one to tie neatly, and requires much practice. It *can* be done, however, and



FIG. 21.

the amateur is urged to persevere until proficiency is attained. A large silk handkerchief is necessary, and it will be found that the two feet square muffler previously referred to is really the only one for the purpose of forming this knot. The method of tying may be easily followed from the diagrams. The handkerchief is twisted rope-wise and held in the first instance as shown in Fig. 21.

The two ends marked A and B in Fig. 21 are now jerked underneath the handkerchief into the palm of the left and right hands respectively and caught between the

first and second fingers of either hand, as shown in Fig. 22.

All that now remains to be done is to pull the handkerchief out straight, as shown in Fig. 23, when the Double Instantaneous Knot is a fact. In practising this

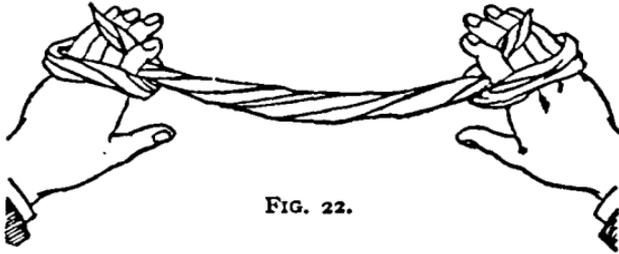


FIG. 22.

knot it will be found advantageous to keep one hand still, and practise tying one knot only. When both hands have been trained to tie a single knot separately, then practise tying both knots simultaneously.



FIG. 23.

Paper Magic

Trough

THIS useful paper fold may be utilised in many ways. It will serve as a " bath for dolly " since it is guaranteed to hold water. Again, many ways may be found for its employment as a receptacle for small table delicacies. If a number of the troughs are made up in coloured paper and filled with sweets or small biscuits, an effective and pleasing table decoration is provided for a festive gathering.

To make the Trough, take a square piece of paper and fold the corners over to the centre, making Fig. 24.

Next fold the points A, A, A, A, of Fig. 24, up to B, B, B, B, by folding along the dotted lines shown, which will make Fig. 25. Fold Fig. 25 diagonally from one corner to the opposite one, in both directions alternately, as shown by the dotted lines. Press these folds well into the paper, and open out the paper again after this has been done, to the form of Fig. 25. The two opposite points A and B of Fig. 25 have now to be made into an oblong. Fig. 26 shows the appearance of the paper after the top point has been folded down. The dotted lines of the lower point indicate the folds that have to be made in order to bring that point to the shape of the upper point. After these two corners have been manipulated, the paper will appear similar to the *solid* lines of Fig. 27.

The edges A—A and C—C, of Fig. 105, must now be brought into line with the edges B—B and D—D respectively. The corners A—A and C—C being pressed into

a triangular position to allow this fold to be effected. The dotted lines of Fig. 27 indicate the folds that are

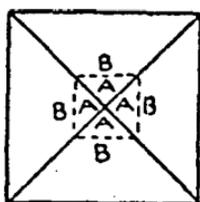


FIG. 24.

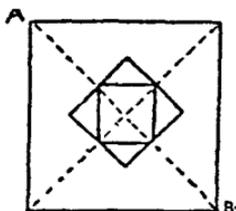


FIG. 25.

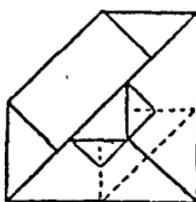


FIG. 26.

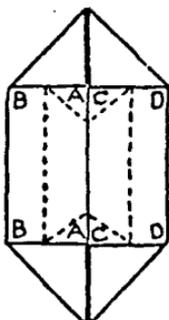


FIG. 27.

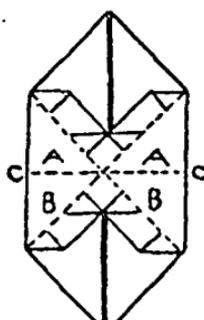


FIG. 28.

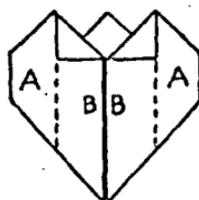


FIG. 29.

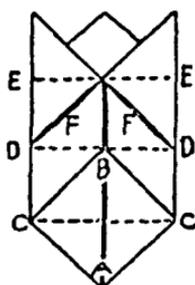


FIG. 30.

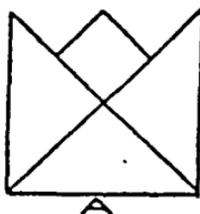


FIG. 31.

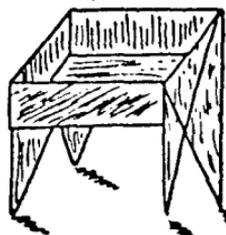


FIG. 32.

made in the paper by executing this movement. The paper should now appear similar to the *solid lines* of Fig. 28. It is important to note, however, that in order

to make the next fold easier to follow from the diagram, the solid lines of Fig. 28 have not been carried into A—B and A—B of Fig. 28.

The paper is next folded in half *backwards* by bending along the dotted line C—C of Fig. 28. At the same time the double dotted triangular side pieces, A—A and B—B, are pressed inwards, the dotted line C on either side forming the centre. This will cause the letters A and B of Fig. 28 to come face to face with each other. It was to enable this movement to be executed that the diagonal lines were pressed into the paper at the stage of Fig. 25. There should, therefore, be no difficulty in getting the paper to fold into the position indicated in Fig. 29. Next fold the side flaps A—A of Fig. 29, over to B—B by bending along the dotted lines. Then reverse the paper and similarly fold over the flaps on the other side. The paper will then appear like Fig. 30. Now fold the point A of Fig. 30 up to \approx by bending along the dotted line C—C. Again fold along the dotted line D—D, which will bring the dotted line C—C up to the dotted line E—E. The two points (now made) at the ends of the dotted line C—C must be tucked into the openings which will be found at F—F. The paper is then reversed and the other side treated in like manner, making Fig. 31. All that now remains to be done is to open out the end A of Fig. 31, when the Trough is ready for use, as shown in Fig. 32.

Easy Aeroplane Fold

The size of paper used is optional, but an aeroplane of useful size may be made from an oblong piece of writing paper about six by eight inches. First fold the paper in half lengthways and cut around the dotted lines shown in Fig. 33. Open out the paper after cutting, and you have Fig. 34.

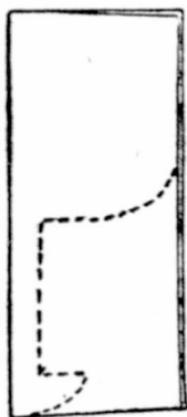


FIG. 33.

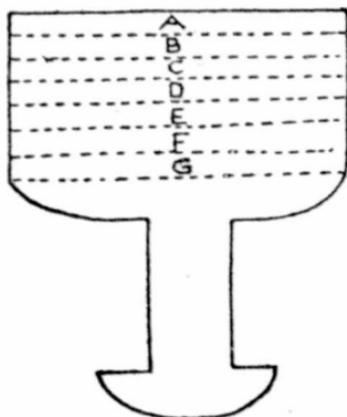


FIG. 34.

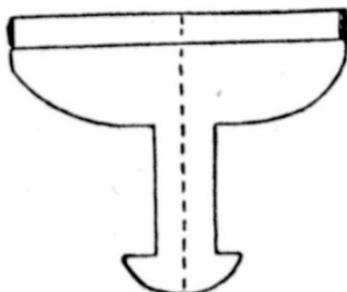


FIG. 35.

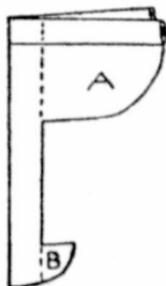


FIG. 36.

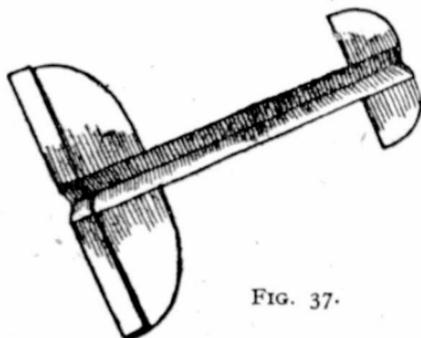


FIG. 37.

Now fold the top portion of Fig. 34 over and over, as indicated by the dotted lines A over to B ; A—B over to C ; A—B—C over to D, and so on. Each turn must be well pressed into the paper. This operation will give Fig. 35.

The paper must now be doubled in half by bending along the centre dotted line seen in Fig. 35. Press this fold well into the paper and you will produce Fig. 36.

Finally, bend down the head-pieces marked A, in Fig. 36, and the tail-pieces marked B, bending one A and one B to the right and the others to the left. The aeroplane is then completed as shown in Fig. 37.

It will be found that raising or depressing the tail-pieces very slightly will materially alter the movements of the aeroplane.

Chrysalis Beads

The manufacture of paper beads provides a very easy, pleasant, and useful occupation for boys and girls of all ages. The beads may be made up into necklaces, bracelets, handbags, Japanese curtains, etc., etc. The initial cost being almost nil, they are well suited for making up into articles for sale at bazaars, etc.-

Almost any kind of paper may be used for the purpose, but bright coloured papers, with or without markings, are very effective. Wall-paper looks very well when made up into paper beads. It is recommended that an old wall-paper sample book be procured and beads made up from these patterns which contain decided colours and gilt markings.

First cut the paper into strips, six inches wide. Then mark off each side into one inch spaces, but the markings on one side must be half an inch lower than those on the other side. Rule lines across the paper as

shown by the dotted lines in Fig. 38. Cut off separately each triangular strip, discarding the top and bottom pieces, which will not be the correct shape. Each strip

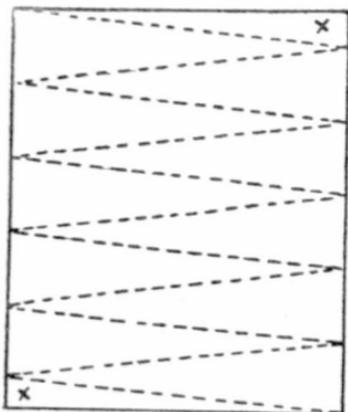


FIG 38



FIG. 39.



FIG. 40.

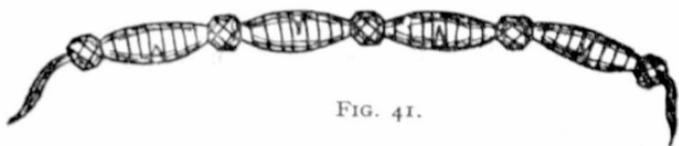


FIG. 41.

makes up into one bead. A bodkin or thick darning needle will be required upon which to roll the paper slip in order to form the beads. Commence with the wide end of the strip, as shown in Fig. 39, and roll it up very tightly, taking care that the paper is rolled evenly on both sides. At the finish of the rolling process see that the pointed end of the strip is well in the centre.

Apply a little adhesive (paste or secotone) when about one inch from the end of the strip, and stick down securely. The paper bead is then finished, as shown in Fig. 40.

The beads may be made in various sizes, which a

regulated by the width of the strips. When a sufficient number has been made for the purpose required, thread them on a piece of macrame thread or string to form a necklace. The beads may be worked with large- and small-sized beads alternately placed, and the necklace will look very pretty if small coloured glass beads are worked between each paper bead, as shown in Fig. 41.

Christmas Crackers

There is no doubt that one of the most, if not *the* most, popular feature at a children's Christmas or New Year's party is the familiar Cracker or Bon-Bon. These are usually sold in boxes containing one dozen, and in endless varieties of style, size, and colour, the contents of the crackers being just as varied. There is, however, nothing very difficult in the manufacture of a simple cracker, and the making of crackers at home will enable young and old to pass away many a long winter evening pleasantly and profitably.

The principal feature of a cracker is the paper cap it contains, and the wearing of these various coloured creations is often the cause of great fun and amusement. To make the caps a few sheets of ordinary coloured tissue paper will be required.

Fig. 42 shows a series of six designs suitable for home manufacture. Many other forms will, of course, naturally suggest themselves to the artist, after a little practice has been acquired. Two pieces of any of the designs given above will make a complete cap, a little paste around the edge of the paper, as shown by the dotted lines in the design. For the "Crown" design, one strip of paper joined together to form a continuous band is all that is required. These caps may be embellished by the addition of streamers, tassels, bands,

stars, etc., cut from paper of a different colour from the cap. When ready, the cap is folded in half; then folded again and again, until reduced to a strip. This is then made into a roll and held secure by a strip of paper being placed around it and fixed with a dab of paste. The cap is then ready to be placed in the cracker.

For the crackers themselves it will be necessary to



GLENGARRY



CROWN



NAPOLEON



ADMIRAL



DUNCE



HELMET

FIG. 42.

procure some *crêpe* paper. This can be purchased very cheaply at a stationer's or at the popular large stores. *Crêpe* paper may be obtained in a variety of colours, but the home-made cracker looks best in alternate red and green tints. Cut a piece of *crêpe* paper about nine by six inches, or according to size of cracker required, and cut the ends as shown in Fig. 43. Now lay the rolled paper cap on the edge, as indicated in

Fig. 43, and roll the outside piece of *crêpe* paper around it. Then tie a piece of small silk ribbon or cord about one and a half inches from each end, pressing the paper inwards so as to form a kind of "neck." Cords and ribbons from old Christmas cards could be made use of in this way, and, with the addition of a coloured scrap in

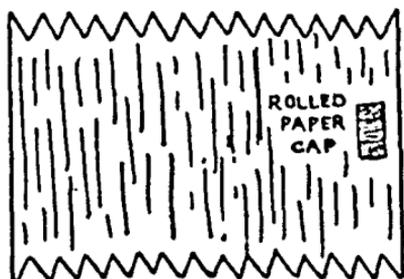


FIG. 43.



FIG. 44

the centre, the Christmas cracker is complete (except for the "cracking"), as shown in Fig. 44.

Slap Bang

This is a harmless and effective little toy for children, and is the cause of much fun and amusement. When in use it is easily manipulated, and gives off a report like the crack of a pistol shot.

To make a Slap Bang, take a piece of strong, thick paper about six inches square, and fold it diagonally across the centre, as shown in Fig. 45.

Now cut away the top and bottom pieces marked A and B in Fig. 45, by cutting along the dotted lines shown. Upon opening out the paper again it will appear like Fig. 46.

Next cut a piece of thin cardboard about five inches square, and lightly score it diagonally so that it will bend without breaking. Place the scored cardboard, scored

side uppermost, on the top of the paper shown in Fig. 46, with two sides of the cardboard touching the dotted lines seen in that figure. Now paste down the flaps A and B of Fig. 46 to the cardboard. When dry, bend diagonally along the scored line, thus folding the paper within the cardboard, making Fig. 47. In order to make the toy more durable, a strip of strong linen paper

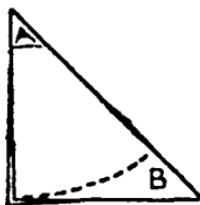


FIG. 45.

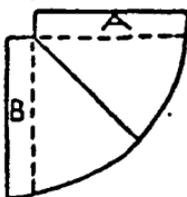


FIG. 46.

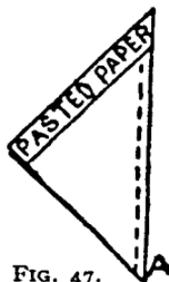


FIG. 47.

should be pasted along the scored edge of the cardboard, as shown by the dotted line in Fig. 47.

To "fire" the Slap Bang, take the end marked A of Fig. 47 between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, and, still retaining hold of the end, make a smart forward throwing movement. This action will force the inside paper to come out to its fullest extent with a loud report. The paper is then replaced and the "firing" repeated as often as desired.

Doorway Scoring Game

Here is an article which is easily made from stiff paper or, preferably, thin cardboard, by means of which, together with some cherry stones or marbles, an interesting game may be played. This game provides great amusement and variety as well as encouraging the skill of the players.

The size of the cardboard used will depend upon the number of holes required, but a small four-hole board may be made from a piece of thin cardboard about ten by five inches as shown in Fig. 48.

First, cut away the openings A to D of Fig. 48, and

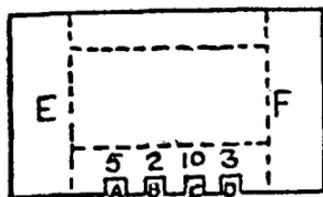


FIG. 48.

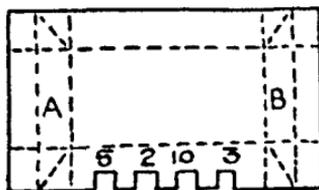


FIG. 49.

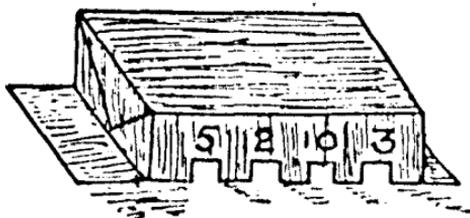


FIG. 50.

Paint the numbers, as shown, in large, plain, black figures. Bend the sides E and F *under* the board, following in like manner with the top and bottom pieces G and I, and well press the folds into the cardboard. Open out again, and make the additional creases in the cardboard, as shown in Fig. 49.

Now bend the ends A and B of Fig. 49 at right angles, *downwards*, and pinch each corner inwards, bending along the dotted lines shown in Fig. 49. This will bring the sides into position and complete the board, as seen in Fig. 50. There are many different methods of play, and this may well be left to the ingenuity of the players.

Conjuring with Coins

Sleights used in Conjuring with Coins

To Palm a Coin

TO be able to palm a coin neatly is a necessary accomplishment of every conjurer, and it is by no means difficult. The ordinary palm here described will serve for most purposes.

The coin is held between first finger and thumb of either hand, for a good conjurer must be ambidextrous, and exhibited as in Fig. 51.

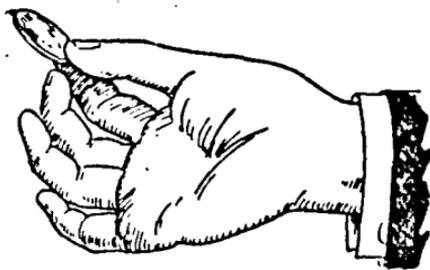


FIG. 51.

The second and third fingers are brought up behind the centre of coin whilst simultaneously the first finger is withdrawn. This leaves the coin held for an instant between second and third fingers and thumb (Fig. 52).

The thumb is now removed, and the second and third fingers press the coin into the palm of the hand in such

a position that a slight inward movement of the muscles of the fleshy part of the ball of the thumb grips the coin against the opposite side of the palm, beneath the little finger, as in Fig. 53.

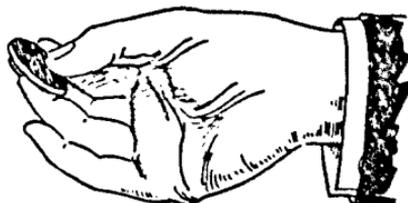


FIG. 52.

The fingers are opened again, leaving the coin so gripped, whilst the back of the hand may be freely shown with fingers apart and the hand moved about and used naturally, the coin remaining in the palm. The whole

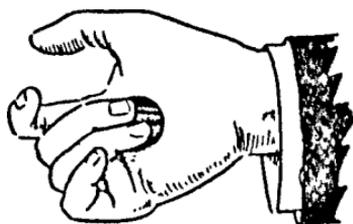


FIG. 53.

of this will be found with practice to become one movement, which the hand will make almost unconsciously whenever anything is to be palmed.

To cover the action, a movement is usually made of the hand and arm at the instant of palming a coin. The performer may say, "Will you kindly catch this coin?"

moving the hand and arm as though throwing the coin to the person addressed, which entirely hides the movement of the fingers in palming the coin. In the "aeria mint" or "coins into the hat" each time a coin is caught it is apparently thrown into the hat or the air this covers the act of palming it ready to be reproduced and creates the impression that another coin has been caught in the air. Once the power to palm is acquired the performer must accustom himself to handle objects freely with the fingers of the hand in which an object is palmed without any fear of the grip upon it being released, so that it falls from the palm.

Another Useful "Palm"

This is not strictly speaking a palm at all, the coin to be concealed being hidden by the top joints of the two middle fingers.

Take the coin between the first finger and thumb, as



FIG. 54.



FIG. 55.



FIG. 56.



FIG. 57.

in Fig. 54. Now slide the two middle fingers forward over the coin until the first joints rest upon its edge (Fig. 55), immediately withdrawing the first finger and thumb and at the same time slightly contracting the middle fingers, between the first and second joints of which the coin is now securely held, as shown in Fig. 56.

The disadvantage of this method of palming is that the fingers cannot be shown extended as in that first described, but, on the other hand, it has the advantage that the hand can be shown in a perfectly easy and natural position both back and front, without betraying the presence of the coin (Fig. 57).

The French Drop, or Tourniquet

This is a very useful and simple sleight. A coin is taken and apparently placed from the left hand into the right, whilst in reality it remains in the left.

Presentation.—The coin is held between first and second fingers and thumb of the left hand.

The hand is moved up as though to place the coin into the right hand, which proceeds to take it as in Fig. 58.



FIG. 58.

Now, as the right hand fingers are closed as though grasping the coin, it is allowed to fall down past the side of the thumb of the right hand into the palm of the left.

The right hand is quite closed and moved away, as though having taken the coin.

In moving away the closed right hand it should be turned over so that the closed fingers are uppermost.

This will with practice be found one of the easiest and least detectable of sleights.

The actual position of the hands to audience, when the right hand appears to take the coin or other object, should be with the backs of the fingers of left hand to-

wards them, while the right hand seems to take the coin from a sideways position.

To Change a Coin

H. de Manche's Method

This change, a novelty of H. de Manche's invention is an improvement upon any other method, for only one hand is required. It is absolutely impossible for one coin to clink against the other. The hand can be shown palm outwards, as in Figs. 59 and 63, and the sleight, made with a quite natural movement, produces a perfect illusion. This change can be used whenever a substituted



FIG. 59.

coin is required in a trick, and it may be shown as a prelude to, or in the course of, almost any trick with coins.

Effect.—A copper coin (say a penny) is shown to the audience, and held in their sight between first finger and thumb. The hand makes a slight upward movement, whereupon the copper vanishes, and in its place is seen a silver coin, say a half-crown or half-dollar.

When used to substitute a coin for a borrowed one in

the course of any trick there is no effect so far as the spectators are concerned, as only the performer is aware of a change having been effected.

Requisites.—A copper coin, say a penny ; and a silver one, say a half-crown.

Presentation of Trick.—The penny is held between the tip of first finger and thumb (Fig. 59) ; the half-crown is concealed in the bend of second and third fingers. The performer may borrow the money. If he uses his own he

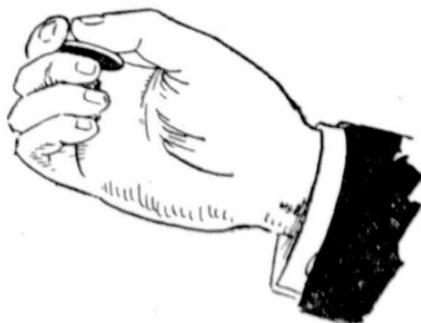


FIG. 60.

should take care to let one or two people handle it, to show that it is not a trick coin.

This done, the hand is held as in Fig. 59, allowing the audience to see right into the palm of it to show that it is actually empty. Attention should not be called to this beyond the statement : " This is really an ordinary penny, which I shall change in your full view into a coin of quite another value." This said, the hand is given a slight upward or sideways movement, during which the change is made as follows :

With the thumb press the penny on to the second finger, at the same moment withdraw the first finger to the edge of the coin (Fig. 60).

Now the first finger slides the penny to the root of the thumb, where it is gripped between this and first phalange (Fig. 61).

Next slightly extend the second and third fingers,

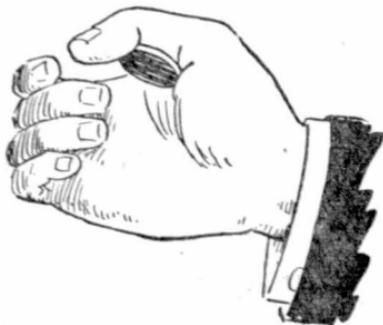


FIG. 61.

thereby releasing their grip upon the half-crown ; at the same moment lower the thumb until its tip rests upon the half-crown (Fig. 62).

Then the point of the thumb presses the half-crown



FIG. 62.

to the top of the first finger and holds it there. The act of doing this causes the penny to be released, whereupon it turns over to its edge and slides into the place, between

the bend of the second and third fingers, just vacated by the half-crown (Fig. 63).

The change is now complete and the half-crown is exhibited in place of the penny. This should be shown to the audience actually as in Fig. 63, for this allows them once more to see the empty palm.

These movements, if practised, will be found to dovetail into one instantaneous motion. It should be practised before a mirror to make sure of success.

The photographs give an inside view of the sleight.



FIG. 63.

The audience only see the back of the fingers and hand when the change is made, and the hand in motion at the instant of substitution. Coins of any size can be used with equal facility.

Coin Tricks

When the student has mastered the various sleights and passes described in the foregoing pages and has diligently practised them until he has acquired a satisfactory degree of dexterity, he will find himself in a position to perform all the most intricate and showy tricks in the whole range of coin conjuring.

Let him, however, make no mistake. There is no royal road to the attainment of proficiency in sleight of hand. It is the result of patience, and at least as much practice as he would devote to the acquirement of any other accomplishment worth while. The great Robert Houdin, when asked what were the essentials for the student of conjuring, replied, "There are three things—the first practice, the second practice, the third more practice."

Lest the aspirant should be discouraged at the outset by the imagined difficulty of his task, we hasten to assure him that there are many really excellent little coin tricks which can be performed without sleight of hand, or at least with only a very elementary knowledge.

The following section of this book is devoted to the description of a number of these, and during the time that the amateur is acquiring what a certain writer on conjuring describes as "digital dexterity," he may amuse and mystify his friends by performing some of these by no means to be despised little magical "stunts," not forgetting that even these should by no means be presented even in a circle of friends without preliminary practice.

Some Simple Coin Tricks

To Vanish a Coin from the Table

Effect.—A coin, preferably a penny or a half-crown, is laid upon the table. It is picked up in the right hand and transferred to the left, which when opened is shown to be empty. The coin may afterwards be found in the pocket of a spectator or elsewhere at the performer's discretion.

Presentation of Trick.—This trick is best performed when seated at a table. The coin is laid down in front

of the conjurer, about two inches from the edge of the table. He covers it with the fingers of his right hand, and draws it sharply towards him, quickly closing the hand at the moment it clears the table. In the act of performing this movement he gives a sharp fillip to the edge of the coin which has the effect of shooting it up the sleeve (see Fig. 64).

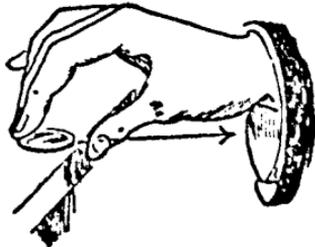


FIG. 64

He now pretends to place it in his left hand, which he closes, making a squeezing motion as if rubbing the coin away. The right hand is meanwhile dropped slowly to the side and secretly secures the coin which falls easily into it from the sleeve.

The left hand is slowly opened, showing that the coin has vanished. The right hand is now plunged into the pocket of a spectator or into the performer's own pocket, and immediately withdrawn holding at the fingertips the vanished coin, or it may be produced from any other place—for instance, from beneath the tablecloth or out of a candle shade—as may be most convenient and appropriate to the "patter."

It adds to the effect of the trick if the coin is first marked by a spectator.

Another Coin Vanish

Effect.—The performer spins a coin in the air and

catches it in his right hand, immediately placing it in the left, from which it vanishes.

This experiment is merely a variation of the one previously described, but has the advantage that it can be performed without having recourse to the table.

Presentation of Trick.—The conjurer spins the coin in the air and makes a feint of catching it as it reaches his hand. What really happens is that the coin falls *behind* the hand (which is instantly closed as if containing it) and into the performer's sleeve.

The conjurer should stand with his right side towards the audience, otherwise they will detect the passage of the coin into the sleeve, which by the way should be pulled well open previous to performing the trick.

The coin is now apparently placed in the left hand as in the preceding experiment, the trick being brought to a conclusion in a similar fashion.

The sleeves are so often unjustly suspected of playing a part in the mysterious vanishing and reappearing of all sorts of objects, from eggs to cannon balls, that it is only poetic justice that in these two instances they are really used to deceive the audience.

The Mysterious Match-box

Effect.—A small coin, either a sixpence or a three-penny piece, is spun upon the table. The performer suddenly arrests its motion by bringing down upon it an empty match-box. A member of the audience is invited to call head or tail. When the match-box is raised to verify the guess, the coin has completely vanished, and is afterwards discovered in the box.

Presentation of Trick.—The performer borrows a sixpence or threepenny piece from one of the spectators.

He then empties out the matches from an ordinary box of the well-known "safety" variety.

Spinning the coin upon the table, while it is still rapidly revolving, he calls out "Heads or Tails?" Someone having made a guess the conjurer brings down the empty match-box smartly upon the spinning coin, which, instead of being simply knocked down as might be expected, forces its way completely through the box, making in its progress, if the coin is a fairly thin one, an almost undetectable clean-cut slit. The bottom of the drawer should be uppermost when the box is brought down upon the coin. Otherwise it will have to penetrate two thicknesses of wood instead of one.

While the audience is still gasping with astonishment at the surprising disappearance of the coin, the conjurer shakes the match-box, and the sixpence or other coin rattles inside it. The box being opened the missing coin is discovered. In this as in most tricks of a similar nature it adds considerably to the effect if the coin is first marked by a member of the audience in order to dispel any suspicion of the substitution of a duplicate or trick coin.

A Chinese Coin Trick

(By the kind permission of Mr. P. T. Selbit, the well-known illusionist.)

The magician borrows a handkerchief, preferably a large silk one. This is spread out flat on the table and a borrowed coin placed on the handkerchief, in the centre. All four corners of the handkerchief are now gathered together, and a finger ring borrowed and slipped over the ends and pushed down until it is close to the coin, as shown in Fig. 65. The hand-

kerchief is now placed on the table again, as it was in the first instance, spread out flat, with the coin and ring of course underneath, as shown in Fig. 66. Two persons are now requested to place a finger of each hand on one corner of the handkerchief, so that the four extremities are tightly pressed down on the table. Now another handkerchief is borrowed and laid over the one containing the coin and ring, but in such a manner as not to hide the corners of the first handkerchief, and still allowing the two persons to retain their pressure



FIG. 65.



FIG. 66.

on the corners of the underneath one. What the conjurer proposes to do is to remove both coin and ring from the lower handkerchief while under the conditions imposed by having the corners held down. This, to all appearances, seems to be an impossibility, but within the space of a few seconds it is proved quite possible, when the conjurer is seen to remove first the coin and then the ring.

How is this accomplished? It is done in a manner both simple and bold. The two corners of the lower handkerchief nearest the performer are not spread out to

their full extent, but the ends are allowed to be a few inches closer together than those on the opposite side. This unsuspecting and apparently careless detail allows a little fulness in the handkerchief on the side nearest the performer, and under cover of the uppermost handkerchief he gathers up that side into little pleats or tiny folds towards the centre. If sufficient fulness has been allowed, this operation will occasion no strain or tugging on the corners held by the audience. After pleating right up to the ring, the folds must be pushed down and out until there is an opening large enough to draw the coin through. Fig. 67 illustrates the aperture thus

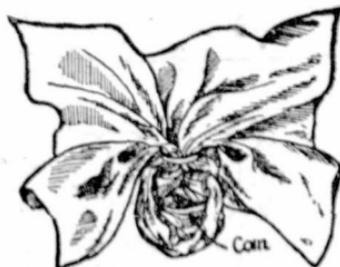


FIG. 67.

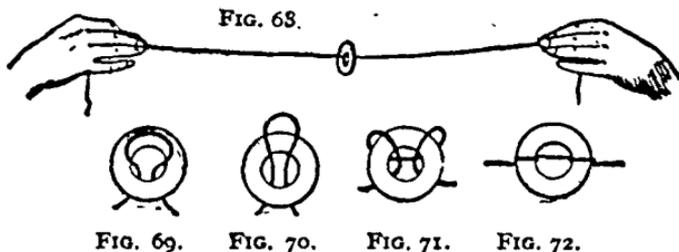
made. After the coin is removed, the ring is released; but before showing it it is always advisable to straighten out the folds of the handkerchief, so that there may be no clue as to how this mystery was accomplished.

The Oriental Coin and String Trick

Effect.—A coin with a hole in the centre about half-an-inch in diameter is threaded upon a string, the two ends of which are held by a spectator. It appears impossible to remove the coin without releasing the ends of the string. Nevertheless the conjurer under cover, of a lady's handkerchief, succeeds in doing this with ease.

Presentation of Trick.—Two perforated coins are required. These should be similar in appearance and each bearing the same date. One of them should be palmed in the performer's right hand at the outset of the trick.

The string should be about three-quarters of a yard in length and of a moderately thin, pliable texture. The audience may be allowed to examine both string and coin in order to satisfy themselves that there is "no deception." The coin is then threaded upon the string, the two ends of which are firmly held by an obliging spectator. The string must not, however, be pulled



quite taut, but allowed to sag slightly towards the middle (Fig. 68).

The conjurer now borrows a lady's handkerchief, which he drapes over the coin, really to cover his subsequent manipulations, but as he explains, with the conjurer's usual economy of truth, "because the spirits work best in a subdued light."

Inserting both hands beneath the handkerchief he slides the suspended coin a little towards the left, and then proceeds to loop the string through the duplicate which it will be remembered was concealed in his right hand. The looping is effected as follows.

The string is first passed through the coin from below, as in Fig. 69. The loop is then passed over the top of the coin as shown in Fig. 70, and continued down the back,

as in Fig. 71. The volunteer assistant is now asked to pull the string a little tighter. This results in the coin being securely held on the string as indicated in Fig. 72.

With the request to "pull a little tighter" the performer slides both hands apart towards each end of the string as if to emphasise his meaning, at the same time sliding along the originally threaded coin under cover of the left hand, "Tighter, tighter!" he exclaims, and, with a slight show of impatience, takes the string out of the assistant's hands, apparently to further illustrate what he means. Saying, "Now, please pull the string quite tight like this," he hands it back, taking care to keep his own hands well towards the ends of the string so that the assistant has no option but to grasp it on the inside of the performer's hands, thus leaving the latter at liberty to slide off the coin he holds and pocket it unobserved.

At this stage of the proceedings the performer removes the handkerchief, remarking, "Let us see how we are getting on." The spectators can now see that the coin is still on the string (having no reason to suspect the substitution of a duplicate), but apparently secured more firmly than before by a seemingly complicated tie, and they are consequently all the more astonished when, by a single simple movement, the coin is freed from the string. To effect this all that is necessary is for the conjurer to slide the loop, Fig. 72, over the top of the coin, and it can immediately be pulled clear.

Tricks and Puzzles with Water and Liquids

The Impossible

THREE tumblers, a jug of water, and a piece of stiff paper about eight inches by four inches are required. Pour the water into the tumblers until each is about half-full. Be very anxious—before an audience—to see that there is the same quantity of water in each glass, not that this little detail has anything to do with the actual working of the trick, but it may lead people to think that it has—until they see you do the trick.

Now, place the paper on the edges of two of the glasses, forming a kind of bridge between them. Pick up the third glass and let it rest, while the hand still holds it, on the paper bridge. Naturally, the paper will sink down under the weight. Then you move the two glasses a little nearer to each other, and try again, and again the paper bends under the weight of the glass you place on it.

You pretend to be in difficulties and encourage the “knowing ones” in your audience to jeer at you as you try the trick again and again. You explain that there is a way of resting the glass on the paper in such a way that the paper shall not sink down. Some brainy person will then say, “Impossible!”—or it is to be hoped that they will—because that will give you the opportunity of saying:

“Thank you. I remember it now. ‘Impossible’ happens to be the name of the trick; thanks for giving me the clue. It won’t be such a bad trick—will it?—if

I make the bridge between these two glasses with this piece of paper and then place the other glass on the bridge . . .”

“With the water still in the glass,” says one of your victims.

“Of course—with the water still in the glass.”

Some members of your audience will be sure to say that it cannot be done; others will beg to be allowed to think it out. You will probably hear whispering:

“The water in the glasses has something to do with

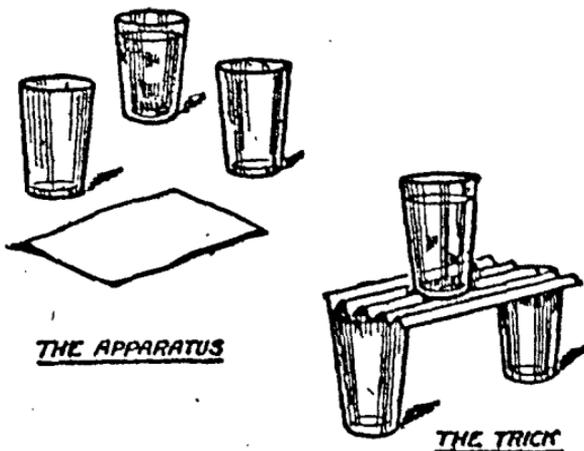


FIG. 73.

it. Why was he so jolly careful to get the same quantity of water in each glass? Now, wait a minute . . .”

This is where you chuckle secretly. You invite any one to come and try the experiment. Your audience will suggest putting something under the paper—a strip of cardboard or something of that kind. You work up the excitement as you say: “No cardboard is used in the trick.”

Your audience will jump to the conclusion that something besides the articles they see is used, but they are

wrong. The trick can be done when you know how to do it.

When every one has "given it up," fold the paper in pleats lengthwise, open out the pleats a little, and rest the paper on the tops of two of the glasses. The paper is then in corrugated form, and it will bear the weight of the third glass, half-full of water, upon it. You have achieved the "impossible."

Of course you could do the trick in about half the time by merely asking: "Can you do this?" and then proceeding to do it, but by working up the trick in the way suggested you make it more effective.

You will now see the necessity of a little private rehearsal with the glasses and the paper that you are going to use. You have to make sure that the paper is sufficiently thick, that the pleats are folded properly (they must not be too wide), and that the glass is not too heavy. The trick is quite simple with a "pony" glass, but as the base of the glass is small the pleats of the paper must also be small; otherwise you will have difficulty in balancing the glass on the paper.

A Quaint Mixture

A soda-water tumbler, a jug containing from a quarter to half a pint of water, and a cup of coffee with a little milk in it are needed for this experiment.

The trick is to pour both the coffee and the water into the big tumbler and then separate them again. Possibly somebody will attempt this feat by first placing a small tumbler in the large one, pouring the coffee into the small tumbler and the water around. But can it be said that you pour both the coffee and the water into the tumbler, when you really pour the coffee into another glass placed inside the tumbler? No, that solution does not work.

Here is the way in which you carry out your intentions.

Pour the coffee into the big tumbler and place on it a disc of thin cardboard; the disc should reach nearly to the edge of the tumbler. Then pour the water very slowly, a few drops at a time, on to the top of the cardboard, which breaks the fall of the water. The water runs off to the edge, and as the coffee is heavier than the water the latter remains on the top. The cardboard disc floats upwards with the water, and so the first half of the trick is accomplished.

The separation of the liquids can be brought about in two or three ways. For example, you can offer to drink the coffee without drinking the water, and you achieve this apparent miracle by merely putting in a straw and sucking up the coffee; in that way you have separated the two liquids.

With the help of a scent spray you can pump the water into the jug again, taking great care, of course, not to disturb the surface of the coffee. You can also take out nearly all the water with a small sponge, and the remainder with a piece of blotting-paper.

On the Edge

Hold a card by the sides between the fingers and thumb of the right hand, the face of the card being towards the audience. Now, can you balance a glass half-full of water on the top of the card?

There are four ways of doing this trick, but we need not take any notice of the first, because you are not likely to trouble to learn it; it consists in actually doing what you profess to do—balance the glass. It can be done, but you need a very steady hand and long practice.

The second way is by the aid of a specially prepared card. This is made of two cards, fastened together.

Fold a card lengthwise in half. Stick one-half to the back of another card and then fold back the half which is not stuck, so that the back of the prepared card may appear to be the back of an ordinary card.

Now, if you hold up this card by the sides you can easily fold the loose half back a little when you are putting the glass on the edge of the card, and thus you get a firm standing-place for the glass. If you wish to be able to throw this card down on the table without giving away the secret (because there will naturally be a little

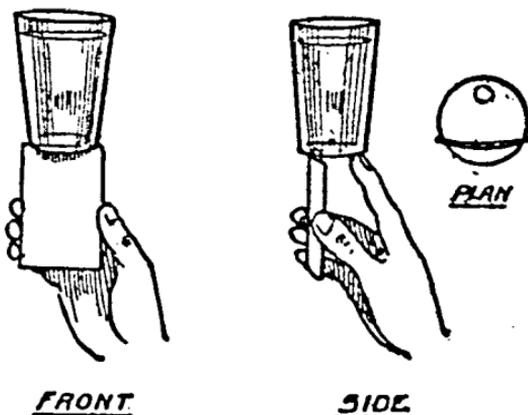


FIG. 74.

curve in the part which you folded back) you must make a little spring hinge by means of a strip of india-rubber down the card. A card prepared in this way can be bought at a conjuring shop. The trick is quite a good one when done in this way, but, of course, it has this drawback. If you are performing at a friend's house and you are using borrowed cards, it is more than probable that the backs of the borrowed cards will not match the back of the trick card. Well, you can do the trick without the use of a specially prepared card, and this brings us to the third method.

Take any card and fold it in halves lengthwise. Then fold it back again and put it on the top of the pack. Of course, if you are performing with a borrowed pack of cards, you will have to seize your opportunity to do this when the attention of the audience is directed to another trick, or you can do it before your performance begins.

Now, pick up the two top cards together and hold them in the right hand in the way described, with the face of the lower card towards the audience. You will understand, of course, that to the audience these two cards must appear to be one card. When you take the glass with your left hand and you try to balance it on top of the card the back of the left hand is towards the audience, and the hand nearly covers the whole of the card. This gives you the chance of bending back the top card to make a firm resting-place for the glass. The bending is done with the right first finger. To assist you in keeping the cards nicely squared up while you are bending back the top one, place the right little finger under the lower edge of the cards and the left middle finger and thumb at the sides, the left thumb being just above the right thumb. Of course, the left hand is held in this position for only a few moments while you are balancing the glass.

After you have done the trick in this way, casually return the two cards to the pack and shuffle the cards, thus getting the bent card out of sight.

The fourth method is considered the best of the lot, because you use only one card. Hold it in the way described and bend it slightly, the convex side being towards the audience. Now, in the act of balancing the glass on the edge with your left hand just stick your right first finger straight up behind the card and rest the glass partly on the edge of the card and partly on the tip of your finger, which, of course, is hidden by the card.

It will be necessary to hold the card up fairly high so that no one can get a glimpse over the top of it. The trick is over so quickly that no one notices that the first finger is concealed behind the card.

Washing a Card

You can begin this trick by asking some one if they have ever tried to wash a playing card with water ; if so, have they noticed the effect. You ask for a pack of cards, and begin the experiment by holding the pack in the left hand, with the fingers on the lower side and the thumb on the other.

There is no harm in saying that the experiment is most successful with a five-spot card, and you put, say, the five of clubs on the bottom of the pack and therefore hold the pack with that card facing the audience. Then, this is what you apparently do.

Dip a finger into some water and rub on the pip at the lower corner nearest to you. To dry the card you take your handkerchief from your pocket and dab the corner. The audience see that you have apparently washed away one of the pips.

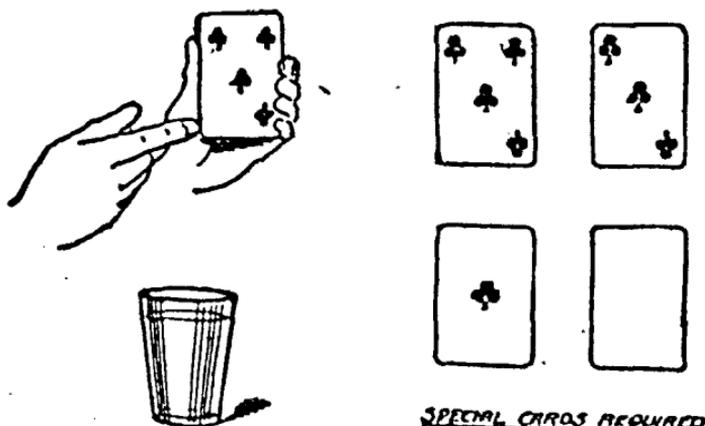
Turn the cards over in your hand, so that the blank corner is now at the top and repeat the experiment with the pip which is now in the position occupied by the first. This action reduces the number of pips on the card to three, arranged diagonally across the face of the card.

Repeat the experiment, but this time wash away the two corner pips at once, leaving only one pip in the centre of the card. Then wash away this pip and you have a blank card, which you hand out for examination.

To begin with, the request for the loan of a pack of cards is not quite what it seems. You arrange with a kind friend in the audience to "find" a pack of cards when you ask for one, and that person has no difficulty

in "finding" the pack which you have prepared for the trick, and placed in some convenient hiding-place in the house.

The disappearance of the first pip is easily managed. You dip a finger into the water, shake it, and rub the corner with a dry finger. Then shake the pack as though you were trying to dry the card; this action enables you to turn the pack, in a natural way, with its face towards the floor, and thus the audience do not see that the pip



WASHING OFF THE SPOTS

FIG. 75.

is still on the card. Then you take your handkerchief from your pocket, and in so doing secretly take out a five of clubs with one spot missing behind the handkerchief. It is not a difficult matter, under cover of the handkerchief and while pretending to dab the corner of the card, to slip the prepared card on the face of the pack. Having done that, show your hands and the handkerchief to your audience, to let them see that you have not merely slipped the pip off the card, but have apparently dissolved it in water and removed all trace of it.

Directly after you have shown this card on the bottom of the pack turn the pack over in the hand, so that the blank corner is now at the top. Now if you bend the third and little fingers of the left hand slightly they will conceal the pip at that corner, but before you bend the fingers let the audience see the card. Now you have to exchange that card for another with only three pips on it, the pips being diagonally across the card.

This prepared card is at the back of the pack. While you are talking, bring the right hand to the front of the pack, push up the back card with the first finger of the left hand, extend the fingers of the right hand and push the card on the tips of the fingers of the right hand, at the same time slide the card down on to the face of the pack.

This movement takes a long time to explain in print, but it is done in the fraction of a second. All you apparently do is to bring the right hand up to the pack to square up the cards.

Directly you have the "three card" at the face of the pack, bend the third and little finger slightly and thus hide the place where the missing pip ought to be. The card is now apparently the same card which the audience saw before—a five-spot with one spot missing.

This time, when you dip a finger into the water and pretend to wash away a spot, you must work rather quickly, and as you take away the tips of the third and little fingers to enable you to wash away the pip which is supposed to be there, you must bring the right hand over the spot at once, otherwise the audience will see that the spot is not there! This time you have the advantage of being able to show the blank corner directly you take away your right hand. Take out your handkerchief, dab the corner with it and return it to your pocket.

Now tell your audience that if you wish to rub away

two spots at once you have to use both hands. Take the cards in the right hand for a moment while you dip a finger of the left hand into the water. In the act of passing the cards from one hand to the other you slide the next card from the back to the front ; this card has one pip in the centre. (If your cards have no index corners you can use the ace for this card.)

While you dip the finger of the left hand into the water, you must hold the pack with the face card downwards ; take it, in the same position, in the left hand, while you dip a finger of the right hand into the water. Then rub first one corner with the left hand and then the other corner with the right hand and bring up the pack with the card facing the audience, but hold the pack in both hands with the hands at the corners (top and bottom) as though you were merely hiding the pips there. Some one is sure to tell you to " take away your hands," and, apparently reluctantly, you do so, disclosing the card with the single pip in the centre. The laugh will then be in your favour, and you take advantage of this temporary diversion to slip the next card from the back to the front of the pack. Then hold the pack by the sides in the right hand with the fingers right over the centre, and the audience will think that the single pip is still there, being hidden by the finger.

To conclude the trick you can say that your fingers are damp enough to manage one pip, and you pretend to rub it off the face of the card, which is thus blank.

Take this card away in your right hand, and offer it to some one on your left hand for examination, taking care to turn the pack down with its face to the floor as you remove the blank card, otherwise the audience will see the next card, which is the one pip card.

The object of handing the blank card to some one on your left is to enable you to turn in that direction in a

natural way, because directly you have turned you drop the pack you are holding in the left hand pocket of your coat (or dinner jacket) and take from it another pack, from which the five of clubs has been abstracted. This is important, because a juvenile audience is merciless to an amateur conjurer as a rule, and some one is sure to say. "Let us have a look at the cards." Don't be in too great a hurry to hand them out for examination; always "play" with the younger members of your audience when you get the chance to do so. Of course, if the children are so exceedingly well-behaved that they do not ask to see the cards you must suggest that "perhaps you would like to have a look at the cards," but it is hoped for your sake that the children are not of that kind. An audience of very prim and proper children may be easy to a conjurer, because they do not attempt to catch him out, but in another sense they are very difficult because it is by no means easy to engage and hold their attention. It is better to have an audience of children who are natural and who are therefore always eager to pounce upon any little weak point—or point which they think is weak—in a trick.

The preparation of the trick cards required for this trick is not a difficult matter. If expense is no object, the best plan is to buy several packs of cards with the backs all alike. A blank card usually goes with each pack. If the cards have no index corners you need prepare only two trick cards—one with four spots on it and one with three. To get the spots, put a ten-spot card in cold water and let it soak until you can peel away the face of it. Dry it on clean blotting-paper. Then cut out the spots very neatly and paste them on two of the blank cards, taking care to get the pips at the corners in the right positions.

The other method of preparing the cards (presuming

that you do not wish to invest in several packs) is to float off the backs of a couple of cards, dry them, paste white paper on them, and then stick pips on the paper. The drawback to this method is that the paper will probably not match the paper on the faces of the other cards in the pack.

The Passe-Passe Trick

This is a very old trick, but one which is seldom performed in its original and proper form. After being out of fashion for a number of years the trick has been recently revived, and there are now several versions of the trick. As far as information goes, however, all the modern versions of the passe-passe trick omit one important detail—some water or other liquid.

In the original version of the trick the performer comes forward with a bottle and a glass—if these things are not already on the table. (As a matter of fact, it is a good plan to have two small tables on either side of the stage for the presentation of this trick.) Two cardboard cylinders, one fitting inside the other, are also required, together with a small tin funnel. The bottle may be of the champagne kind, or a wine bottle, or a beer bottle; the latter is generally the most convenient; a Bass's label on the bottle serves as a kind of guarantee that the bottle is "genuine."

The performer pours water from the bottle into the glass; in fact, he fills the glass with water. Finding that he has a little too much water for his purpose, he pours a little back into the bottle, using the funnel to aid him in the task of getting the water into the bottle. He then places the bottle on the table on his right and the glass on the table on his left.

. The next thing to do is to show the cardboard covers to the audience, and in doing this some little amusement

may be caused by pretending that you have something concealed in one of the covers. Thus, you lead off by nursing the smaller cover carefully under one arm, and showing the larger cover. When this is returned to you slip it over the smaller cover, withdraw the smaller, and hand that out for examination. The audience will at once jump to the conclusion that you have concealed something in the larger cover, and will demand to be allowed to "look at the other." Then the argument begins.

"But you have already seen that one," you say.

"Ah," comes the quick reply, "but you've slipped something from the other one into that since we saw it."

Take back the smaller cover, pass it through the larger one, and hand that out for examination. The audience, being now convinced that there is "some trick" in the covers, will demand to see both of them at once, and with a show of reluctance you hand out both covers at once and the audience laugh at themselves for being "had." Possibly, however, some of the more knowing ones will still think that the covers "have something to do with the trick"; if so, all the better for you, because in that case those persons are on the wrong scent altogether.

Having received the covers again you can assure your audience that the covers are made in that way to save space in packing—a remark that is sure not to be believed—and you go on to demonstrate the real use of the covers. One covers the glass, the other the bottle.

The trick is, of course, to make the glass of water and the bottle change places. You pronounce the magical word, lift the covers, and show that your command has been obeyed. Having done that it is as well to raise the glass to let the audience see that there is water in it. Then you cover the glass and the bottle

again and cause them to return to their original places, and once more you show that the two covers are empty.

Unknown to the audience the conjurer uses two bottles for this trick and two glasses. The bottles are made of tin and are painted black to resemble dark glass bottles. Neither bottle is quite "ordinary." One of them has no bottom to it, and is therefore a mere shell. The other has the bottom fixed in about half-way down, leaving room for a small glass to be hidden in the bottle under the bottom. Close up against the

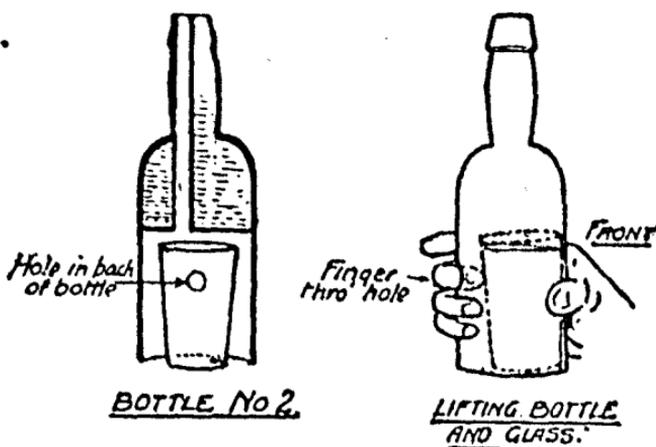


FIG. 76.

neck of the bottle there is fixed a tiny tin tube which passes down the neck and then through the centre of the bottom. Therefore, if you merely pour water into the neck of the bottle it remains in the bottle, but if you insert a funnel into the top of the little tube and pour water into the funnel you are really pouring the water into the glass hidden under the bottom of the bottle.

Of course, both bottles must be exactly alike and the label on one must match the label on the other; it is a good plan to have a little piece "accidentally" torn off

the label. At the outset of the trick a glass, similar to the "visible" one, is placed in the small bottle (the one holding the water), the shell bottle is placed over that bottle. To enable the conjurer to pick up the bottles and glass together two small holes are made in the backs of the bottles; the tip of the middle finger passes through both holes and holds the glass against the interior of the bottle. In order to prevent the glass from "talking" (making any sound by knocking against the inside of the bottle) it is a good plan to line the lower half of the bottle with cloth.

The working of the trick will now be clear. Hold the bottle in the right hand and the glass in the left. Pour out the water and stand the bottle down, taking care to keep the side with the hole away from the audience. Then apparently pour some of the water back into the bottle, but by using the funnel you pour it into the glass below. When you are practising the trick you can find out by experiment just how much water to pour back in this way, and if you make a little scratch on the glass you will guard against the fatal mistake of pouring in too much (because you cannot get it back again) or pouring too little. Obviously, the water you pour into the bottle (really into the glass below) should be equal in quantity to that which you leave in the glass.

Having settled this matter to your satisfaction, place the glass on the other table, or if you are performing with only one table keep the bottle and glass as far apart as possible; if they are close together some members of your audience may be confused and forget on which side is the bottle and which the glass.

Now comes the business of handing round the card-board covers for examination. When you get them back again take care to hold the larger one in the right hand.

While pattering to your audience, you quietly pass the larger cover over the bottle, raise it, and then put the smaller one over the bottle. In raising the larger cover you should nip it slightly and so get the shell bottle inside it.

A word of caution is here necessary. Do not forget that there is a hole in the back of the bottle; when you place the cover containing the shell bottle over the glass—which you do immediately after you have covered the bottle with the smaller cover—you want to make sure that the hole in the shell bottle is still at the back. Therefore, note carefully the position of the hand when you raise the cover with the shell bottle inside it, and when you place the cover over the glass see that your hand assumes the same position. You will probably find it convenient to stand behind the table and to keep your thumb at the back of the cover.

Now the bottle and the glass are covered, and all you have to do to cause them to change places is to raise both covers; you grip the one on the right rather tightly, thus raising the bottle inside it and disclosing the glass, and you hold the other loosely, thus leaving the bottle in view. Cover the glass and bottle again, and to cause them to go back to their original positions first pick up the one on your left—gripping tightly to hold the shell bottle inside it; then walk over to the other and raise it, showing the bottle.

This leaves you with the shell bottle inside the larger cover, and you naturally have to get rid of it. Drop the cover over the bottle quickly and then apparently attempt to put the other cover over it. It is impossible to do this, of course, because the cover which held the shell bottle is the larger of the two; therefore you raise the larger cover again, leaving the shell bottle in its original position over the other bottle. Then put the smaller cover inside the larger one, pick up the bottle,

taking care to hide the glass inside it, and place it behind your screen or on a side table. Then take away the glass and you are ready for the next trick.

A word as to the appearance of the bottles and the covers. These can be bought at a conjuring shop, and you will find that, as the Scotsman said of various brands of whisky "Some are better than others." You want a bottle which looks exactly like the real thing, and the only way of making quite sure of getting it is to take an empty bottle with you when you are buying the trick. Note the slope of the "shoulder" of the bottle. The labelling you can do yourself.

As to the covers, take care that they fit properly, and are not too stiff. If the larger one is really a shade too small for the shell bottle and is also too limp you will have difficulty in raising the cover quickly and leaving the shell bottle on the table; the bottle will get jammed in the cover and then—well—perhaps you had better tell the audience that the trick had not happened yet, but you hope it will in time! It is better to guard against such a catastrophe by having covers of the right size; they must not be too large or too small.

Although the trick is quite an easy one it requires more than a little practice. The most important move of all is that which enables you to get the shell bottle into the large cover. You will find that the knack of putting the cover quickly over the bottle and then lifting it up as quickly with the shell bottle inside it, is not learned in a moment; at any rate, you cannot learn to do that in a natural way in a moment. To get the move quite right put the cover over the shell bottle and lift it without the shell inside; keep to the same movement when you lift the cover with the shell bottle inside it. To guard against the dropping of the shell you can place your little finger under the cover.

Tricks and Puzzles with Matchsticks

Dividing The Inheritance

A FARMER died who had five sons, leaving them a large square plot of land (made with sixteen matchsticks, as shown by the outer square of Fig. 77) to be divided among

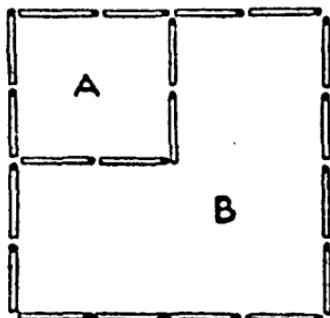


FIG. 77.

them in the following proportions: The eldest son was to take one corner square (marked "A" in Fig. 77) and the remaining three-quarters were to be divided among the four younger sons into plots of equal size and shape. Show, by placing additional matchsticks within Fig. 77 how it is possible to divide the plot marked "B" into four plots of equal size and shape.

Solution. — Eight more matchsticks will be required to solve this puzzle, and they must be placed as shown in Fig. 78.

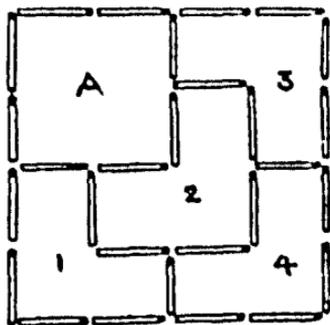


FIG. 78.

Boy Scouts' Bridge

Sixteen matchsticks are formed into two squares, as shown in Fig. 79.

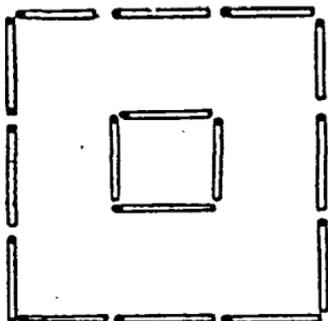


FIG. 79.

The centre square is supposed to represent an island, the space between the two squares representing water. Two boy scouts carrying their poles desire to cross to the island and were able to make a bridge above the water, using only their two poles. How did they manage it?

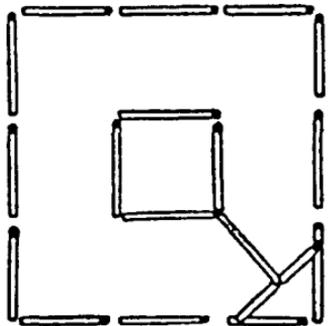


FIG. 80.

Solution.—Place one pole (matchstick) across the lower corner of the outer square and the other matchstick will then be found long enough to reach across from

the first matchstick to the opposite corner of the small centre square, without touching the water, as shown in Fig. 80.

Doubling the Area

Lay four matchsticks upon the table in the form of a square, as shown in Fig. 81.

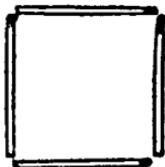


FIG. 81.

The above is supposed to represent a field, enclosed by four fences. You are now asked to estimate how many more fences would be required to enclose an adjoining field, exactly the same as Fig. 81. None of the matchsticks forming Fig. 81 may be disturbed,

Solution.—Most people would probably estimate that four more fences would be required, but the correct answer is three.

As you will see in Fig. 82, one side of the existing enclosure is utilised for both fields.

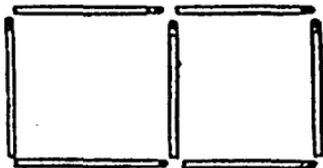


FIG. 82.

Easy Multiplication

Hand a quantity of matchsticks to one of the company and request that two numbers of matchsticks be

laid out on the table, which, on being multiplied together, will make seven. None of the matchsticks may be broken.

Solution.—This extremely simple puzzle will be found to prove a “give-it-up” to many who are asked to figure it out, and who look for a deeper meaning of the conditions than is apparent in the wording. The two numbers are, however, seven and one, these being laid out on the table as indicated in Fig. 83. These two numbers multiplied together will, of course, produce seven.

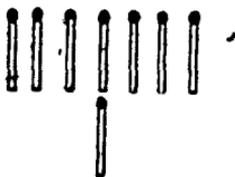


FIG. 83.

Subtle Subtraction

Five matchsticks are handed to one of the company with a request that he will endeavour to make nineteen of them without breaking any. Also, when he has made nineteen, he must further endeavour to make twenty, by *taking away* one matchstick.

Solution.—Nineteen is made with the five matchsticks in the form of Roman Numerals, as shown in Fig. 84.



FIG. 84.

It is, of course, a simple process to remove the centre

matchstick and thus leave twenty (XX), as shown in Fig. 85.



FIG. 85.

Singular Subtraction

Fifteen matchsticks are handed to a friend, and he is asked to place them upon the table in such a position that when he has removed six of the matchsticks, ten may yet remain upon the table.

Solution.—The fifteen matchsticks have to be arranged upon the table as indicated in Fig. 86.



FIG. 86.

Six of the matchsticks (marked with a "X" in the above diagram) are then taken away, forming Fig. 87.



FIG. 87.

It will thus be seen that "TEN" remains.

Twenty-Five from Six

Hand out six matchsticks to one of the company and request him to make them into twenty-five, without breaking any.

Solution.—The principle of this puzzle is dependent upon the use of Roman Numerals, an invaluable friend

in many matchstick puzzles. The six matchsticks are placed upon the table in order to form twenty-five (XXV) in Roman numerals, as shown in Fig. 88. Thus "twenty-five" has been made from six matchsticks.



FIG. 88.

Matchstick on the Plate

Five matchsticks are placed upon a plate, as shown in Fig. 89.

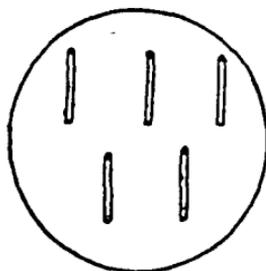


FIG. 89.

The question is then asked how it is possible for five persons each to take one matchstick and yet to leave one on the plate.

Solution.—This is a very amusing little catch and will be found to take in many of the knowing ones. The performer asks four persons each to take a matchstick from the plate, after this he lifts up the plate with the fifth matchstick lying undisturbed upon it. The position now is, that five persons have each taken a matchstick and there still is one remaining on the plate.

One-Square Puzzle

Four matchsticks are placed together upon the table in the form of a cross, care being taken to see that the centre is formed exactly as shown in Fig. 90.

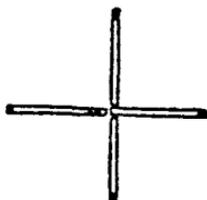


FIG. 90.

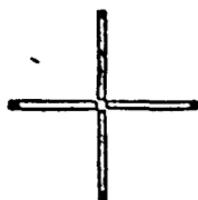


FIG. 91.

One of the company is now requested to form a square by simply moving one matchstick only. None of the other matchsticks may be moved in any way.

Solution.—The centre right-hand matchstick of Fig. 90 is moved slightly to the right. This leaves a little space in the centre in the form of a small square, the ends of the four matchsticks making the sides of the square, as shown in Fig. 91.

Two-Square Puzzle

Arrange twelve matchsticks in the form of two squares, as shown in Fig. 92. Now take away the eight matchsticks forming the outer square, and replace six of

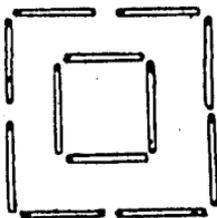


FIG. 92.

them in order to form three squares the same size as the inner square of Fig. 92.

Solution.—This is done by rearranging the matchsticks, as shown in Fig. 93.

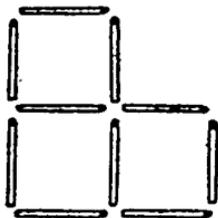


FIG. 93.

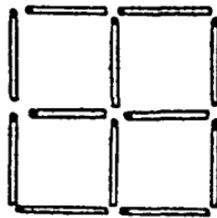


FIG. 94.

Three-Square Puzzle

Twelve matchsticks are arranged upon the table in the form of four squares, as shown in Fig. 94. Three of the matchsticks have now to be removed and then replaced in order to form three squares only.

Each of the three squares must be the same size as the original four squares, and the whole of the twelve matchsticks must be used.

Solution.—The two bottom left-hand corner matchsticks and the top right-hand matchstick of Fig. 94 are removed and replaced against the perpendicular top right-hand matchstick in order to form a square, as

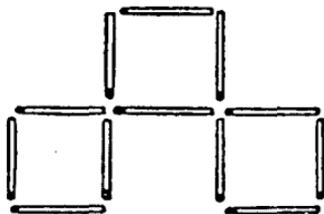


FIG. 95.

shown in Fig. 95. Thus three squares are formed with

the twelve matchsticks in accordance with the conditions of the puzzle.

Six-Square Puzzle

Lay seventeen matchsticks upon the table in the form of six small squares, as shown in Fig. 96. Now take away five matchsticks, leaving only three squares remaining on the table. It must be understood that those remaining on the table must not have been disturbed in any way.

Solution.—Remove the two matchsticks from the top right-hand corner and the two from the top left-hand corner (lettered "A," "B," "C," and "D" of Fig. 96),

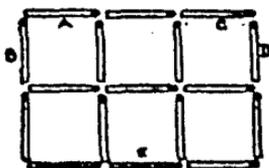


FIG. 96.

and also the bottom centre matchstick. This will leave only three squares, as shown in Fig. 97.

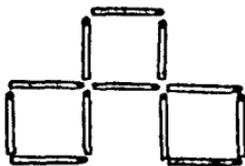


FIG. 97.

Six From Six Leaves Two

Six equal squares are made with seventeen matchsticks as directed in the foregoing puzzle and illustrated in Fig. 96. You are now asked to take away six match-

sticks and leave two squares only on the table. In this puzzle, as in the previous one, the matchsticks remaining on the table must not have been moved in any way whilst solving the puzzle.

Solution.—This is somewhat of a catch, since the two small squares that remain are not of the same size. Most solvers will doubtless assume that they are required to make the squares of the same size. Remove the four matchsticks forming the inner sides of the four left-hand squares and also the bottom right-hand corner matchsticks. This will leave two squares only, as shown in Fig. 98.



FIG. 98.

Eight from Fifteen

Fifteen matchsticks are required, and the idea is to form eight complete and equal squares.

Solution.—The method of placing the fifteen matchsticks upon the table to form the eight squares is shown in Fig. 99.

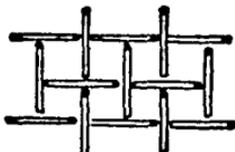


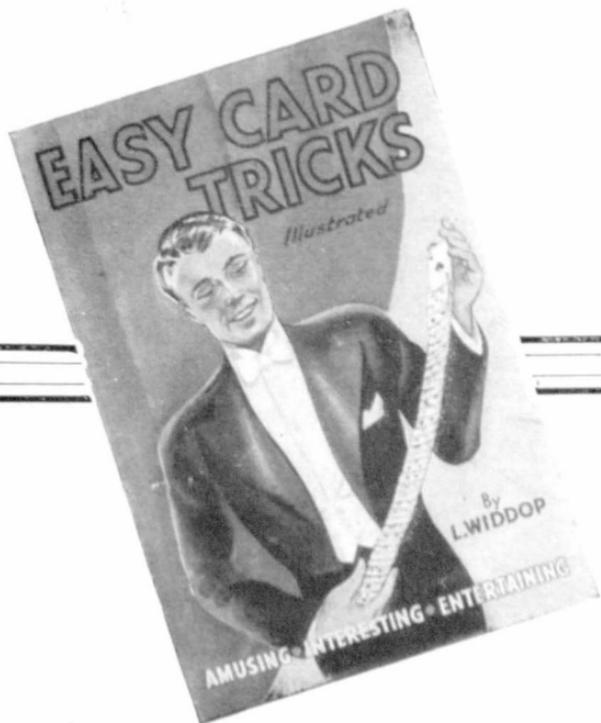
FIG. 99.

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