

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

Books by Will Goldston

- *SECRETS OF MAGIC
- *LATEST CONJURING
- *MAGIC FOR THE FORCES
- *LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE
TRICKS AND ILLUSIONS
PAPER TRICKS
- *THE YOUNG CONJURER, Parts 1 and 2
THE YOUNG CONJURER (Both Parts Revised)
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CARD AND BALL TRICKS
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- *SENSATIONAL TALES OF MYSTERY MEN
- *MORE TRICKS AND PUZZLES
MORE TRICKS AND PUZZLES (Revised)
- *MAGICAL SCRAPS
- *GREAT MAGICIANS' TRICKS
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TRICKS THAT MYSTIFY
MORE MODERN CARD TRICKS
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MAGICAL INFORMATION
WHO'S WHO IN MAGIC
- *A MAGICIANS' SWANSONG
GREAT TRICKS REVEALED
TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

* Out of Print.

J - Doc - Gol

BY

WILL GOLDSTON

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TRICKS
OF THE
MASTERS



Illustrated

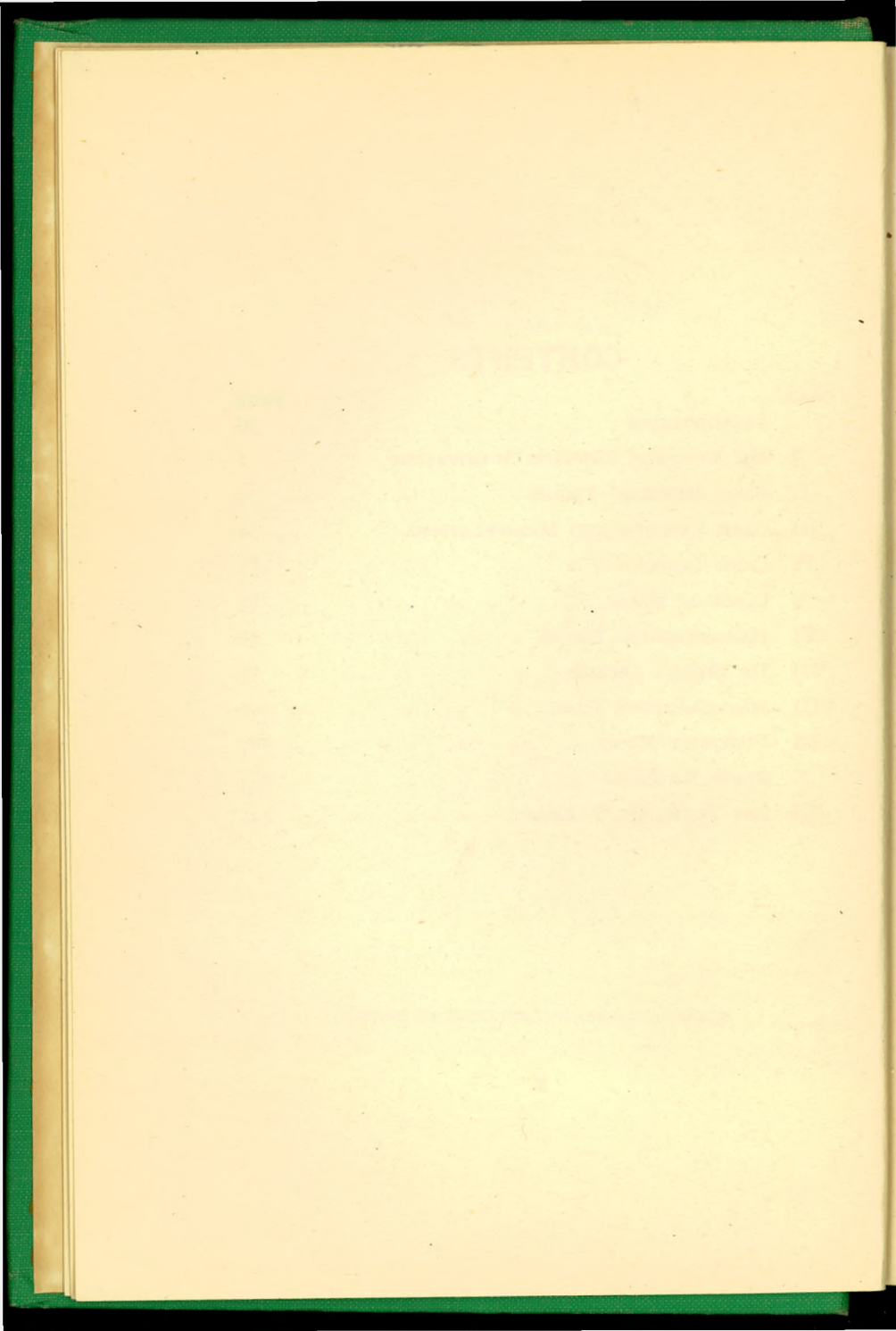
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INTRODUCTION

AN introduction is no essential part to a book of magical revelation, but the chequered history of the present volume before it reached the publisher's hands demands some explanatory notes from me.

When Arnold de Biere died I decided to publish a book on him and his magic and arranged tentatively that it should appear as *The Secrets of De Biere*. Just as I was settling to work in sifting through the material, my valued illustrator, Clifford Thompson, died.

Thompson was a man who understood magic and an artist of high quality, as many of my readers must have realized. He had worked in close co-operation with me for many years and his death was a considerable loss to me in both a professional and a personal sense. I interviewed and tried out several other artists but without success. The illustrator of a good book on magic must have other qualities besides the ability to draw well; he must, above all things, have a wide knowledge of mechanics.

Whilst this search continued, I was still collating and writing material. I do not know at what stage I decided to enlarge the scope of my book, but it was

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certainly before a suitable artist for it was found. Some of de Biere's tricks have been described before, and there seemed little point in re-writing them. Then again, I had a great deal of other first-class material on my hands.

I therefore decided to make my book more comprehensive and to call it *Tricks of the Masters*. I believe most of my readers will approve of this course, and those who expected a volume devoted exclusively to de Biere will feel no disappointment. The best of de Biere is here with the exception of the thumb-tie, and this trick, as I have stated elsewhere, is explained in detail in my *More Exclusive Magical Secrets*.

From the beginning I had every confidence that this book would be successful, and I was determined that it should not be spoiled by incompetent illustrations. Nevertheless, I had begun to despair of ever finding a properly qualified artist when one morning George E. Hobbs walked into my office. I had not seen him for twenty-five years, but I knew at once that my wildest hopes had been realized. Hobbs, indeed, was a gift from the gods to me, and it is true to say that he found me rather than that I found him. Of the quality of his line work I shall not speak; the illustrations in this volume are ample testimony to him.

I believed then that my troubles were over. But I was wrong. I had not reckoned with the German aerial warfare. A bomb, flung with light-hearted

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abandon from a Nazi night-raider, destroyed the greater part of my typescript just as I was knocking it into final shape for the printer. Consequently I had to settle down to a laborious re-writing of some thirty thousand words.

I cannot pretend this was a hard task, but it occupied a deal of time. I considered myself fortunate in that none of the illustrations prepared by Hobbs, nor any of the card-fanning photographs had been damaged. The matter of the book—indeed, of all my books—is carried in my head, so that in no sense was the loss irretrievable.

The photographs referred to above have given me particular pleasure. For a long time there has been a demand for a really understandable explanation of the intricacies of card fanning. The printed word in itself is certainly not enough, and line illustration of the various movements is a difficult business technically besides having doubtful value as an explanatory medium.

For these reasons I decided to use photographs. I was fortunate in enlisting the aid of Howard de Courcy, one of the best card fanners in the world to-day, and I cannot express too strongly the gratitude I feel to him and to Mr. Sherlock, for the introduction to Messrs. Jerome's, the responsible photographers.

They spent many hours together and the results fully justify their pains and patience. So good, indeed, are

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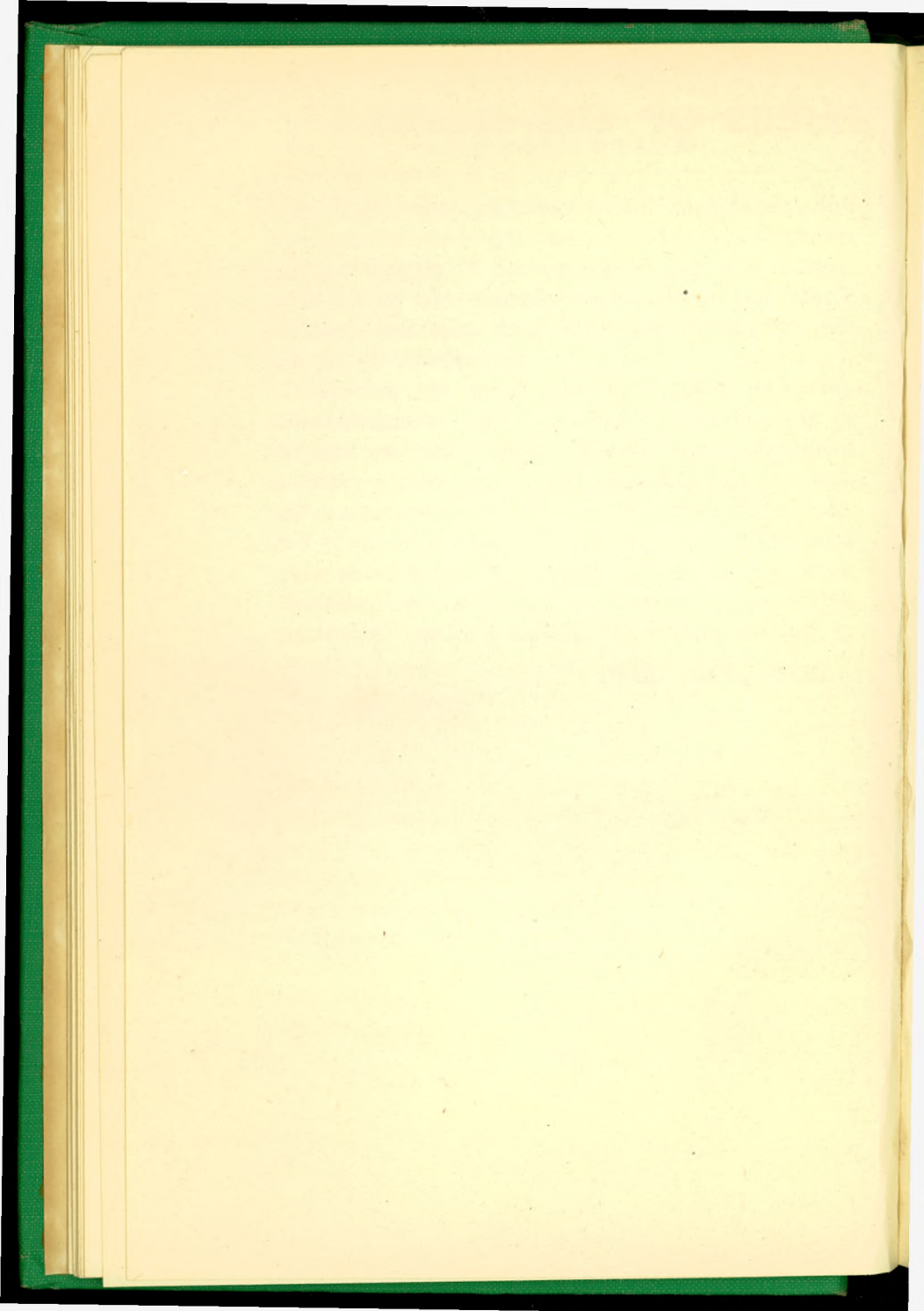
these photographs that they are self-explanatory, and have enabled me to dispense with written descriptions of great length. I am convinced that any learner, provided he has normally supple hands and ample patience, can learn from these illustrations the full routine of card-fanning.

Following my usual custom, I have made my acknowledgment with each trick to the magician or inventor who originated it. But such acknowledgment is rather a cold and necessitous business at the best, and I must emphasize that but for the kindness, help, and advice of a whole host of magical men this book could never have been completed. To all concerned, therefore, I give not merely my acknowledgments, but my sincere thanks in making the book a reality.

WILL GOLDSTON.

LONDON, W.C.2.

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS



TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

CHAPTER I

MY ATTITUDE TOWARDS SURVIVALISM

My interest in Survivalism and spirit mediumship extends over a great many years. I have described how that interest was first aroused in other books, and I shall not repeat the story here. Since my early experiences as a young man, I have sat with, and frequently personally tested, the claims of many famous spirit mediums.

Let me here and now define my attitude towards Survivalism. I am convinced that genuine psychic phenomena do occur. Under strictest test conditions I have witnessed happenings which can be explained only as the manifestations of a true psychic force. I am also convinced that a great deal of the so-called phenomena which consolidates the beliefs of many sincere Spiritualists is trickery of a more or less skilled nature. Some of the trickery is so clumsy that

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I am amazed it can fool people with normal powers of observation and deduction. Some is conjuring of a high order, and only an expert investigator with an intimate knowledge of conjuring principles could hope to detect it.

I hold the view that every "medium" detected of trickery should be black-listed and banned for all time from the Spiritualist movement. Many leading Spiritualists do not agree with me in this. They argue that many mediums caught in trickery are, in fact, genuine mediums, and that trickery is resorted to only when the mediums come under the influence of evil and malevolent "spirits". Though I will grant that some mediums with true psychic powers may on occasion resort to trickery, the argument to me is idiotic. It assumes from the outset that the medium is at all times under some sort of psychic influence, that he cannot be held responsible for his actions, and that trickery is, in fact, a manifestation of psychic power.

This puerile sort of thinking is too prevalent amongst Spiritualists. They are far too tolerant of the hoaxers and tricksters in their midst. For my part, I believe in facing facts, and forming a considered judgment from them. The genuine medium who on occasion resorts to trickery is more likely to rely on trickery than psychic power if he finds it pays him. Such a medium was Cecil Husk, whom I did not

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hesitate to expose when I caught him in red-handed fraud.

Husk was a blind man specializing in clairvoyant mediumship. It was on my recommendation that Harry Houdini sat with him, and subsequently accused me of being a party to a conspiracy. Husk spoke to Houdini, who sat anonymously, in the following terms: "I see you in a box, roped and securely nailed. I see you outside the box. You are free."

"How did I escape?"

"To you it is a simple matter. You have a tiny jemmy concealed in your clothes. You work it into a rear panel of the box, and in a few seconds the panel moves outwards. You pull aside the rope and squeeze yourself through the aperture. You are outside the box. You push back the panel and push the rope into position. It is simple for you."

I was unaware of the secret of this particular box escape of Houdini's, and there was not the slightest truth in Houdini's angry assertion that I had arranged things with Husk. I already had some suspicions of Husk, but on this occasion I believe he gave us an exhibition of genuine psychic power. At subsequent sittings he demonstrated direct voice and a number of materializations. A voice, purporting to be that of Dan Leno, was heard one evening, and I remember taking Dan Leno's daughter, Georgie, with me to Husk's house a few days later, to identify, if possible,

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the voice of her father. But at this séance we did not hear Leno.

Shortly afterwards, however, I attended a sitting with Finlay Dunn, a figure well known to the vaudeville stage a quarter of a century ago. A voice spoke, claiming to be Dan Leno. We were warned that there would be materializations, and I received a special message saying that a brother of mine who had died in India was anxious to appear.

We were not disappointed. A pale face appeared at the end of the room and moved towards me. A yard in front of me it came to rest. I saw at once that it was a gauze mask, and that the moustache attached to it was loose at one side through lack of gum. I pulled at the mask. It came away, revealing the face of Husk.

Another medium of similar calibre whom I met about the same time was Mrs. Sands. This lady, living in a flat in West London, claimed to have considerable powers as a clairvoyant, and was particularly expert with the crystal. Without much difficulty I obtained a private sitting with this lady, the fee, if I remember rightly, being one guinea.

I was ushered into a small room draped with dark curtains. On a table in the centre was set a large crystal. Mrs. Sands sat before this crystal, and taking my hands, reeled off some not altogether convincing patter concerning my past life and misdeeds. I agreed

that some of the things she told me were true, but some were not, and insisted that such a recital was not fair value for the fee I had paid. Mrs. Sands clasped my hands again, and said: "It is all there, written in the crystal. Look, look, look! I see a blue sky, and a dark road beneath. I see houses, row upon row of them. See! See for yourself!"

I looked into the crystal, and saw the sky, the road, and the houses, just as she had described. Now, I am not clairvoyant, nor have I ever been. The proof that Mrs. Sands was a fraud was now before me in the crystal. I accused her, and she protested loudly. I talked very firmly with her, and within half an hour had discovered the ingenious secret of the crystal. It was, in fact, connected with a series of mirrors on the *camera obscura* principle. The images of trees, houses, the sky, and the roadway outside the house were caught by the mirrors and projected on to a small screen inside the crystal. When I left Mrs. Sands, I took the crystal with me, and subsequently presented it to the Museum of the Society of American Magicians, where it is to-day.

A medium who, in recent years, has earned a considerable reputation for herself is Mrs. Duncan, a Glasgow woman. I first sat with her some ten years ago—not as an examiner, but in the passive rôle of a spectator. Several forms were materialized on that occasion, and one of them, a child, took a pencil from

my grasp. These materializations were convincing, and I was inclined to the belief that Mrs. Duncan was a medium of very considerable powers.

Some time later, I was given the opportunity of examining Mrs. Duncan in séance. I imposed no difficult conditions, but took my chair to within a yard of the cabinet, determined to watch and listen closely. After a suitable period, Mrs. Duncan's control, Albert, appeared from the cabinet, a vague and shadowy shape with no clear detail of the features. At this point I began to suspect that Mrs. Duncan might not be all that she claimed for herself.

Albert informed me that a friend of mine would shortly appear. He then withdrew into the cabinet. After a few moments, I discreetly raised a corner of one of the cabinet curtains. The light within was poor, but I could see well enough. Mrs. Duncan was not in trance, but sat bolt upright, and was carefully winding some diaphanous material round one of her wrists. One end of this material was allowed to fall, so that at quite a short distance it seemed like a shrouded human form. A voice, supposedly that of Albert, complained that light was coming into the cabinet, and so I let the curtain fall. But I knew already that Mrs. Duncan was faking her phenomena.

Mrs. Duncan, amongst her many achievements, can produce slate writing in the full light of day. It is cleverly and convincingly done, but it is not genuine.

In a subsequent chapter I have described in detail the method she employs, and I can testify to its effectiveness, for I have produced slate messages with it myself.

Psychometry is a form of mediumship which divines the secret properties of objects by mere contact, and Mrs. Duncan indulges in this too. I prepared two sealed envelopes, each containing a message, and these were handed to her by a third person. Learning that they originated from me, she did not appear keen to continue with the test, but finally agreed to carry on. She gave me the messages with complete accuracy, but when the envelopes were returned to me, I saw that the seals of one had been tampered with. The other appeared intact.

From my observations of Mrs. Duncan, I am not prepared to say that she does not possess some genuine psychic powers. It may be so. What is quite certain is that she does not hesitate to use trickery when it suits her purpose. In this connection, it is interesting to recall the discovery made by Harry Price concerning her. When Director of the National Laboratory for Psychical Research, Price put Mrs. Duncan to exhaustive tests, and discovered her in fraud. In an interesting book he published about her he says that she possesses the rare power of regurgitation, and that before a sitting she swallows a length of cheese cloth, regurgitates it in the secrecy of her cabinet, and with

it produces various "spirit" forms. Not long after the Price disclosure, Mrs. Duncan "materialized" a child's form at a séance in Scotland which was seized by one of the sitters. It proved to be nothing more exciting than a baby's vest. Mrs. Duncan was prosecuted and fined.

Controversy still centres around John Myers, who, a few years ago, established a considerable reputation as a photographic medium. In his presence, and with his own camera, literally hundreds of photographs were taken of "spirit extras". These "extras" usually took the form of head-and-shoulders portraits, were often of well-known people who had recently died, and invariably surrounded by typical "ectoplasm", much like cotton-wool in appearance.

Viscount Donegall, on behalf of the *Sunday Dispatch*, challenged Myers to prove his claims. Myers accepted, and my presence as an impartial witness was invited at the test, since I was known to both parties. Two sittings were held, but I shall not describe them in detail. On neither occasion did I go into the dark room whilst the plates were being developed, so I cannot speak of what occurred in there. The camera was examined by an expert, and pronounced to be in order. Some good "extras" were produced at the first sitting, and I signed a document stating that I had found no evidence of fraud or attempted fraud.

The second sitting was held one week later, and

followed on the lines of the first. The camera was examined, and the plates exposed in Myers's presence. Then Myers and Donegall went into the dark room to carry on with the developing. After the elapse of a few minutes, we heard an excited shout from Myers. The dark room door was flung open, and he strode into the room with half a dozen plates in his hand. "I've been trapped!" he cried, flung the plates into the fireplace, and ground them to pieces under his heel.

Lord Donegall followed him, and forthwith accused him of fraud. Myers cried again, "I've been trapped", and angrily denied the charges.

Now, a significant point struck me, as undoubtedly it will strike my readers. Donegall had accused Myers of substituting faked plates for unprepared ones, and the plates Myers brought from the dark room were those under suspicion. Those plates were the sole evidence of his innocence or guilt. Why, in these circumstances, did he not only smash them, but grind them to powder so that they could not be pieced together again? It may be, as one of his apologists said to me, that Myers at the time was so angry that he did not realize what he was doing. Even so, the destruction of those plates, if Myers was indeed innocent, was an act of crass stupidity.

A very unusual type of medium is Erto, an Italian, whom I examined some six or seven years ago. He

has been called "the flashlight medium", and the phenomena he produces are, I believe, unique. During his sittings vari-coloured flashes from crimson to creamy-white are produced, and they appear to emanate from different parts of the room. However, I have reason to believe that this is a fraud.

In the company of Professor C. E. M. Joad, I watched these flashes for a considerable time. They were extremely baffling, as was the speech made to us by Erto's control, in a language which could neither be understood nor recognized. However, it was the flashes which intrigued us, and after a time we decided to enclose Erto's hands in two small boxes.

The flashes ceased, and as they did not reappear, it was suggested, after some minutes had elapsed, that Erto should be stripped and searched. He was quite willing, and nothing suspicious was found on him or in his clothing. On the following day, however, a number of small flints was found on the carpet on which he had stripped.

On learning of this, I immediately invited Erto to undergo a further test. He replied that he had not the time since he was due in Paris for a number of pre-arranged sittings. An acquaintance who attended one of these seances told me that on one occasion following a successful production of the flashes, Erto was stripped and placed in a bath whilst his clothing was examined. Nothing was found until the following

day, when numerous flints were found in the unemptied bath.

Opinions are divided on Erto. For my part, I do not believe his flashes have a genuine psychic origin. For one thing, they are utterly senseless, without all meaning. They convey no sort of message to the beholders. Secondly, the flints which Erto leaves behind him must surely have some significance. They are, I believe, the real cause of Erto's flashes, and I am sure that had I been afforded further opportunities of examining this extraordinary man, I should have discovered exactly how they were used.

So much for a few amongst the many mediums I have personally tested. Before I close this chapter, I must speak of two more, Valiantine and Margery C., neither of whom have I met. Valiantine is a mechanic without the benefits of a good education. Yet he has given direct voice messages in fluent French, Italian, and Spanish, to say nothing of a strange, unidentified language which seems to be remotely related to Chinese.

Valiantine is also capable of producing remarkable thumbprints in wax. It was these prints which aroused the suspicions of the late Dennis Bradley, with whom Valiantine gave a number of sittings. By quiet observation, Bradley observed how these prints—or at least, some of them—were obtained. Under cover of darkness, Valiantine contrived to remove a

shoe and a sock, and implanted his great toe in the wax. The ensuing print had all the appearance of a thumbprint, but could not, of course, be identified with Valiantine's own thumb, or with the thumbs of any of his sitters.

Margery C., the wife of Dr. Crandon, of Boston, Massachusetts, is one of the best known mediums in the world to-day. Her control is her brother Walter, and she seems capable of producing many different sorts of phenomena. Indeed, Mrs. Crandon's versatility has, in some quarters, made her suspect. As for Walter, who died more than twenty years ago, he is a rough diamond if ever there was one. He is an entity full of confidence and quick in anger.

When Walter speaks, he appears to do so from a point several inches in front of the medium's stomach. He very willingly leaves his thumbprint in wax, and this print tallies exactly with a print he left behind on his shaving razor on the day he died. I cannot help reflecting what a very fortunate thing it was that this razor, bearing the key thumbprint, should have been preserved for fifteen years until the time when, through his sister, he was able to leave a similar spirit thumbprint in wax.

Houdini claimed to have discovered Margery C. in an act of trickery. Walter is said to have described Houdini by many impolite names and Margery C. has issued a forthright denial that she has ever, at any

SURVIVALISM

time, descended to trickery. But as a result of her experiences with Houdini, she has set her face against admitting any magicians to her séances. As a result, I am barred from her sittings. She has also refused to undergo an exhaustive scientific test by Harry Price.

I am not, of course, qualified to give an opinion on the nature of Margery C.'s phenomena. None the less her attitude towards a fair scientific inquiry bewilders and dissatisfies me. If Margery C.'s phenomena are genuine, what has she to fear? It is plainly illogical to brand all magicians as interfering tricksters because she quarrelled with Houdini more than twenty years ago. But perhaps one of these days Margery C. will change her ideas, or perhaps the forthright Walter will change them for her. I have not yet given up hope of discovering the truth about Walter for myself.

CHAPTER II

FAKE MEDIUMS, TRICKS

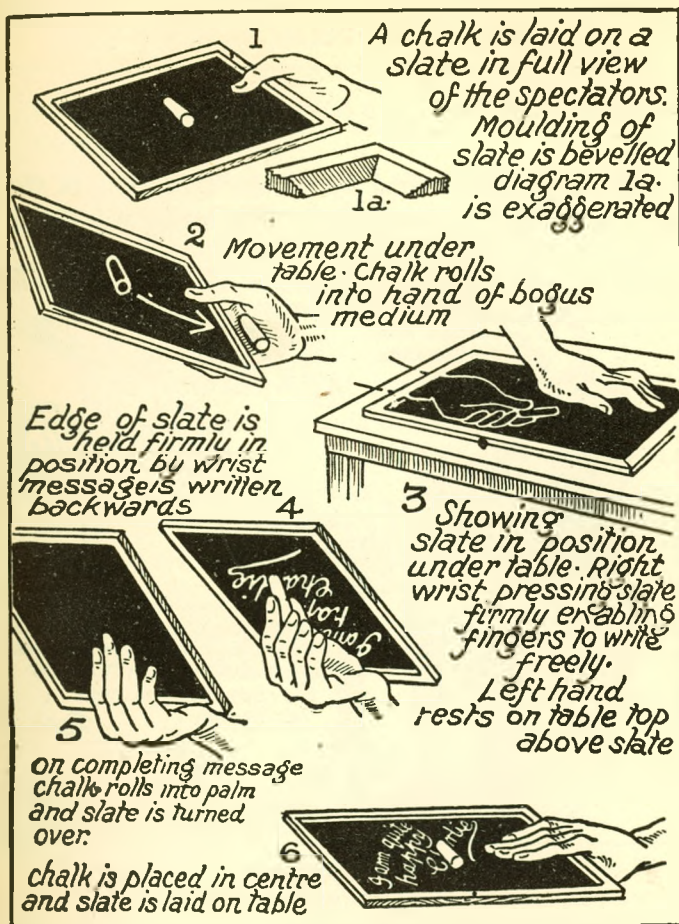
THE DUNCAN "SPIRIT" MESSAGE

I HAVE never in my whole experience witnessed anything equal to the daring method of slate writing as demonstrated by Mrs. Duncan. A genuine slate and unprepared piece of chalk were the only objects used.

The slate is shown on both sides and laid in full view on the table, a piece of chalk is now placed in the centre of the exposed side of the slate and allowed to remain in this position for a few moments.

The medium lifts up the slate with care, not to disturb the chalk, and carries it in this position with the right hand, holding it by the moulding under the table for a few moments. Writing on the slate is distinctly heard when the slate is brought into view with a message written in chalk.

All the stages of this ingenious system are shown in the diagrams with a full explanation of each move. This disclosure, I think, will interest my readers.



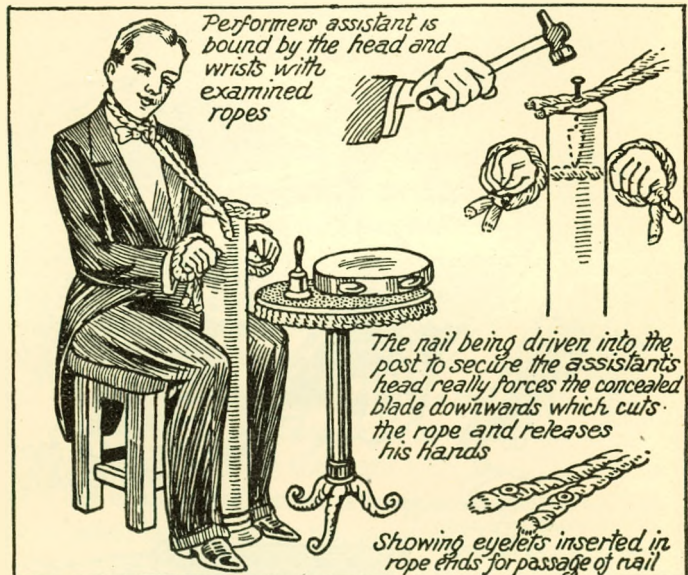
THE DUNCAN "SPIRIT" MESSAGE.



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A GOOD RELEASE

The performer is tied by a rope to a post in the way shown in the illustration. The reader will notice



A GOOD RELEASE.

that the rope is passed through a hole near the top of the post and is then passed round the performer's neck. The two ends of the rope have eyelets fixed in them; these two ends are finally brought to the top

of the post and are nailed down to it, the nail passing through the eyelets.

A tambourine and a bell are placed near the performer and a curtain is drawn for a moment in front of him. In a moment the audience hear the tambourine shaken and the bell rung, but when the curtain is quickly drawn on one side the performer is seen to be tied to the post.

The secret is simple, but very good. The nail which is driven through the ends of the rope forces a knife concealed in the top of the post downwards. The knife cuts through the rope, and so all that the performer has to do when the curtain is drawn in front of him is to get busy with the bell and tambourine. He then puts his hands back into their original position, but of course he takes care that the two short pieces of rope go into the hole in the post.



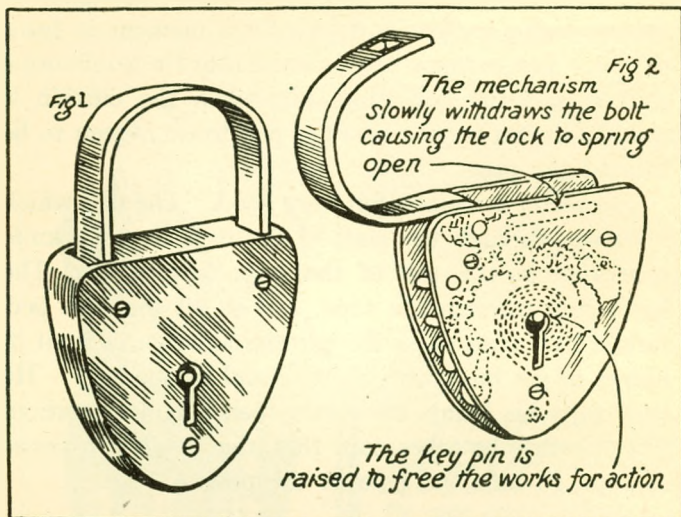
A FAKED SPIRITUALISTIC PADLOCK

The padlock is closed and the key turned in it. Anyone who tries to open the padlock will not succeed. The performer, however, calls upon the "spirits" to open the padlock and presently it flies open.

The secret is explained in the drawing. When the key-pin is raised the mechanism inside the lock is

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released, and the bolt is slowly withdrawn. The top of the padlock is fitted with a spring hinge.



FAKED SPIRITUALISTIC PADLOCK.



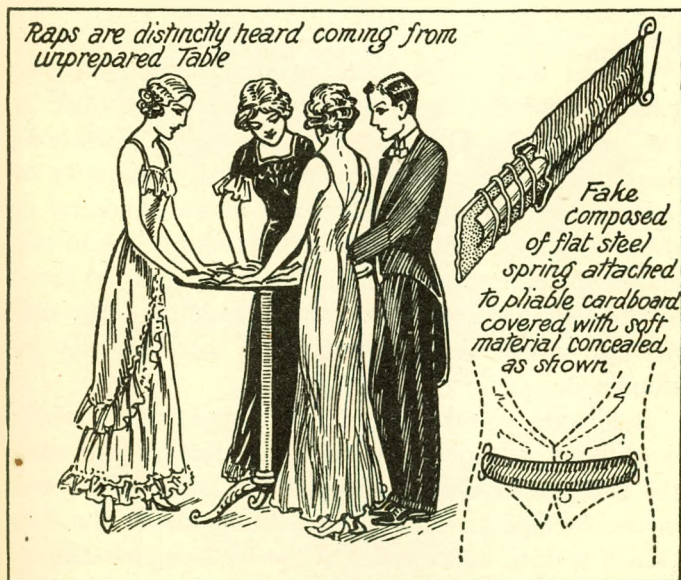
THE SPIRITS ARE HERE !

This is a trick for the drawing-room. Members of the audience are asked to place their hands on a small table, and the performer joins the circle. While the performer and his assistants are standing well away

FAKE MEDIUM TRICKS

from the table, but with their joined hands on it, raps are heard distinctly, thus proving, as the performer says, that "The Spirits are here!"

The raps really come from the noise of a steel spring concealed under the performer's waistcoat. The illustration shows how the simple fake is made. To produce the raps the performer merely has to push his stomach forward; the steel spring does the rest.



THE SPIRITS ARE HERE!

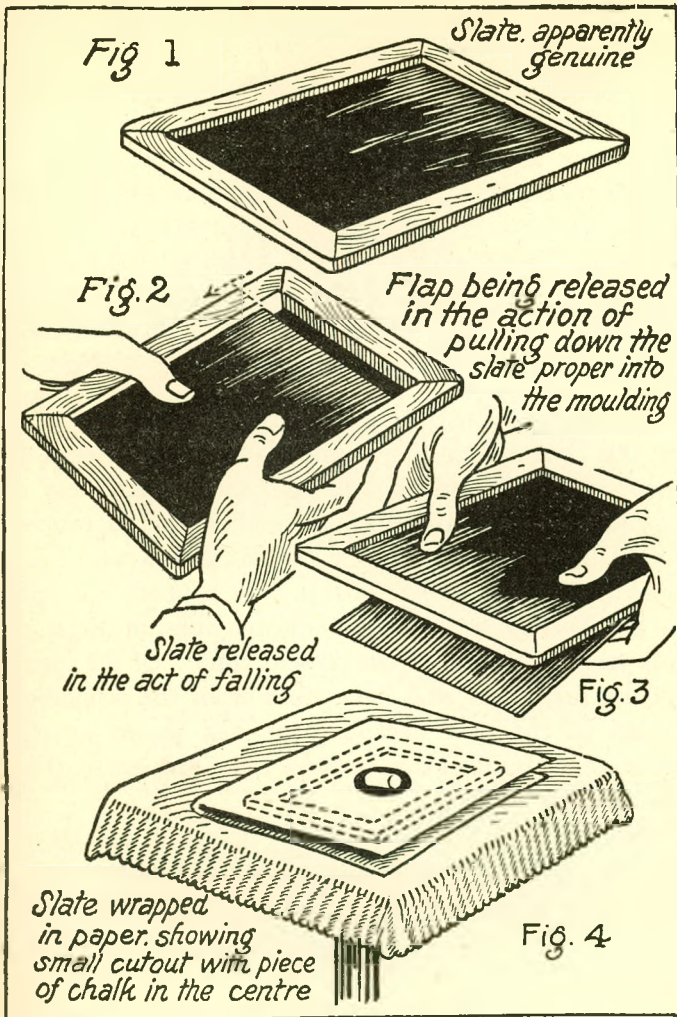


OTTOKER FISCHER'S SPIRIT SLATE

This trick is performed with a single slate which may be examined with safety. The conjurer cleans both sides of the slate with a sponge and then covers it with a folded sheet of paper. In the centre of the upper part of the paper is an oval cut out in which is placed a piece of chalk. When the slate is removed from the paper covering, the secret message is found boldly written.

Several trick slates have been invented since the loose flap which was first introduced to the public in the year 1870. The Fischer improvement is without doubt exceedingly good and used by the majority of professional conjurers. The slate has a moulding in plain wood and contains a secret spring fitted into one end of the moulding which is covered with a flat piece of wood the same material as the moulding. The flap fits into the moulding securely and therefore may be examined.

Before the performance the secret message is boldly written on one side of the slate and then covered with the flap and locked by means of the concealed spring in the moulding. The method of removing the flap (which is done under cover of the wrapping) is clearly shown in the diagrams. The slate is removed leaving the flap under cover of the paper on the table.



OTTOKER FISCHER'S SPIRIT SLATE.

CHAPTER III

CARD FANNING AND MANIPULATIONS

HOWARD DE COURCY

THE hands demonstrating the intricacies of card fanning in this book belong to a young man named Howard de Courcy. I am indebted to him for his kindness in spending so many patient hours with my photographer, but I must add that that is not the reason why I am making him the subject of this short chapter. I write of him because he is undoubtedly the finest magician of his years in Europe at the present time. Of the many young magicians who have risen from the schoolboy ranks in the past decade, none has shown greater promise, or fulfilled that promise more brilliantly, than Howard de Courcy.

He has a natural aptitude for magic. Like David Devant, and the much-lamented Arnold de Biere, he is one of those men who are at their best handling cards, billiard-balls, silks, and the everyday paraphernalia of the modern conjurer. He has the square, long-fingered hands that are made for palming and misdirection ; he has a flair for patter coupled with an intimate and easy

approach to his audience. In short, he is a magician born, a magical artist of the highest attainment.

No less an authority than Horace Goldin described his technique as perfect. That is high praise for a man who has been in magic for only ten years or so. None the less, it is justified. De Courcy has found his *métier* in magic. He never lacks for engagements and he commands high fees. Others who have spent a lifetime in magic and have achieved less, envy him more for his inherent magical gifts than for his financial success, which, after all, is but a measure of his merit.

The story of de Courcy's rise in magic is a schoolboy's dream come true. He had very little magical interests until, at fourteen, he read a copy of my *Simple Conjuring Tricks*. This book fired his imagination. He wrote to me, and I evolved a programme for him and advised him to practise.

Four years later he came to show me what he could do. I was amazed. I gave him further advice to which he willingly listened. He improved very rapidly as his record shows. In London he has appeared at many West-end theatres and cabarets, including the Savoy, Dorchester, Grosvenor House, Quaglino's, Piccadilly, and the Café de Paris. He has established a reputation on the Continent, and in this connection has some amusing stories to tell.

He was engaged once to play at the Teatro Nuovo, Milan, for six days, but after his initial performance

the booking was extended to thirty-eight days. Whilst performing there he was seen by a member of the Italian Royal household, and a few days later he was commanded to appear before the King and Royal Family.

As a direct result he was visited by the President of the Milan Magical Society, who said his Society would like to arrange a dinner in his honour. De Courcy naturally accepted, and a hundred amateur magicians and their ladies turned up at one of Milan's leading hotels to pay him tribute.

The President was energetically considerate. He said that he would reply to the toast on de Courcy's behalf since, presumably, de Courcy did not speak Italian. This seemed rather a good joke to de Courcy, who, in fact, speaks Italian, French, English, and German with equal facility. The terms of the speech were agreed, but when the President stood up he seemed suddenly inspired with extraordinary bitterness. He suggested that de Courcy realized he would create a sensation since Italians knew very little of magic ; but if only they would learn English and read English magical books, they would soon become very expert and be able to exceed anything that de Courcy himself could do.

There followed further remarks which tended to show de Courcy as being altogether an inexperienced and rather amateurish performer. De Courcy rose

unannounced, thanked the company for their kindness in his best Italian, then, turning to the President, said: "Sir, your unbrotherly and unmannerly speech was a greater surprise to me than any of my tricks could have been to my audience." A few days later he learned that the President had been removed and a new man installed.

On another occasion, de Courcy was engaged to appear at a theatre in Zurich, Switzerland, the country of his birth. His salary was high, but on his arrival the management threatened to break the contract since it was understood he was of English birth. The argument was long and obscure, but the point, apparently, was that only English and American magicians were worthy of a high salary, and that no Swiss-born magician could possibly be any good. De Courcy, however, was firm and insisted that the full terms of the contract should be carried out. After his initial performance he was entertained *en fête* by the delighted management, who assured him that he could arrange his own return date and promised a considerable increase of salary.

De Courcy can tell you of many such experiences as these. But perhaps the most surprising thing he will tell you is that he has always been lucky. Well, that may be, but it can be said with truth that nobody who knows him begrudges him his luck. He is that type of man.

It is not easy to say what the future holds for him. If, when the war is behind us, the long-promised boom in things magical does materialize, de Courcy, in my opinion, will be ranked with the best magicians of his type the world has known. If vaudeville were to return to its prestige of a quarter of a century ago, he would command many hundreds of pounds per week. Let it be said that he will go in magic as far as it is now possible to go. For the rest his future lies with the gods, and it is my heartfelt wish that the gods will be good to him.



THE CARD WHEEL

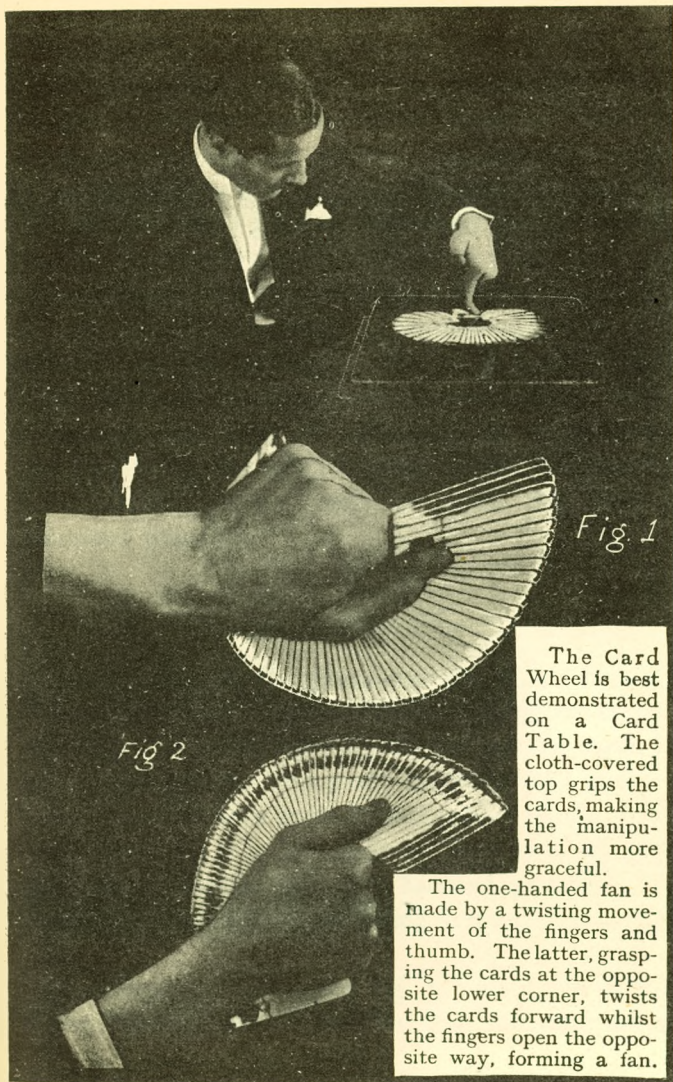
The pack of cards is arched, placed on the centre of the table, and with the index finger of the left hand a complete wheel is formed. A delightful effect.



ONE-HANDED FAN

This fan is acknowledged by the majority of card manipulators to be an outstanding item, and should not be omitted. This artistic flourish is used to produce fans of cards from most unlikely places. Each production creates surprise, since each fan fills the hand.

The cards which are palmed are released from that position, and are held against the lower joints by



The Card Wheel is best demonstrated on a Card Table. The cloth-covered top grips the cards, making the manipulation more graceful.

The one-handed fan is made by a twisting movement of the fingers and thumb. The latter, grasping the cards at the opposite lower corner, twists the cards forward whilst the fingers open the opposite way, forming a fan.

Photographs Jerome Ltd.

THE CARD WHEEL AND ONE-HANDED FAN.

[face p. 26.]

pressure from the first joints of the four fingers. Now a slight twisting movement of the fingers and thumb, the latter grasping the cards at the opposite corner, opens the cards in a fan. It is important to remember that all the fingers play an important part in forming this fan, the thumb moving one way and the fingers the opposite way. With constant practice the student will develop the skill in making an astonishingly wide half-circle as depicted in Figs. 1 and 2. It is essential to make fans with both hands, each hand singly. When proficient, fans may be produced in both hands simultaneously, the effect is really worth the practice. When artistic backed cards are used, the effect is definitely beautiful.



THE MASTER FAN

Before taking up the practice of the Master Fan, the reader must be conversant with "springing the cards" perfectly. It is advisable not to use fanning cards for any other purpose. Keep the cards under a press or bound together with three or four rubber bands. Care should be taken that the cards are kept in a dry place and treated before use with fanning powder. This powder is obtainable at conjuring shops at a reasonable price.

We commence by taking Fig. 1. Hold the pack as shown, taking care to see that the first and second

fingers of the left hand are in correct position, since these fingers play an important part in the manipulation, viz. giving the desired smooth finish to the edge of the fan. Bend the cards slightly and slowly allowing the cards to spring from under the fingers, the left hand sweeping with a circular motion to the left. Fig. 2.—Continue until you reach the little finger, the right hand at the same time sweeping the reverse way, to the right. This movement, as shown in Fig. 3, completes the fan.

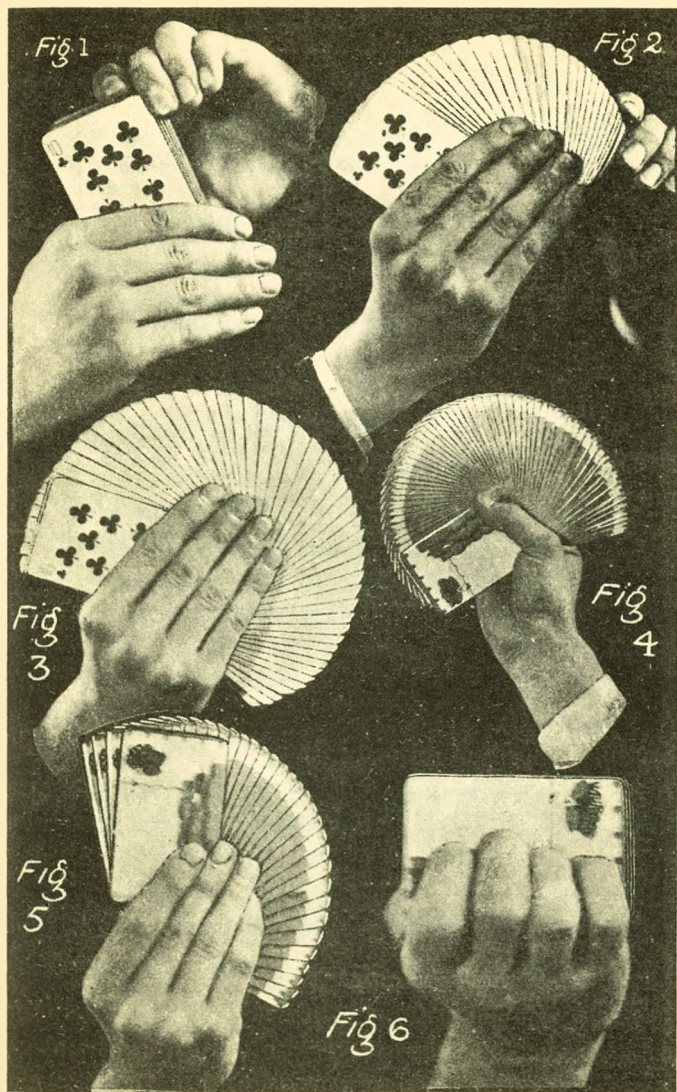
It will be understood if this fan is made in the opposite hand the result will be a fan showing the faces of the cards. To obtain an all white fan, it is necessary to have a white card at the bottom of the pack. Failing a blank card an Ace of any suite may be used with one exception, the Ace of Spades. The pip on any of the three Aces may be concealed by one of the performer's fingers.

PHOTOGRAPH FIGURES

Fig. 1. Hold cards lightly in the right hand, the first finger of the left hand at the top left-hand corner with the second finger on the edge of the pack.

Fig. 2. Slightly bend the cards inwards, and allow them to spring slowly from under the fingers with a circular motion to the left.

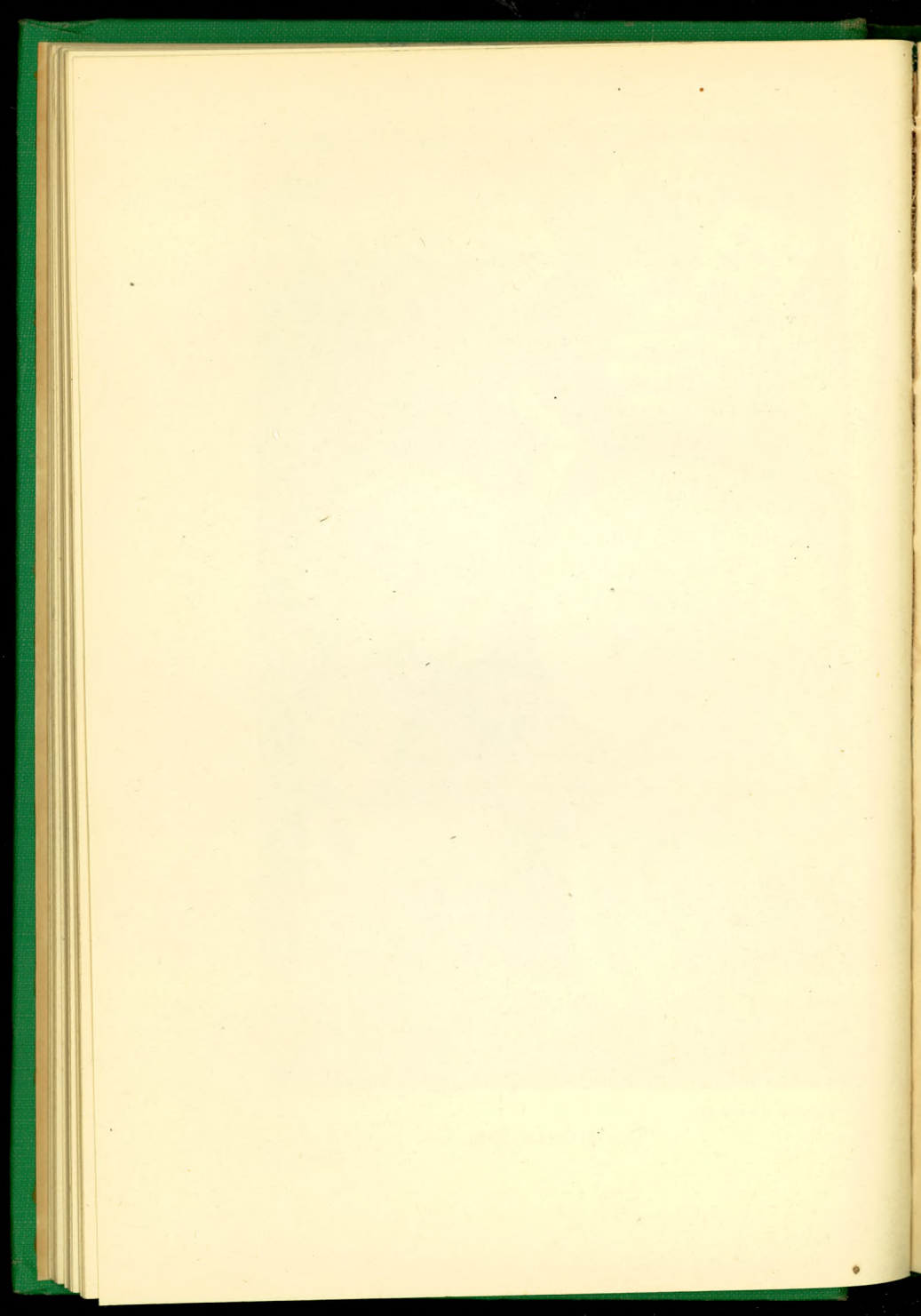
Fig. 3. The first and second fingers of the left hand keep the top edge of the fan smooth. The right thumb is now in the centre of the fan.



Photographs Jerome Ltd.

THE MASTER FAN.

[face p. 28.]



CARD FANNING

Fig. 4. Reverse view of the fan, showing position of the thumb for closing the fan in the same hand. Hold fan between thumb and second, third and fourth fingers, leaving the index finger free.

Fig. 5. Showing fan half closed, the reverse view to the audience. The index finger pushes up the cards against the second finger with a circular motion.

Fig. 6. The fan is now closed in the same hand. The top of the fingers square up the cards bringing this display to a finale.



THE MASTER FAN

(Second Method)

Hold the pack as shown in Fig. 1, keeping index finger of left hand in position slightly curled on top of the pack. The second and third fingers of the left hand sweep upwards with a circular motion springing the cards into the right hand, which moves downwards in the opposite direction. In this fan control comes from the second and third fingers only the index finger helps to act as a guide (see Fig. 2).

Continue the fan to the top of the right hand. Fig. 3 shows fan completed. Hold the cards tightly in this position with thumb of right hand in centre of back of the fan. To close the fan, the third and fourth fingers are released, holding the fan with the first and second fingers against the thumb. In a circular movement sweep the cards upwards (refer Fig. 4). The little finger comes into action to assist in squaring up the pack in the hand (Fig. 5).

Further details :

Fig. 1. The cards are held in the right hand, the left-hand first finger curled on top of the pack, the second finger at the bottom corner.

Fig. 2. Keep the cards slightly bent, springing them slowly with the left hand in an upward circular movement.

Fig. 3. The right hand moves in the opposite direction—downwards, whilst the left hand completes the fan. The right-hand thumb is at the centre of the fan.

Fig. 4 depicts the half-closed fan. The movement is accomplished with the first and second fingers in circular motion, against the thumb pressure from inside the hand.

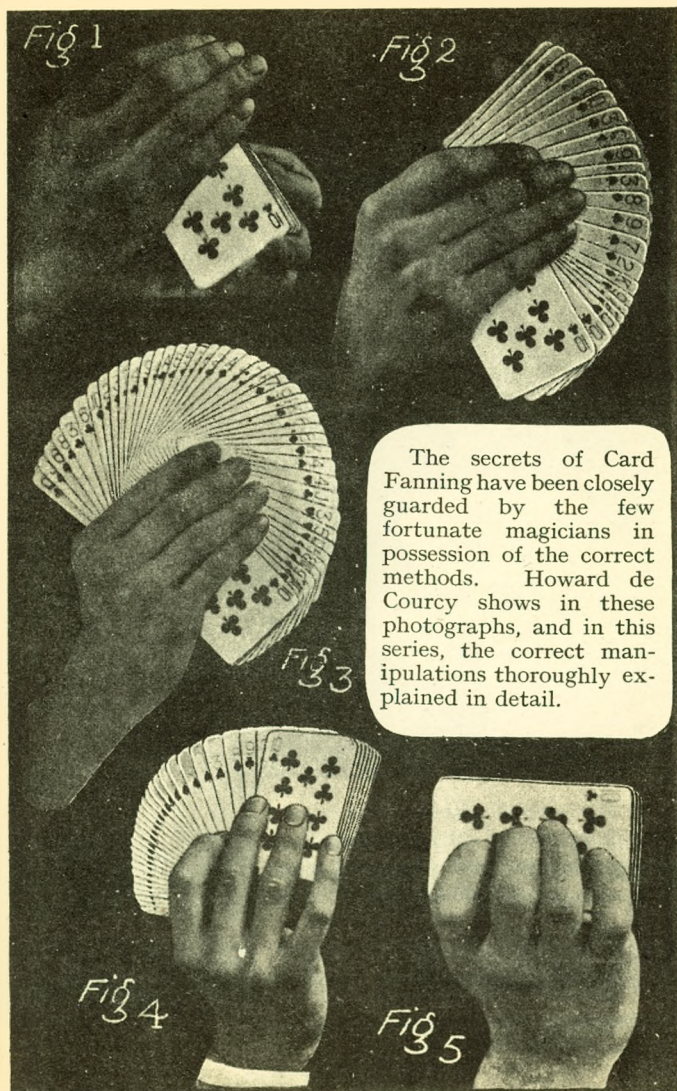
Fig. 5. The fan is closed with the support from the tips of the right-hand fingers squaring the pack. The thumb is now lying against the top card. Note position of the little finger.



THE DOUBLE FAN

The pack of cards should be held in the same position as the "Master Fan". With the index finger of the left hand on the right-hand top corner of the pack, make a sweeping movement downwards opening half the fan. The second finger of the left hand keeps the fan in a smooth position. Do not spring the cards, give them a quick movement. The result is shown in Fig. 1.

Place the little finger of the right hand between the top of the fan and the remaining balance of the cards, and with the index finger and thumb of the left hand bring the second half of the pack to the original

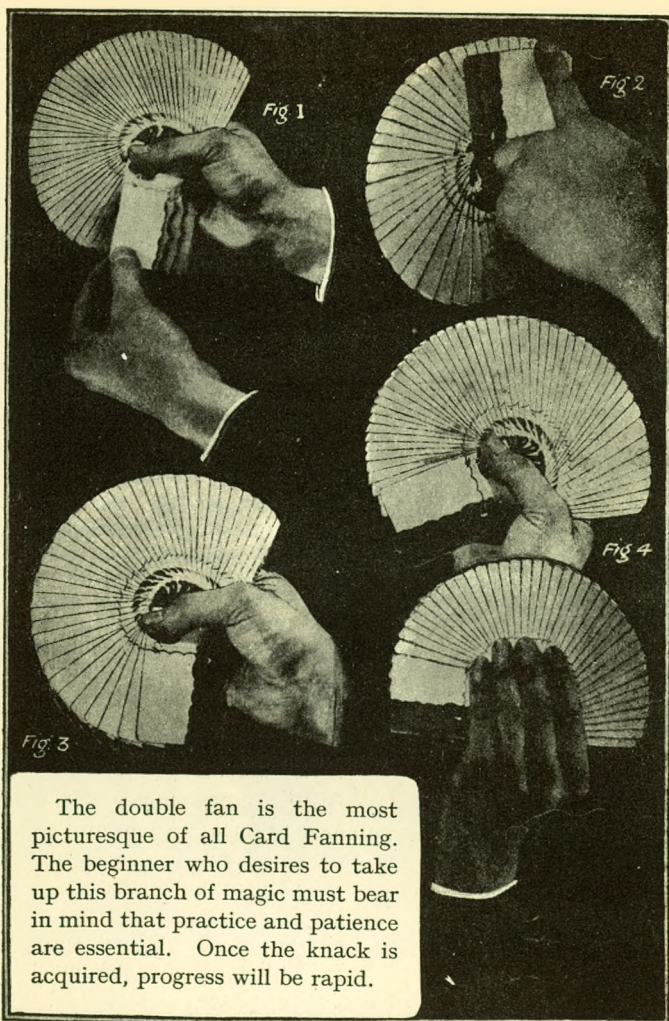


The secrets of Card Fanning have been closely guarded by the few fortunate magicians in possession of the correct methods. Howard de Courcy shows in these photographs, and in this series, the correct manipulations thoroughly explained in detail.

Photographs Jerome Ltd.

THE MASTER FAN (Second Method).

[face p. 30.]



The double fan is the most picturesque of all Card Fanning. The beginner who desires to take up this branch of magic must bear in mind that practice and patience are essential. Once the knack is acquired, progress will be rapid.

Photographs Jerome Ltd.

THE DOUBLE FAN.

[see p. 31.]

CARD FANNING

position. Fig. 2.—The index finger now repeats the fan with the top half of the cards pictured in Fig. 3. This is a double fan, one covering the other. The little finger of the right hand comes into action and separates the fans.

The next move is to place the fingers of the left hand on top of the fans, holding them against the right fingers tightly; meanwhile the thumb of the right hand takes up a position on top of the first fan, and the thumb of the left hand is placed below the top fan. The fans are now held one in each hand, and are displayed as in Fig. 4.

Further details:

Fig. 1. First finger of the left hand sweeps downwards in a circular motion making a fan with one-half of the pack. Separate the fan from the remaining cards with the little finger.

Fig. 2. With the thumb and index finger of the left hand move the top half of the pack upwards to its original position. With the index finger repeat the movement of the first fan.

Fig. 3 depicts the second fan covering the first. Notice should be taken that the little finger is separating the two fans. Press thumb firmly on centre of the pack, the little finger forcing top fan outwards.

Fig. 4. Place the four fingers of the left hand over the top of the fan pressing against the right-hand four fingers. Remove right-hand thumb and place over the first fan, whilst left thumb takes hold of top fan. A handsome double fan is accomplished with apparent ease.



THE RUNAWAY KING

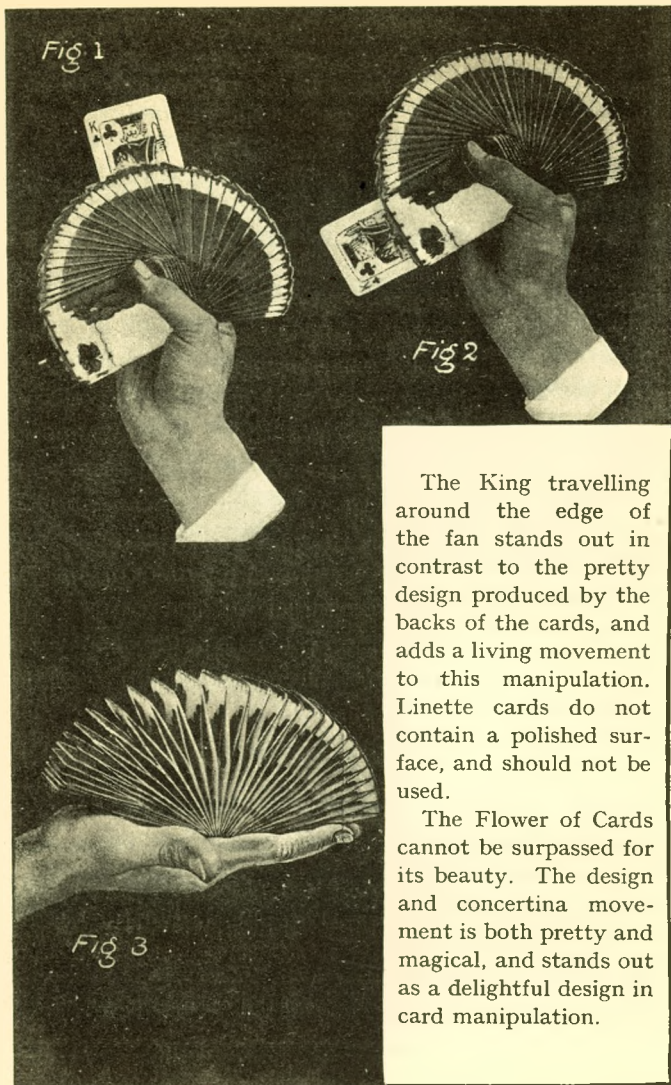
Reverse the King of Clubs, and place it at the bottom of the pack. Now arrange cards as in Fig. 1 of the master card fan. Do not spring cards, but with the little finger of the left hand open a fan upwards with only half the pack. This will produce one design from the picture design printed on the backs. It will be understood that the backs of the cards are in full view of the audience in this fan ; hands are held to the right.

With the index finger of the left hand open a fan downwards with the remainder of the cards. The effect will produce an attractive change of design. With the right hand close the first fan—the fan behind the top one, and with the index and second fingers of the right hand push up the reversed card—the King of Clubs, to position shown in Fig. 1. Continue to push the King in a circular fashion along the edge of the fan until it assumes position as in Fig. 2. Remove card from the pack with the left hand, at the same time closing the top fan in the right hand, and placing the King on the top of the pack.

Detailed information in the order of the photographic illustrations :

Fig. 1. The first card which has been reversed is forced up with the index and second fingers. The card is now guided round the edge of the fan.

Fig. 2. The third and fourth fingers help in turn to



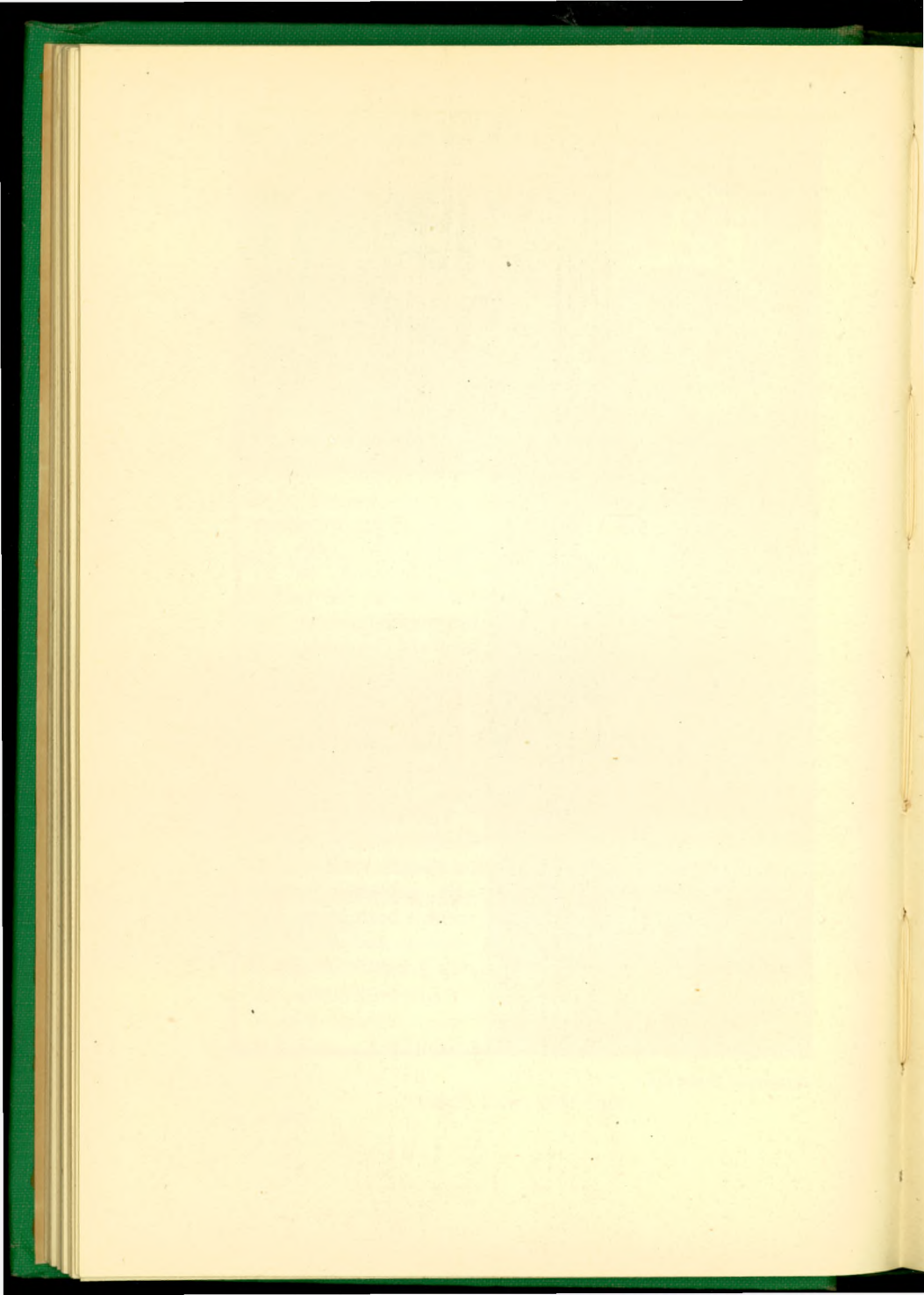
The King travelling around the edge of the fan stands out in contrast to the pretty design produced by the backs of the cards, and adds a living movement to this manipulation. Linette cards do not contain a polished surface, and should not be used.

The Flower of Cards cannot be surpassed for its beauty. The design and concertina movement is both pretty and magical, and stands out as a delightful design in card manipulation.

Photographs Jerome Ltd.

THE RUNAWAY KING.

[face p. 32.]



CARD FANNING

guide the card slowly to the end of the fan. A most effective sleight for the appearance of a card.



THE FLOWER OF CARDS

Divide the pack into two portions and bend each portion in opposite directions. Take one card from each stack and complete the pack with the 26 pairs. Press the cards tightly with the fingers and lower part of the hand, then slowly open the hand when the cards will automatically arrange themselves into the design as shown in Fig. 3. The better the quality of the cards, better will be the result of this artistic effect.

Arrange the cards as described. Release pressure slowly until the hand is in a straight line, then close the hand and reopen several times.



THE GIANT FAN

The manipulation to produce this effect is of a higher order and comes under the heading of intricate sleight of hand. To develop what is known as the "finger touch" the practice of weaving the cards is essential.

Square the pack, then hold the pack by the ends, the thumb on one side, and the fingers on the opposite side. The index finger now divides the pack into

equal portions and forces the lower half forward where it is securely held by the other hand. Keep each half squared and place the inner corner of the cards together. Care must be taken that the top card of one stack comes underneath the top card of the other stack, this being accomplished with a little pressure from the ends of the cards, which will interlace automatically (refer Fig. 1).

For the next move hold the whole pack of cards in the right hand between the thumb on one side, and the fingers on the other. With the left hand open the cards outwards as shown in Fig. 2, and continue with a downward motion—the fingers of the right hand at the same time forming the fan into a graceful curve depicted in Fig. 3. When the fan is completed wave it to and fro as one would use a genuine fan, close the cards and riffle, showing the pack in its original form, or finish with the “waterfall” manipulation.

Fig. 1 should be carefully studied. To weave the cards, square the half packs and hold at the angle as photographed. The cards will interlace automatically. Fig. 2 shows how the cards are held in the right hand between the thumb and fingers. The cards are then opened quickly. Fig. 3.—Continue fanning the cards, curve them with the thumb, and with the fingers at the other end. This curve will produce a more attractive fan than by any other known method.





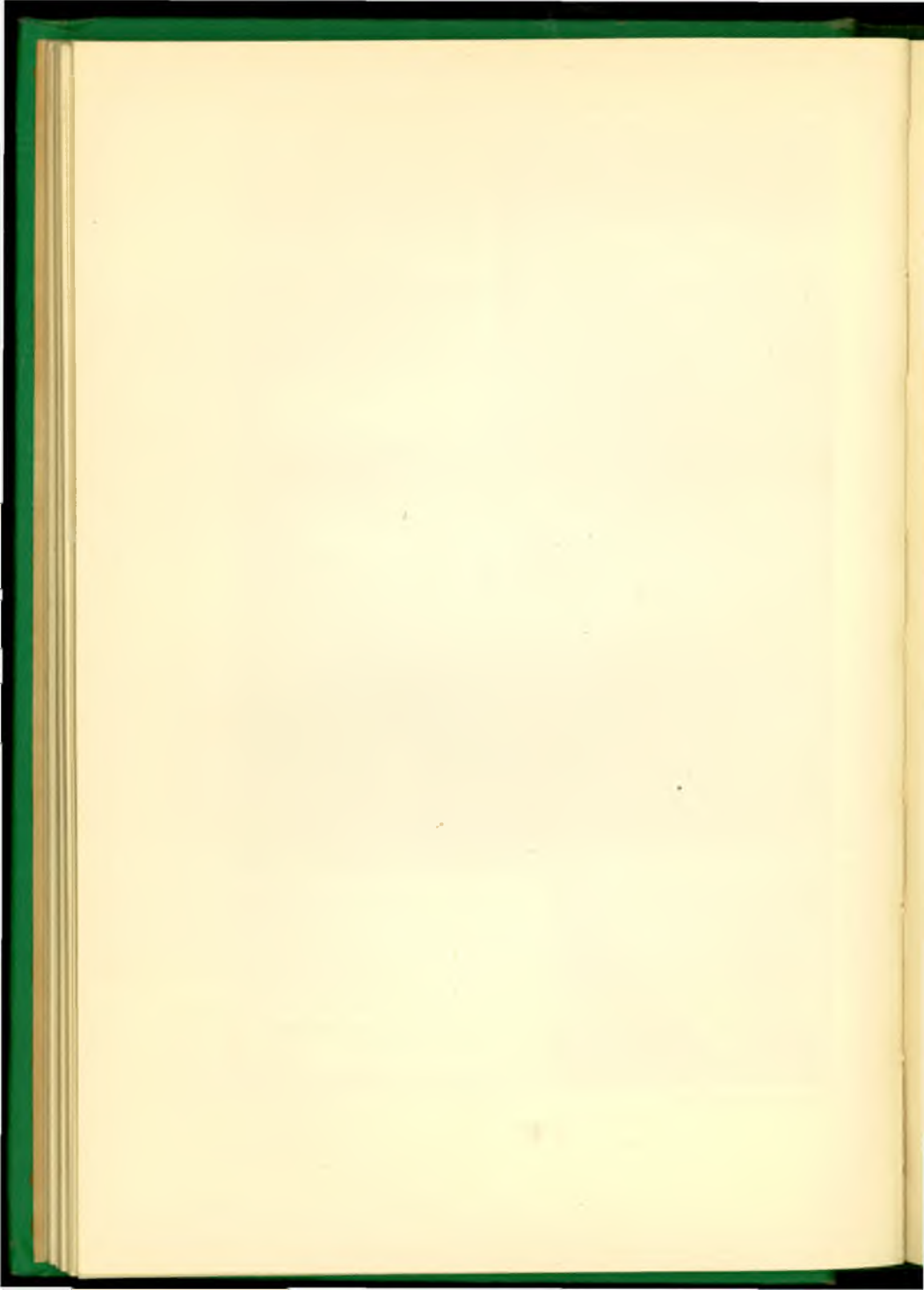
The Giant Fan should not be omitted from this pretty series. The cards used in this outstanding effect should have a gaudy design, and be of a pliable quality. If the backs are printed in pale colours, the effect will be lost to onlookers some distance away from the performer.

A feat of dexterity greatly admired. Do not omit this manipulation from your repertoire. Although practice and patience is called for, you will never regret the time spent on this picturesque manipulative effect.

Photographs Jerome Ltd.

THE GIANT FAN.

[face p. 34.



RAPID PRODUCTION OF CARD FANS FROM THE AIR

(Howard de Courcy's Original Method)

After a great deal of thought and experimenting for a finale to my routine of card fans and flourishes, I decided to produce several fans from the air, each fan singly. I reach out, catch a fan and drop the cards on the stage. After the first two or three fans are produced, applause greets me.

I really intended to keep this method a secret, since it is an outstanding "hit" in my repertoire. Will Goldston, having witnessed this production, was keen to include my method in the "Card Fanning" section. I felt, on account of our long friendship, I could not refuse his request.

Here is my method of working. After going through a series of card manipulations, before throwing the pack on the stage, I palm from the bottom about 20 cards in the left hand, and slightly turning to the right I palm another packet of 20 cards in the right hand. The palming is done under cover of the pack. The remaining cards are thrown down, and quietly reaching out my hand I produce my first fan (Fig. 1). Both sides of the fan are shown, and as my hand is lowered a little, my index finger separates six cards from the fan (Fig. 2). The remainder of the cards are back-palmed under cover of the fan (Fig. 3), these cards are thrown away. Next I produce the second fan and

repeat, using the method described with about half the remaining cards.

In producing the third fan, the cards are back-palmed before throwing the visible fan away. With the apparent intention of showing the right hand empty the third fan is taken in the left hand, the right hand being shown empty with the fingers wide apart. The left hand now replaces the fan in the right hand, at the same time turning slightly to the right. This move leaves the right hand in an excellent position for back-palming the load of cards from the left hand as shown in Fig. 4. Drop the exposed fan on the stage and produce the last of the cards. Separate about eight cards from the fan, back-palming the rest and dropping the 8-card fan on the stage, show hand empty and produce six cards singly, then finally reach up in the air and produce the last fan.

Note. In producing the fans this should be done with a sweeping circular motion revealing to the audience the production of a full fan. It is important to remember when the fans are being formed the hand should be in a half-turned position and then quickly shown palm outward.

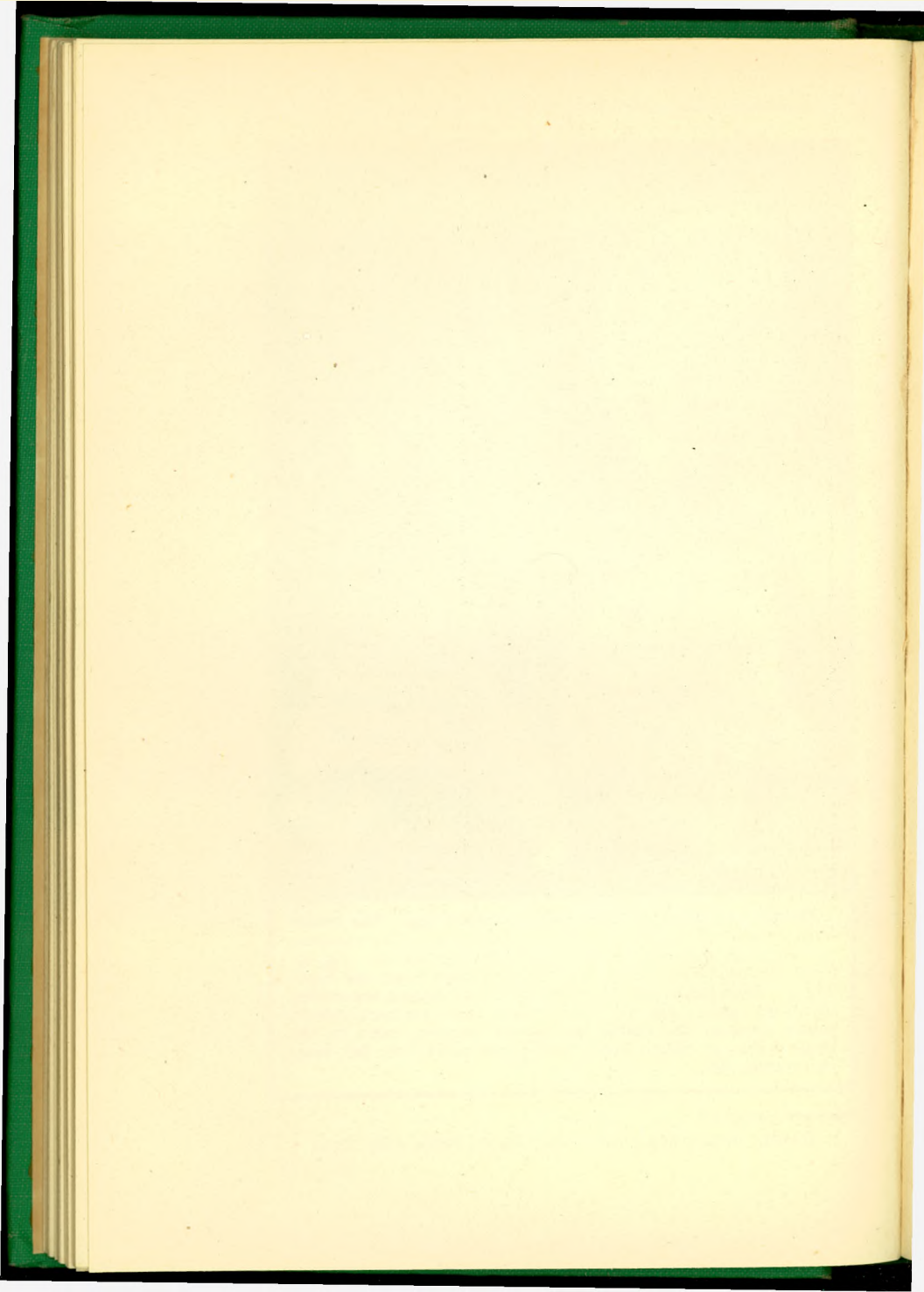


Rapid production of Card Fans is fascinating. The reader with a pack of cards in hand is advised to follow the excellent photographic figures and study the following details. Fig. 1 : First fan produced from the air, cards shown front and back. Fig. 2 : Hold fan by second, third and fourth fingers, separating about six cards. Fig. 3 : Remainder of cards are back-palmed under cover of the visible fan, before dropping cards on the stage. Fig. 4 : Right hand back-palms cards from left hand in retaking fan.

Photographs Jerome Ltd.

RAPID PRODUCTION OF CARD FANS FROM THE AIR.

[face p. 36.]



CHAPTER IV
CARD TRICKS

“COLORBLYND”

THIS exclusive mystery which has baffled many professional conjurers has been devised by Andrew Shivas, better known as “A. Hay Prestowe”. The effect is as follows: A pack of cards is first shown to contain only red cards, when again ruffled all black cards and finally red and black cards. The entire pack is genuine.

Since a little preparation is necessary, this must be done before presentation of the trick. Separate the red cards from the black ones. Now apply a weave shuffle to the cards so that a red card falls upon a black one uniformly through the entire pack. To those of my readers who are not conversant with the weave shuffle they will find a description of how to accomplish this feat in Hugard's *Card Manipulation*, Series 3, on pages 96 and 97. A more simple method instead of the weave shuffle is to stack the cards in position. The diagrams of each move are clearly shown by the artist. The shuffle is not completed by squaring the

cards. They are brought together to within a sixteenth of an inch of one another, so that reviewed from one end the blacks are one-sixteenth of an inch from the reds, which if the packs were turned round the position would be reversed and the reds become one-sixteenth of an inch above the blacks. To make matters quite clear study the diagrams which accompany this description.

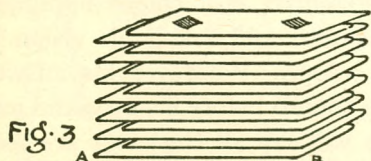
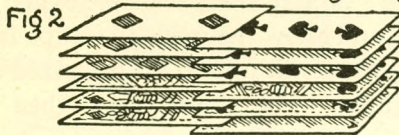
Fig. 2. Reds and blacks are brought together by the weave shuffle, dovetail shuffle, or by dealing. Note, only the ends of the cards are engaged.

Fig. 3. Blacks have now been pushed from right to left and reds from left to right so that the reds are one-sixteenth of an inch from real ends, i.e. the two halves are fully engaged except for the sixteenth part of an inch at each end. Hold the pack in its prepared condition by end B between the ball of the thumb and the fingers of the right hand, so that the pack is vertical. The pack must be held tightly so that their position is securely held.

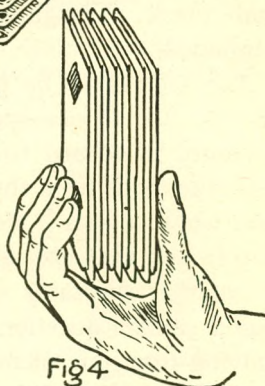
Now place the left thumb at C and the first finger at D. Bend the cards over to the left and allow them to escape from the thumb singly. Only the blacks will show and it will appear as if the cards are all black. Turn the cards and repeat the process and all the cards with the exception of the face card will appear red. To improve the effect, a red card should



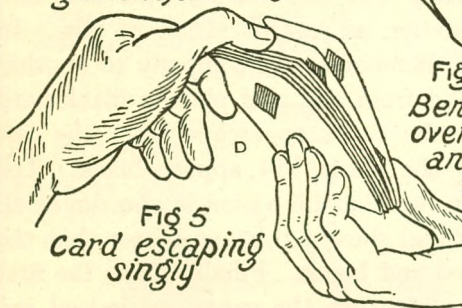
Reds & Blacks are brought together by the weave
or douetail shuffle
or by dealing.



Cards have been pushed from
right to left.



Bend the cards
over to the left
and allow them
to escape from
the thumb
singly



Card escaping
singly

"COLORBLYND."

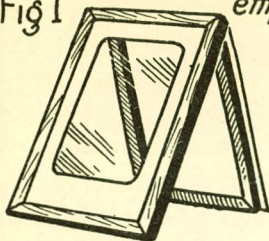
TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

be slipped from the back of the pack to the front by means of the pass by the well-known manner of the colour change, or openly. The cards may now be shown to be all red. Square the pack destroying the separation intervals and allow the cards to escape from the left thumb and they will appear to be mixed red and black throughout. The cards may then be examined.

The trick may be presented as a colour blindness theme. Go to one spectator and ask if his vision is accurate in regard to colour. Whatever his answer riffle the cards from the thumb before his eyes and ask him what he sees. He will say all the cards are red. Say to him that his sight may be defective. You pass to another spectator who has not seen the reds and put a similar question as regards vision to him. In moving from one member of the company to another turn the cards end from end and place a black card in front. Allow the cards to escape from the left thumb when all the cards will appear black. Tell spectator number two that his vision is also doubtful. Square the cards and show a third spectator that the cards are both red and black. Finally allow the first two spectators to see that the cards are indeed red and black.



Fig 1 *Frame shown empty*



Likewise the back Fig 2

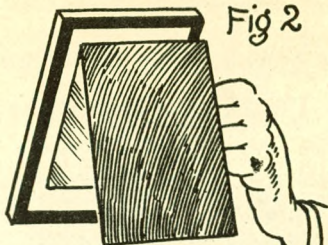
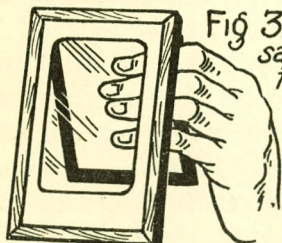
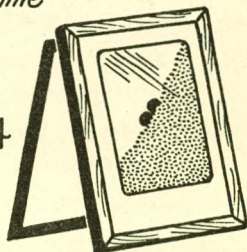


Fig 3 *Fake centre containing sand & concealed card held together with the back of frame*



Fake centre close to the frame showing escaping sand bringing duplicate card into view

Fig 4



Back of frame

Fig 5 *Duplicate card now in view*

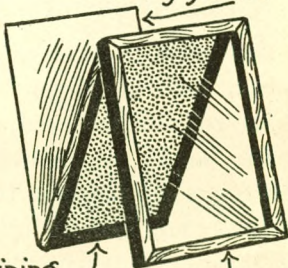
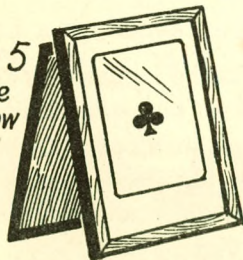


Fig 6 *False back containing sand & duplicate card.*

Frame

THE IMPROVED SAND FRAME.

THE IMPROVED SAND FRAME

The common sand frame has played a useful part in the majority of conjurers' programmes for nearly a century, and is still in use by many performers to-day. I think the improved sand frame will quickly take the place of the old on account of its possibilities. I am indebted to W. J. Jennings for this secret.

The frame proper contains one sheet of glass, but unknown to the audience a double sheet of glass containing sand is fitted between the front frame and the back. This can be manipulated with ease. The sand hides the duplicate card and gives the appearance of a solid back to the frame. As in the old method, when the frame is reversed the sand escapes revealing the card.

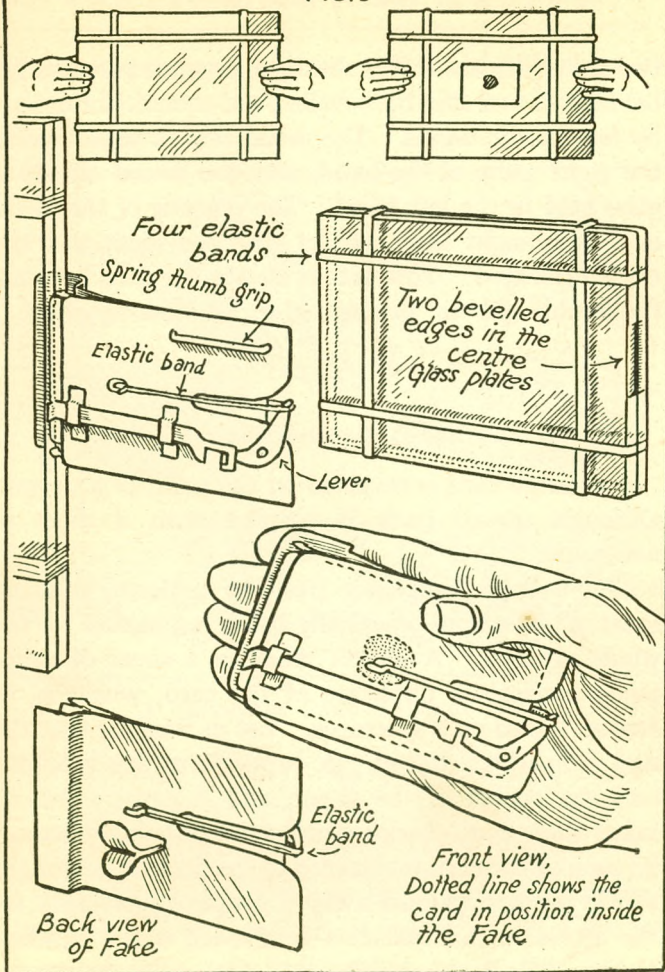


THE MYSTERIOUS APPEARANCE OF A CARD

This original effect should be included in the repertoire of card conjurers. Two pieces of clear glass are shown to be unprepared, and then bound together with elastic bands. A card having been chosen vanishes and reappears between two sheets of glass whilst held in the hand, and in full view.

The secret lies in a metal case fitted with a trigger. A duplicate card is loaded prior to the performance, in the metal case, and retained until shot between the

FIG. 1



THE MYSTERIOUS APPEARANCE OF A CARD.

two sheets of glass. The sheets of glass are prepared by having one end slightly bevelled and then held together by four elastic bands. The metal case is concealed in the right palm of the hand, and the bound sheets of glass held in the left hand. The opening of the metal case is brought into contact with the glass, and the trigger released. This action shoots the card between the double glasses, producing an astonishing effect.



A DIFFERENT CARD-STABBING TRICK

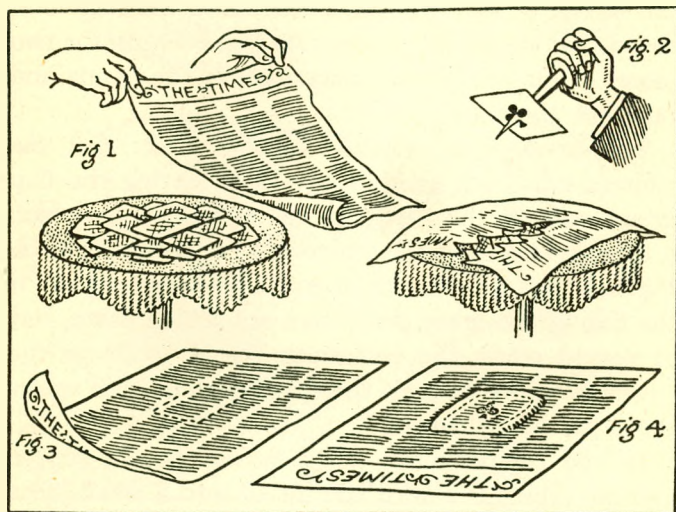
A selected card is revealed on the point of a dagger, although spread pack is covered with a sheet of newspaper.

The trick is simplicity itself to perform, a faked sheet of newspaper practically being responsible for the whole mystery. A pocket made in a sheet of newspaper conceals a duplicate of the card, which is, of course, forced on a spectator. Let us imagine that the Ace of Spades is forced. A duplicate of this is loaded into the pocket of the paper, and if paper is neatly faked there is no chance of its presence being detected. So soon as the card is returned to the pack, it is brought to the top and palmed away. Ample opportunity for the necessary manipulation is afforded whilst bandage for the eyes is examined.

The piercing of the duplicate with the dagger under

CARD TRICKS

these circumstances is not a difficult matter, as the performer knows the exact position of pocket and stabs accordingly.



A DIFFERENT CARD-STABBING TRICK.



A NEW CARD TRICK

Having shown an empty envelope to the audience the performer places inside it two glass plates fastened together with two indiarubber bands (see Fig. 1). He then asks a member of the audience to take one

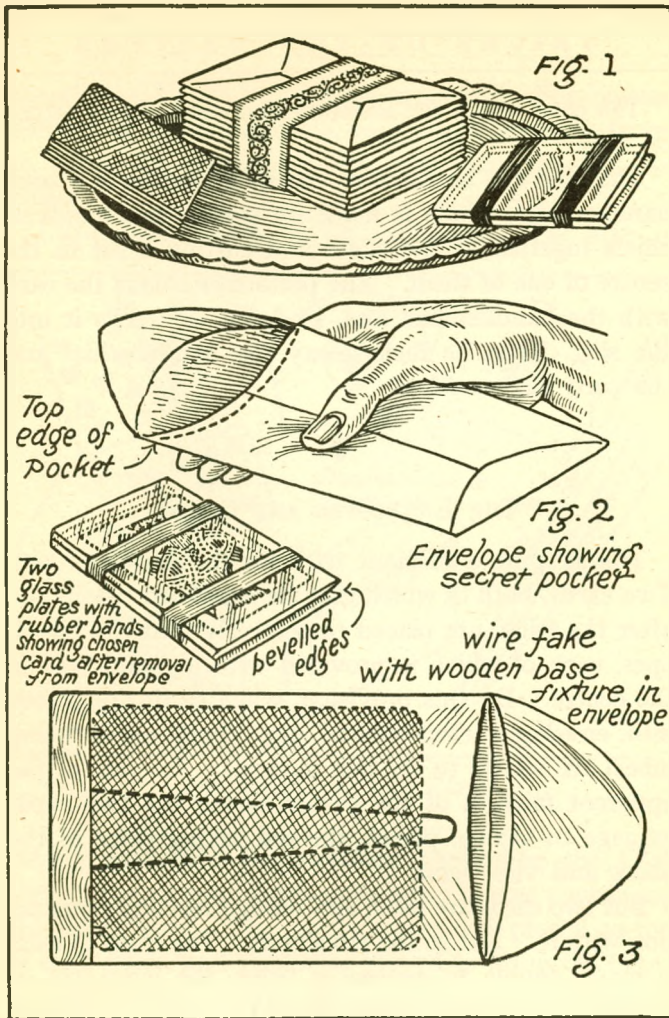
card from the pack. This card is caused to vanish mysteriously.

The performer at once takes the glass plates from the envelope and, holding them up to the audience, shows that the card has found its way between the two pieces of glass. Anyone may remove the bands and take out the card.

The envelope is prepared for the trick. Cut the address side from another envelope, leaving the flap intact, and slip this piece into the first envelope, which is thus divided down the centre into two compartments. Fig. 2 shows how the trick envelope would appear if the flap of the inner piece were not folded down, but of course when the performer wishes to show the envelope empty he folds the flap down and thus shows the other compartment.

In the compartment which is not shown to the audience there is a wire fake fitted into a small piece of wood. Near the ends of this piece of wood there are two tiny clips in which a card—a duplicate of the one to be forced—is fixed.

The ends of the two glass plates are bevelled, and so, when the performer puts them into the envelope, he is able to get the card in between them; the wire fake helps in the operation. When the glasses are pushed well down into the envelope the performer raises them slightly and thus disengages the card from the clips.



A NEW CARD TRICK.

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

The card which the assistant chooses is really forced on him.

The card can be made to vanish by means of a trick handkerchief, which is made by sewing two handkerchiefs together at the edges and cutting a slit in the centre of one of them. The performer covers the card with the handkerchief and, in doing so, works it into the slit. Then he flicks away the handkerchief and the card has vanished.



THE ENVELOPES AND CARDS

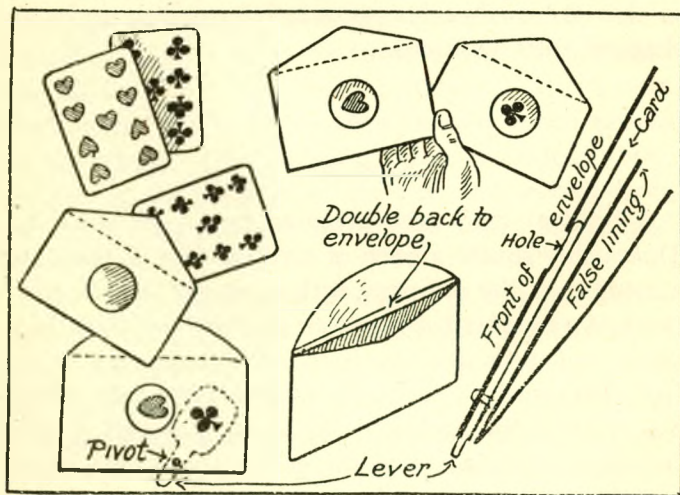
This is quite a brilliant trick for the drawing-room. Two cards, both of which may be examined before and after the trick, are placed respectively into two envelopes, each of which is provided with a round hole in the centre. By this provision, when cards are placed into envelopes their centre pips (both cards being nines) are visible to the last moment. In spite of the apparent fairness of the preliminaries, the two cards manage to change places, the red taking place of the black and vice versa.

But two cards are used, and neither has any preparation with it. Not so the envelopes. The front of each is made double to conceal a lever, the long arm of which carries a square piece of card on which is painted the pip of a card. One envelope has a Club concealed,

CARD TRICKS

the other a Heart. The short arms projecting beyond corners of the envelope, a very slight pressure serves to bring the respective pips into view through the holes.

Little more needs to be explained. The nine of



THE ENVELOPES AND CARDS.

Hearts goes into the envelope containing the Club lever ; the nine of Clubs goes into the one containing the Heart lever. The envelopes are now placed on top of each other, and the levers moved to bring the faked pips into view. Whilst showing two tumblers, against which the envelopes are eventually lodged, the audience

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

naturally fails to remember the positions of the respective cards. Each envelope is now shown and careful attention drawn to the respective positions of the cards. In turning the envelopes round so that the holes are away from the audience, the levers are pushed aside, so that the cards a few seconds later appear to have changed their positions.



“STOP ME!”

A brilliant card trick invented by G. W. Hunter. Thoroughly shuffle a pack of cards and hand them to a member of the company with a request that he will think of a number between four and ten, and deal that number of cards in a row from left to right on a table face downwards. Then ask another person to select a card from the pack and show it to the rest of the company, and place it at the end of the row of cards already on the table, thus making the row one card longer. This card you elect to find, and your back is turned to your audience during the whole of the demonstration, making it impossible for the performer to know how many cards are dealt.

Now request your assistant to think of a number between one and five, and to deal that number of cards on to each one that is on the table and put the rest aside, and when this has been done pick up each packet

CARD TRICKS

into the left hand commencing with the left-hand packet, the next one is placed on top of the first, and continue until all are gathered into one heap. Then have them cut and squared up.

Now request your assistant to call out the names of the cards as he deals them face upwards on the table one at a time. Before he turns up the chosen card you shout "Stop me!" and announce that the next card is the one that has been chosen, which proves to be correct. This surprising effect is brought about by having a knowledge of the first and second cards on top of the pack, and this can be easily ascertained while shuffling.

Remember the second card first, as this one will be your cue card. Suppose the second card is the ten of Clubs, and the first card is the six of Diamonds, and that four cards are dealt on each single one. When your assistant calls out the cards one at a time (you request him to go slowly) you listen for the ten of Clubs, and in this particular case you count the card after the ten until you arrive at the six of Diamonds—the fifth card—then count four more cards and shout "Stop me!" the next being the chosen card. There is always the same number of cards between your cue cards as there are between the first card and the chosen card.



HOUDINI'S FAVOURITE CARD TRICK

A pack of cards is shuffled by a member of the audience, returned to the performer and placed in full view on a small table down stage. The performer calls attention to the fact that he will not touch the cards during the performance of this trick.

A member from the audience is requested to step upon the stage and spread the cards around the table face downwards. This done, he is asked to remove one card, look at it, then show the card to the audience. The card is then returned to the pack and shuffled. The performer turns the pack over revealing the selected card on the bottom of the pack.

This trick in the hands of an experienced conjurer cannot fail to create astonishment. The performer has two card indexes, as used in the trick "any card called for", one index in each trouser pocket. All the palaver of having the cards shuffled and spread is simply showmanship. After the card has been selected and returned to the pack the performer picks up the pack and asks the assistant from the audience to name the card. A duplicate card the performer removes from the index in his pocket and secretly places the card at the bottom of the pack, more patter follows, then the performer turns the pack of cards over revealing the selected card.



THE ROYAL PAIRS

Remove the four Kings and the four Queens from the pack, and place them face upwards on the table. First pick up the four Kings and then the four Queens and place the latter on the Kings.

The important point, however, is that the suits of the Queens should correspond with the suits of the Kings. If, for instance, the Kings run Spades, Hearts, Clubs, and Diamonds, the Queens should be placed in the same order on the Kings. This should be done nonchalantly, so that spectators think they are picked up at random.

Now make a false shuffle, and let the cards be cut several times. If the performer cannot execute the false shuffle in a proficient manner, it can be discarded, and only the process of cutting several times through.

The performer places the pack of cards behind his back, the four top cards are counted off and slid half-way back from the bottom.

Whilst still holding the pack with the left hand, the right removes bottom card of each packet and places them on the table face downwards. This done with all the eight cards, will leave four pairs on the table, which when turned over, will show that each King has sought his wife. Each King will have the Queen of the same suit.



AN EASY RISING CARD TRICK

The performer has a card selected and returned to the pack, which may then be shuffled by anyone. On receiving the cards back again the performer places them in their case and snaps two elastic bands round it. Under these very difficult conditions the card rises when commanded to do so.

The card is really forced on a member of the audience. For the benefit of any magician who does not care to risk failure when forcing a card in the usual way—that is, when running the cards from one hand to another and spreading them out before the person who is to take a card—I suggest two other plans which have the merit of being easy and certain.

Hold the pack on the left hand with the thumb coming over the top of the pack. Hold the right hand over the pack and bring the middle finger from the bottom of the pack upwards, letting the cards spring back. Say to the audience that you are going to cut the pack and you will cut it where they please. "Will someone please tell me when my finger is to stop springing the cards."

You stop immediately you hear the word "Stop" and at once lift off the top half of the pack and put it down, but as the card you wanted to force was on the top of the pack in the first instance and as you dragged it down on to the top of the lower portion of the pack

Case holding pack of cards,
secured with two rubber bands.

Fig. 1

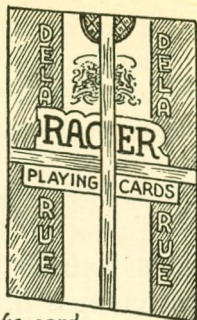
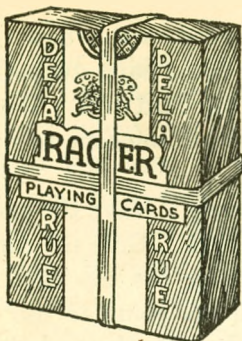


Fig. 2

Fake card
backed with part of card case
length of rubber bands affixed as
shown.

Fig. 3

Position of
index finger of
left hand forcing
the card to rise

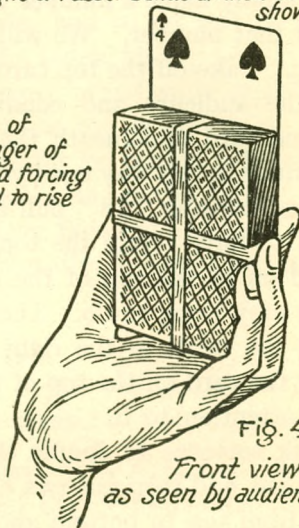
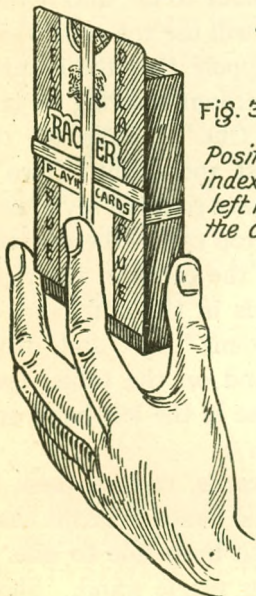


Fig. 4

Front view
as seen by audience

AN EASY RISING CARD TRICK.

when you cut the cards, the forced card is now there. Remind the audience that they could have stopped you at any time, and then turn the top card over. Replace the top portion of the pack and ask someone to shuffle the cards.

The other method is just as easy. Have the card to be forced on to the top of the pack. Give the cards a genuine shuffle without disturbing the top card.

Tell your audience that you are going to use only one card in the trick you are about to do, and if they will kindly name a number you will use the card which is at that number. We will suppose that the number is 19. Take off the top card, without showing its face to the audience and count "One". Take off the second card underneath the first and count "Two". Continue in this way until you have counted seventeen. When counting "18" pull the top card—the one you wish to force—from the top of the cards in the right hand on to the top of the cards in the left hand—a very easy thing to do. Then count "19" and, dropping the cards in the right hand on the table, turn over the card on the top of those in the left hand and call attention to it.

Ask someone to shuffle the cards, replace them in the case, and then put two elastic bands over the case, one from top to bottom and one from side to side.

Return to your table for your magic wand. Show the front of the case ; turn it round and show the back.

CARD TRICKS

Wave your magic wand all round the case and then above it ; at the same time call upon the card to rise. The card obeys you.

When you turn to your table to get your magic wand you took from your waistcoat pocket a card similar to the one forced but with its back prepared by having the front of a card case stuck to it and two strips from an elastic band similar to those round the pack. Holding the faked card close to the front of the pack you then turned the pack and the card round in the hand. Then, all you had to do was to push up the faked card with the index finger.

There are, of course, many other ways of getting the faked card secretly to the top of the case. For example, the faked card might be behind a handkerchief or some piece of apparatus on the table. The performer drops the case over the card and then picks up the two together. Personally, I should prefer the method I have described.



YOUR CARD !

An ingenious card trick devised by Al Baker. A card is chosen from a pack and the performer hands the pack to another spectator and requests him to count any number of cards on the table. The performer does not look at the cards during this operation. After

the cards have been counted, the assistant is requested to gather the cards and place them on the top of the pack. The person who selected the card is requested to cut the cards and place his card into the pack and place a hat over the pack. The performer now asks the assistant who counted the cards to name the number he counted, assume the number was 12—the performer requests him to take the pack and count off 11 cards, each card face up. He does so and the performer turns to the first person with the request for him to mention the name of the card he selected—Knave of Hearts is mentioned. The twelfth card is turned face upwards when it is found to be the Knave of Hearts

The secret lies in the fact that two Knave of Hearts are used. On the bottom of the pack is one Knave, this is forced on the spectators. The second Knave is on the top of the pack. The performer instructs the second person to count any number ; if he counts 12 the Knave of Hearts will be reversed and be the twelfth from the top. (This, of course, applies to any number chosen.) The second person is told to cut the cards, usually he will cut near the centre, and is then requested to place his card into the pack and square the cards. The duplicate card is now in the order for the counting.

Al Baker palms card after trick is performed in case the pack of cards is examined.

CARD TRICKS

AN ASTOUNDING FINALE

A trick is not a good trick if the effect is not clear to all who see it. I suggest, however, that there may be an exception to every rule and that the trick which I am about to describe is a good exception to the rule that the effect of a trick should be plainly seen by the audience.

In this case the effect is hidden until the last moment and, if the magician wishes to do so, he can invite the audience to guess the effect after the trick has been done!

The performer leads off by inviting two members of the audience to assist him. Two men come up; one is shown to a chair on the left of the stage and the other to a chair on the right.

Shuffling a pack of cards with their faces towards the assistant on the left of the stage the magician asks that assistant if he can see the four cards which are to be used in the trick. As the assistant can see all the cards he says "Yes."

"Well, I hesitate to contradict you," says the performer; "it is just possible you can see in my pocket. But if you can't—well, then you can't see the cards I'm going to use in the trick."

With this the magician takes four cards from his pocket and calls the attention of the audience to them; they are the five and six of Spades and the five and six of Hearts.

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

"I put them in my pocket," the magician explains, "to save time in finding them now ; it's very difficult to save anything nowadays, so I save time."

The magician then gives the two black cards to the man on his left and the two red ones to the man on his right and asks the audience to remember that the first man holds the two Spades and the other the two Hearts.

"Please make sure that I am speaking the truth," says the performer. He takes the cards, shows them to the audience again, and returns them to the two assistants.

"Now," continues the magician, "the effect of this trick is very simple. I am going to ask these two pairs of cards to change places. One minute, please."

He turns to the man on his left and asks him if he is sure that he is holding the two Spades. The man may hesitate and smile but, prompted by the magician, he agrees that he is holding the two Spades. In the same way the other man is asked if he is holding the two Hearts and, also in the same way, he agrees.

"And yet," says the magician, addressing both assistants, "you will agree that the trick has been done?" The assistants agree to that suggestion. Then—if he wishes to do so—the magician may suggest to the audience that perhaps they would like to guess what the trick really is. If he does not wish to do that the magician may go on to explain, at once, that

CARD TRICKS

the cards were rather lazy and that instead of changing places only the colours went from one man to the other. The assistants are then invited to hold up their cards and the audience see that the man on the left has two red Spades and the man on the right has two black Hearts.

The four "doctored" cards are at the top of the pack. When the performer shuffles the pack he leaves them at the top; the two red Spades uppermost.

The magician invites the man on the left to make sure that he is holding the Spades, the performer can easily get hold of them and show them to the audience; in apparently giving them back to the assistant the magician "top changes" them for the two red Spades—not a difficult move in the circumstances.

The two black Spades are now on the top of the pack, and the performer has to get rid of them. He can easily do this when he is walking over to the other assistant. Having his left side to the audience the performer holds the pack in his right hand and slides the two top cards into his side pocket.

Now the two top cards are the black Hearts and I suggest that it is not advisable to make use of the "top change" a second time. This is a simple method of exchange.

The performer, having asked the assistant to make sure that he is holding the two Hearts, then goes on to ask him to place them on the top of the pack. Just

before the cards are placed there the performer palms off the top black Hearts for a moment and when the assistant puts the real Hearts on the top of the pack the performer at once brings his hand down and palms the black Hearts over them. Then, as an afterthought, the performer says: "Perhaps you would rather hold the cards yourself; you see, they are still where you put them."

With that, the performer holding the top of three cards together as one card, can show that apparently an ordinary Heart is still at the top of the pack, and he can show that the next card is the other Heart. Then he squares up the pack, takes off the two top cards and gives them to the assistant.

Of course, any other change will do equally well if it is neatly performed. The magician may like to walk behind the assistant for a moment, and exchange the two cards behind his back! That simple method goes!

Directly the two changes have been made the trick is over, so far as the performer's work is concerned; the rest is a matter of showmanship. If the two assistants are of the inquisitive kind it is as well to get them to put the cards on the left hand and to cover them with the right and keep the hands in that position. Then they are not likely to peep at the cards before the right time.

CHAPTER V
CLOSE-UP MAGIC

A MYSTERY KNOT

THIS pretty effect, is best done with silk ribbon. Smooth string may be used, but, in my opinion, much of its charm is lost.

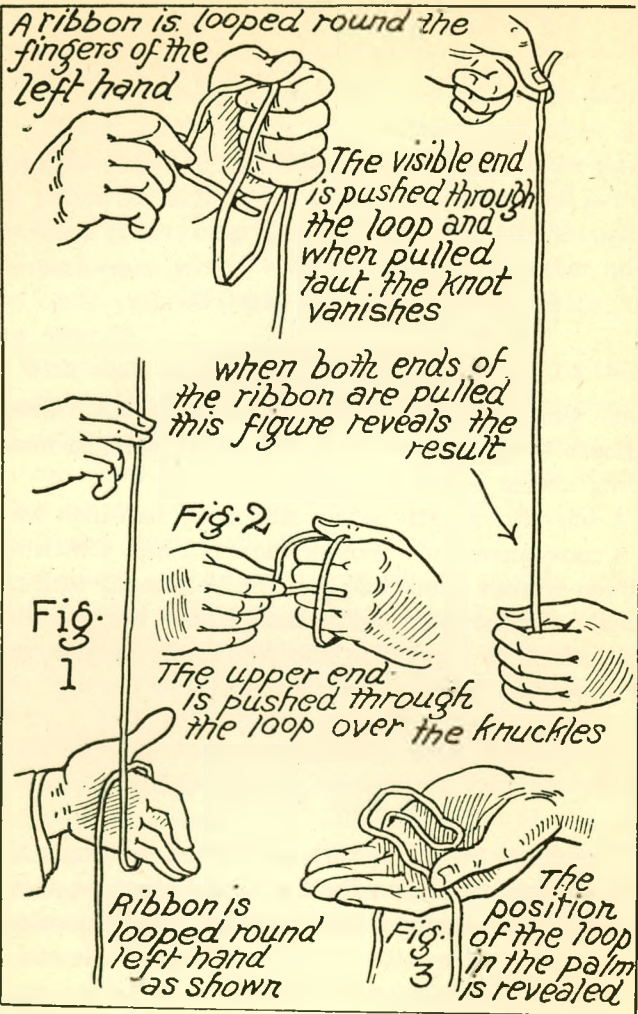
A one-yard length of silk ribbon by half-inch wide is a convenient size. Follow Figs. 1, 2 and 3 with the ribbon in your hands and you will be pleased with the result. Of the many knot tricks I have learnt during the last thirty years, this effect is, in my opinion, one of the best.



A RING PUZZLE

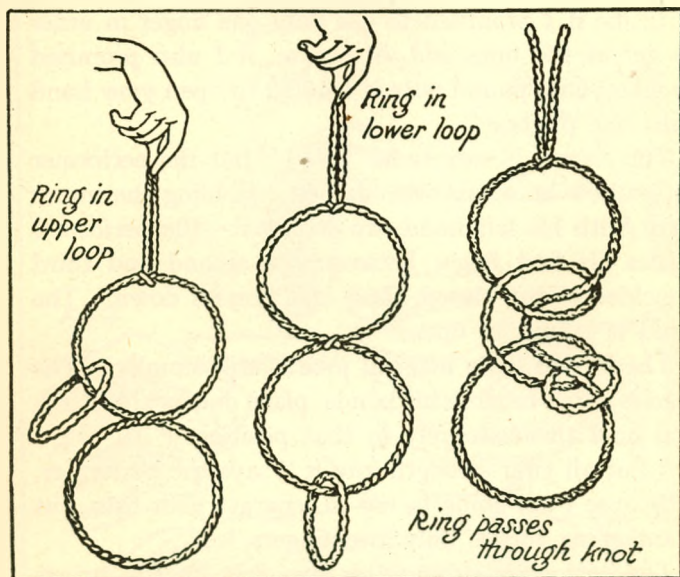
Doubling a length of rope in half the performer ties two loops in it, one on the top of the other, as shown in the accompanying sketch. Before tying the second loop—the top one—the performer slips a single end of the rope through a small ring.

The puzzle consists in passing the ring from the top



A MYSTERY KNOT.

loop to the lower one. At first sight this seems impossible because the knot between the two loops bars the way. However, if this knot is loosened—as shown in the sketch—it is a simple matter to pass the small ring through the knot and so down to the lower loop.



A RING PUZZLE.



TWO MAGICAL JOKES

A man is asked to close his right hand and to keep it tightly closed.

“Now,” says the performer, “please imagine that you have a pound note in your hand. Would you give it to me if I promised to use only one finger in order to get at the note and, of course, if I also promised to give you a pound note if I failed to open your hand with one finger?”

The answer is sure to be “No!” but the performer shows how he would win his bet. Holding the man’s wrist with his left hand—to steady it—the performer places his first finger between the second and third knuckles of the closed hand and presses down. The hand is bound to open.

The second little magical joke is still simpler. The man is asked to close his hands, place one on the other, and hold them securely in that position.

“Put all your strength into it,” says the performer, “because I am going to try to separate your fists, but I am going to use only two fingers.”

The performer extends his two first fingers, brings them up smartly against the two fists in opposite directions and—the trick is done. No matter how hard a man may try he cannot keep his fists close together when they are tapped in that manner.



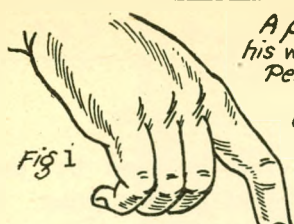


Fig 1

A person clenches his hand and his wrist is held firmly by the Performer.

The latter presses the point of his index finger between the second and third knuckle bones of the person which will compel him to open his hand.

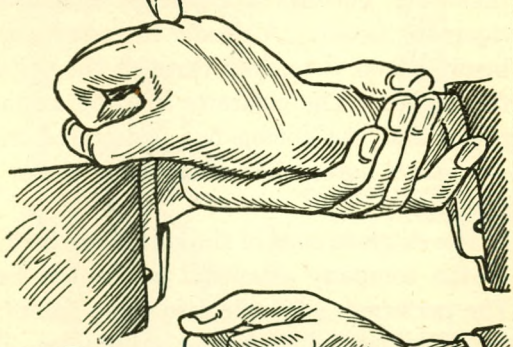
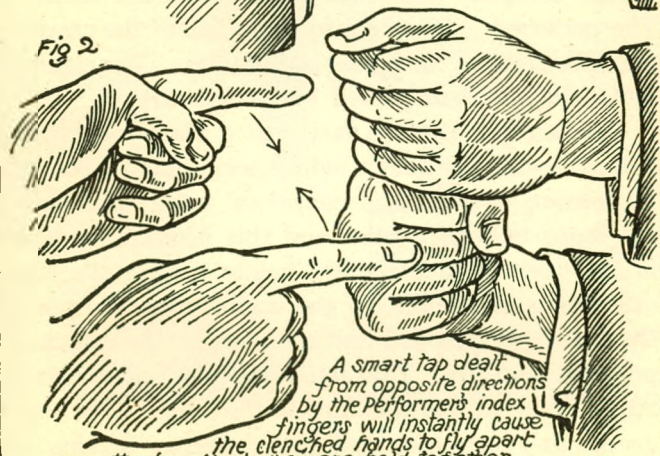


Fig 2



A smart tap dealt from opposite directions by the Performer's index fingers will instantly cause the clenched hands to fly apart no matter how firmly they are held together.

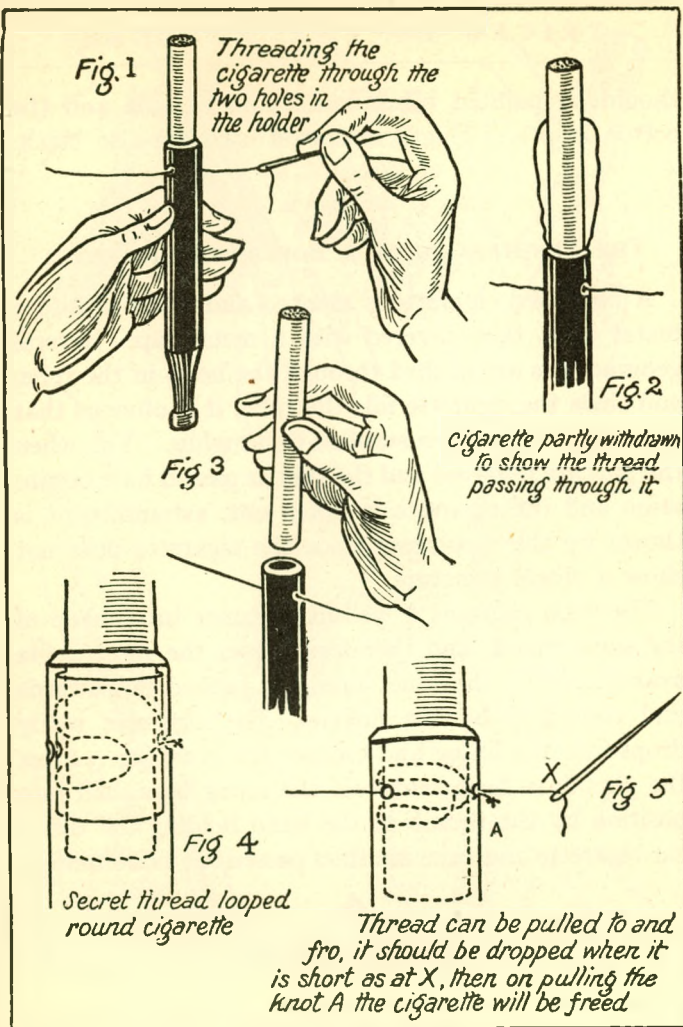
TWO MAGICAL JOKES.

THREAD IT AND RELEASE IT

This excellent mystery was invented by James Rogers, to whom I am indebted for this secret. The performer borrows a cigarette and drops it into a cigarette holder. A needle threaded with a length of black cotton is pushed through the opposite holes in the holder. The cigarette is lifted an inch or two to prove that the cotton has penetrated the cigarette—spectators agree that everything is fair and beyond question.

The extreme ends of the cotton are held by a member of the company after the needle has been removed. The performer grips the projecting end of the cigarette and lifts it out of the holder in full view. The cigarette and holder is then passed for examination.

The secret lies in the fact that a black cotton loop is fixed inside the holder before performance, and held in position by means of conjurers' wax. One end of the loop contains a knot and this projects from one of the holes of the cigarette holder. After the cigarette has been secured by the cotton from the needle, the needle is removed and the ends of the cotton are pulled to and fro. This action gives the performer an opportunity to pull the knot of the loop. This action draws the cotton around the cigarette, leaving the cotton through the two holes in the holder. The loop is secretly dropped on the floor. The cigarette holder



THREAD IT AND RELEASE IT.

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

should be painted black inside and outside and the cotton loop and length of cotton used are also black.



THE PENETRATION OF A BORROWED CIGARETTE

A borrowed cigarette is marked and dropped into a metal tube, then covered with a metal cap. Several genuine pins are pushed through the holes in the tube, and since the cigarette fills the tube, it is obvious that the cigarette has been stabbed thoroughly. Yet, when the pins are removed and the tube is passed for examination and the cigarette is taken out, astonishment is shown by the spectators since the cigarette does not show a single puncture.

The tube contains a well-fitted inner tube made of the same metal, and therefore passes the most acute examination. The inner lining is pushed downwards and concealed by the fingers. The cigarette really drops into the lining and escapes the stabbing. After the pins have been removed, the lining is pushed into position by the thumb of the hand holding the tube; the cigarette and tube are then passed for examination.



MAGICAL SMOKE

This is a little magical interlude. The performer can suggest that the old saying "Where there's smoke

Fig. 1

*Cigarette is dropped
into tube*

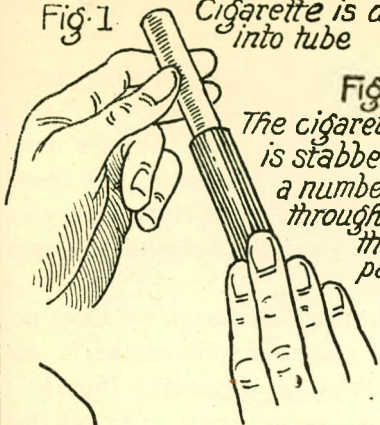


Fig. 2

*The cigarette
is stabbed by
a number of pins
through holes in
the upper
part of
tube*

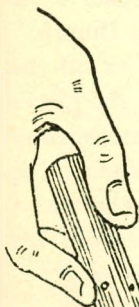
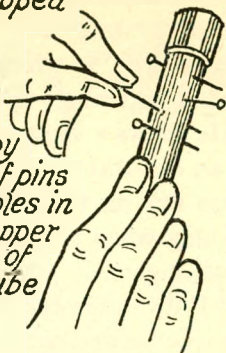


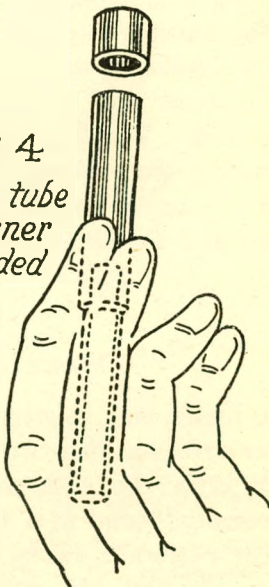
Fig. 3

*cigarette
expelled
from tube
and found
to be minus
pinholes*



Fig. 4

*The tube
showing inner
fake extended
containing
cigarette*



THE PENETRATION OF A BORROWED CIGARETTE.

there's fire " is wrong, and he then proceeds to prove that it is wrong.

He shows a saucer which, he explains, has been used as an ash-tray and has been slightly burnt, but there is no fire on the ash-tray now. The cigar that was burning when the ash-tray was used has gone the way of all cigars.

" But," adds the performer, " although we have no fire—no lighted cigar—we still have some smoke." As he says this, smoke rises from his finger and thumb.

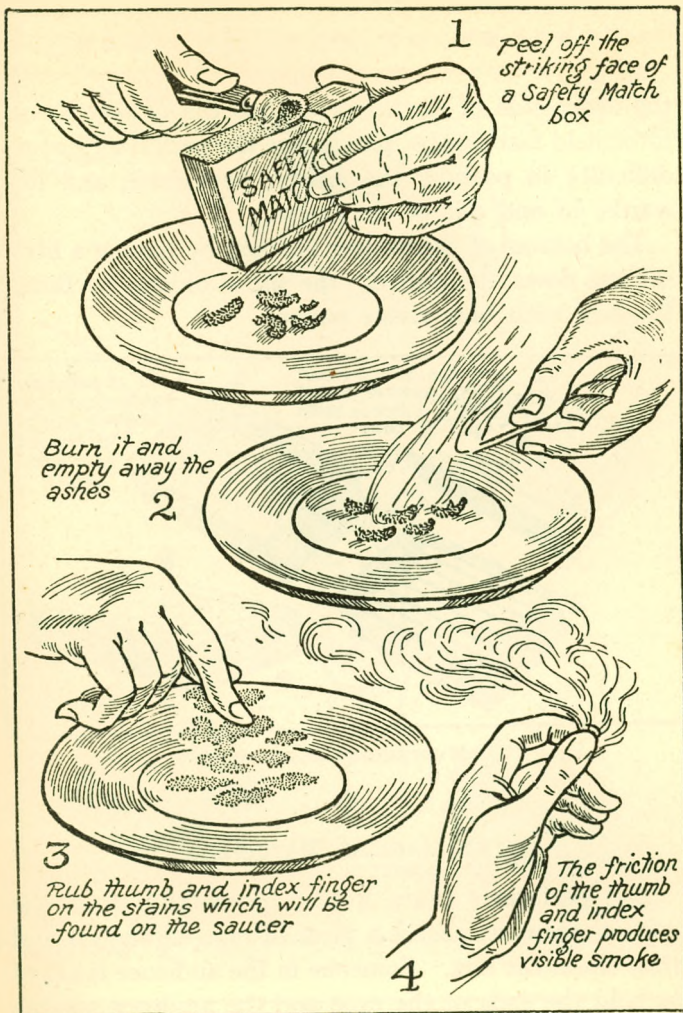
The ash-tray is prepared for the trick. Cut off the black sides of a box of safety matches. Put the pieces on a saucer and set light to them and throw away the ashes. The saucer will be stained. When he is pattering, the performer openly wipes away the stains with his finger and thumb and then, if he rubs his finger and thumb together, the smoke will appear.



A MYSTERIOUS MATCH-BOX

A match-box is given out for examination; the outer cover has had two small holes in it, opposite to each other, but otherwise the box appears to be " ordinary ", and it is full of matches.

The performer takes out one of the matches and closes the box. He passes the match right through the box and the audience see the end protruding from

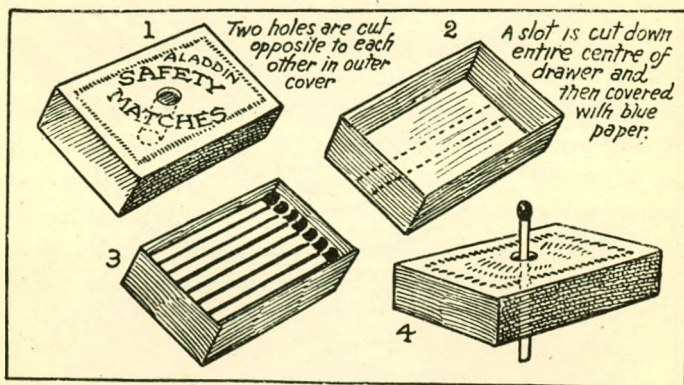


MAGICAL SMOKE.

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

the lower side of the cover. Thus the drawer seems to be held fast by the match, but the performer has no difficulty in pushing the drawer backwards and forwards, in and out of the cover.

The bottom of the drawer is faked by having a little slit cut down the centre; the slit is hidden by lining the box with blue tissue paper.

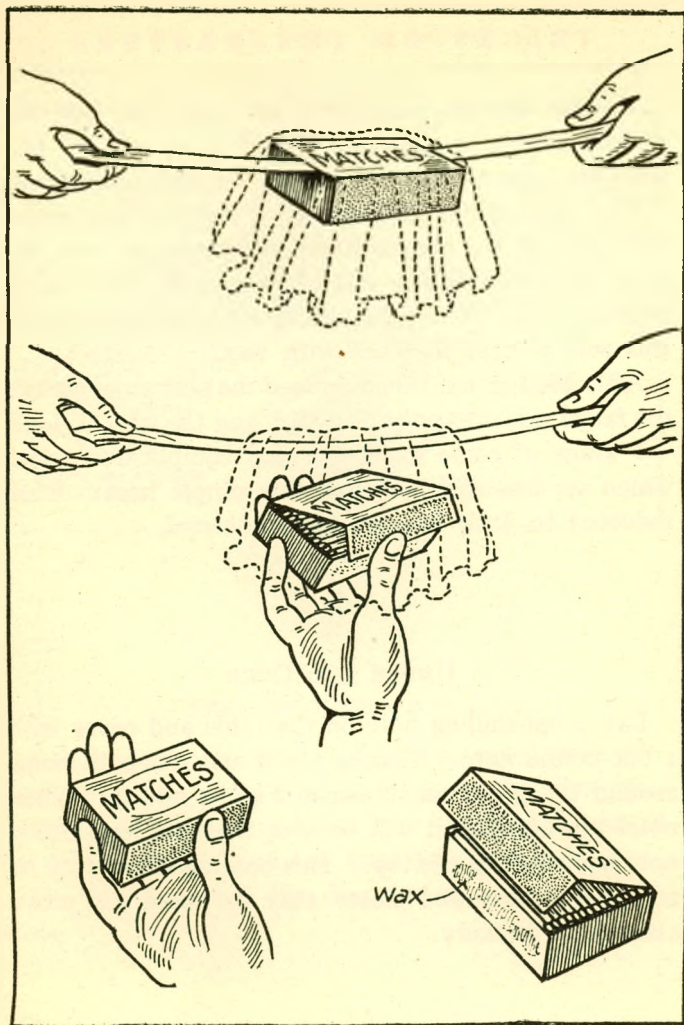


A MYSTERIOUS MATCH-BOX.



THE MAGICAL MATCH-BOX

The performer takes a box of matches from his pocket, opens it, pushes a piece of tape through it and then closes the box. Someone in the audience is asked to hold the ends of the tape and the audience see the match-box suspended in the middle of it.



THE MAGICAL MATCH-BOX.

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

Having thrown a handkerchief over the box the performer gets to work and is able to remove the box from the tape and then give the box for examination.

The illustrations give the trick away. The reader will see that the box is faked by having one side cut away, so that this side and the top of the box can be lifted up, but when the performer first shows the box this side is kept in place with wax.

After the box has been removed the performer presses the faked side into position again, and the trick is done.

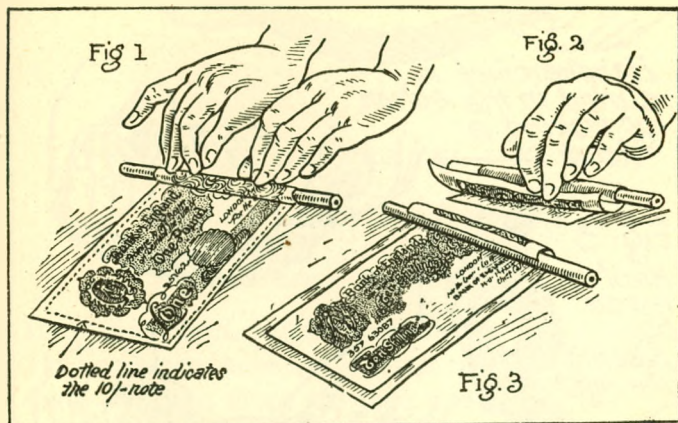
I know of some expensive and complicated tricks which are less effective than this simple trick. I am indebted to Jack Hughes for this secret.



UNDER AND OVER

Lay a ten-shilling note on the table and cover with a one-pound note. Take a pencil and roll both notes around the pencil as shown in Figs. 1 and 2. When notes are unrolled it will be seen that the ten-shilling note has come to the top. This baffling effect may be repeated; borrowed notes may be used to prove absence of trickery.

CLOSE-UP MAGIC



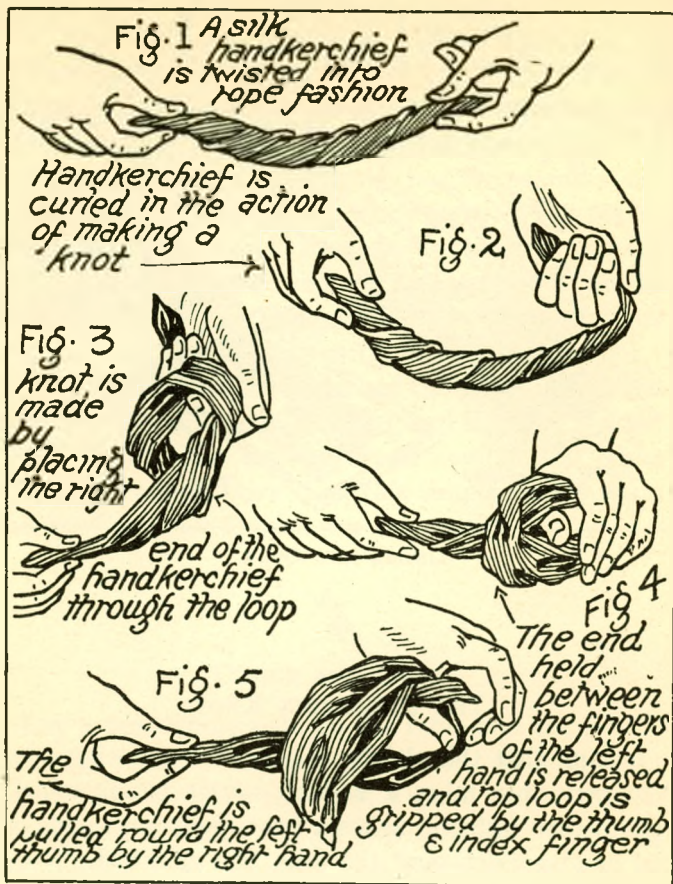
UNDER AND OVER.



THE DISSOLVING KNOT

I claim that this sleight is a most convincing one. The performer takes a 24-inch square handkerchief, rolls it rope fashion, makes a knot, pulls both ends of the handkerchief—and the knot has vanished.

The five figures in the diagram clearly show every move.



THE DISSOLVING KNOT.

CHAPTER VI

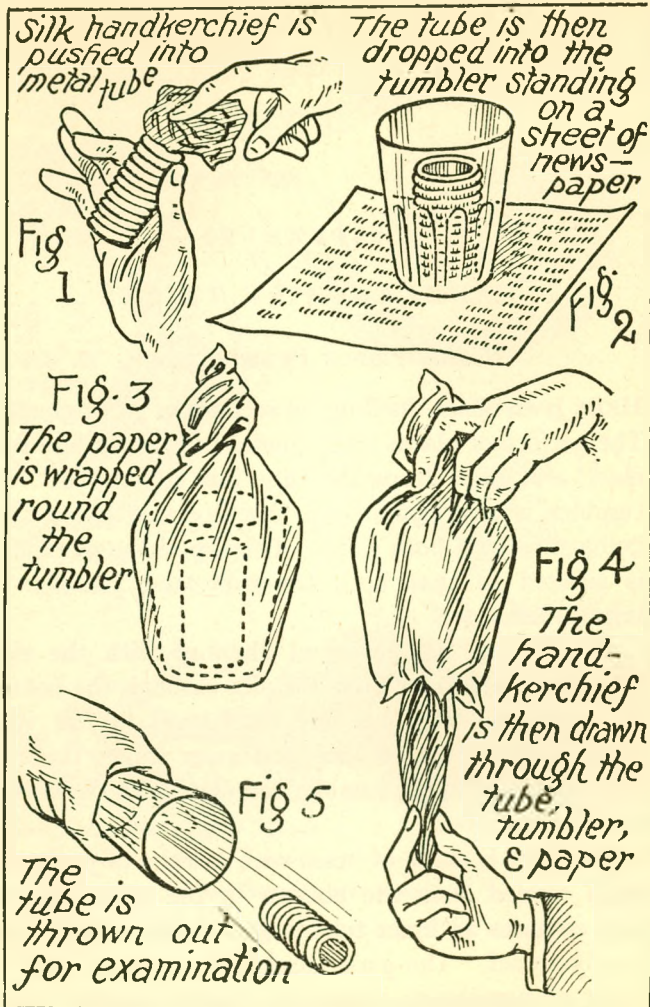
HANDKERCHIEF TRICKS

THE TRIPLE PENETRATION

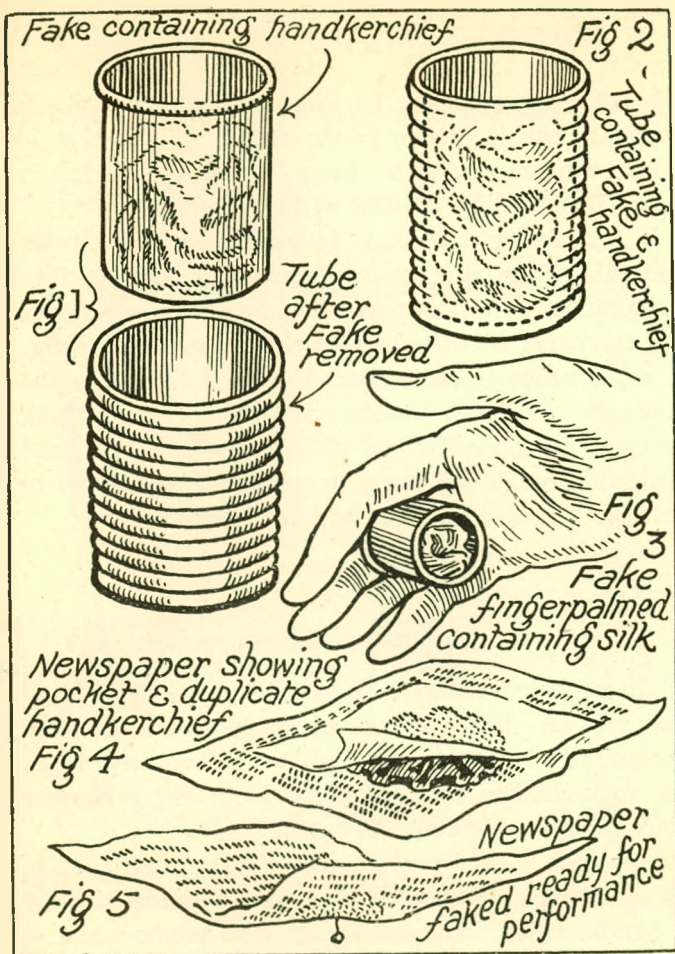
HERE is an effect, baffling on account of its originality. The performer places into a metal tube a silk handkerchief, and then drops the tube into a tumbler. The tumbler is wrapped into a sheet of newspaper after being shown on both sides. The top of the newspaper is twisted so that both the tube and tumbler are imprisoned.

Holding up the parcel at the top with the right hand, the performer pulls the silk through the bottom of the parcel with his left hand, and in full view. Unpacking the parcel, the performer shows the tube to be empty, and the tumbler complete with the bottom undamaged.

The tube is made of brass with a series of projecting rings carried from the bottom to the top. The top ring contains an inner tube large enough to take a silk handkerchief. The glass tumbler is unfaked, but the sheet of newspaper contains a pocket exactly in the centre. This pocket is carefully prepared, so that both



THE TRIPLE PENETRATION (EFFECT).



THE TRIPLE PENETRATION (EXPLANATION).

sides of the paper may be shown with impunity. A duplicate silk is in the paper pocket, this pocket is closed with a good clean paste. After the pocket is closed it should be pressed with a weight.

In performing, the silk is first pushed into the tube, and palmed out (Fig. 3) just before it is dropped into the tumbler. The newspaper is wrapped around the lot and the paper is twisted round the top of the tumbler. It is advisable to fix a short length of thread to the duplicate silk in the centre, and affix a small black bead to the opposite end of the thread. The bead projects through the paper to enable the performer to pull the handkerchief out without fumbling.



A QUICK CHANGE

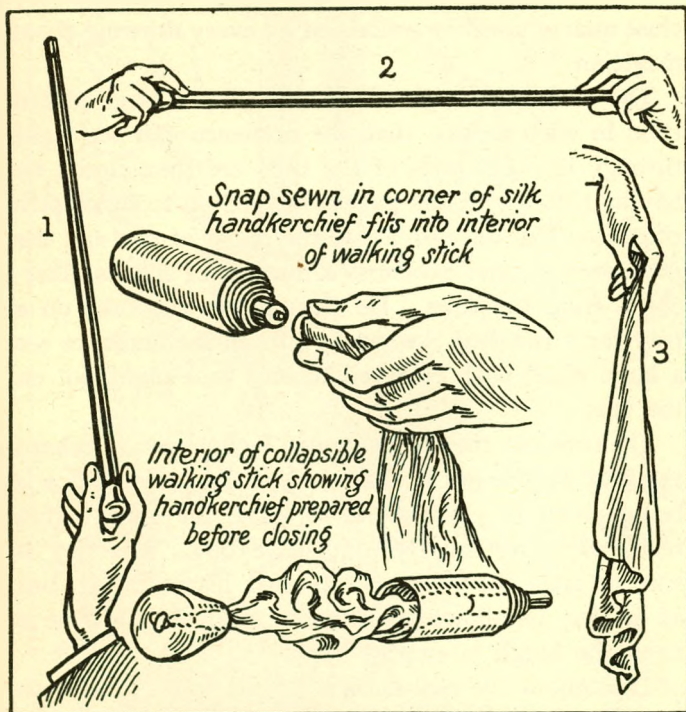
The performer enters with a walking-stick in his hand (see Fig. 1). For a few moments he holds the stick horizontally between both hands and then, in a flash, the stick changes into a handkerchief; the performer holds it by one corner, as in Fig. 3.

The stick is of the collapsible kind; when it is in its extended state there is plenty of room inside it for a handkerchief. The corner of the handkerchief is attached to the knob of the stick.

To bring about the change the performer merely has to bring his hands together very quickly and pull off

H A N D K E R C H I E F T R I C K S

the knob ; he can then display the handkerchief ; the closed stick is palmed, for a time, in the other hand.



A QUICK CHANGE.



A GOOD PRODUCTION

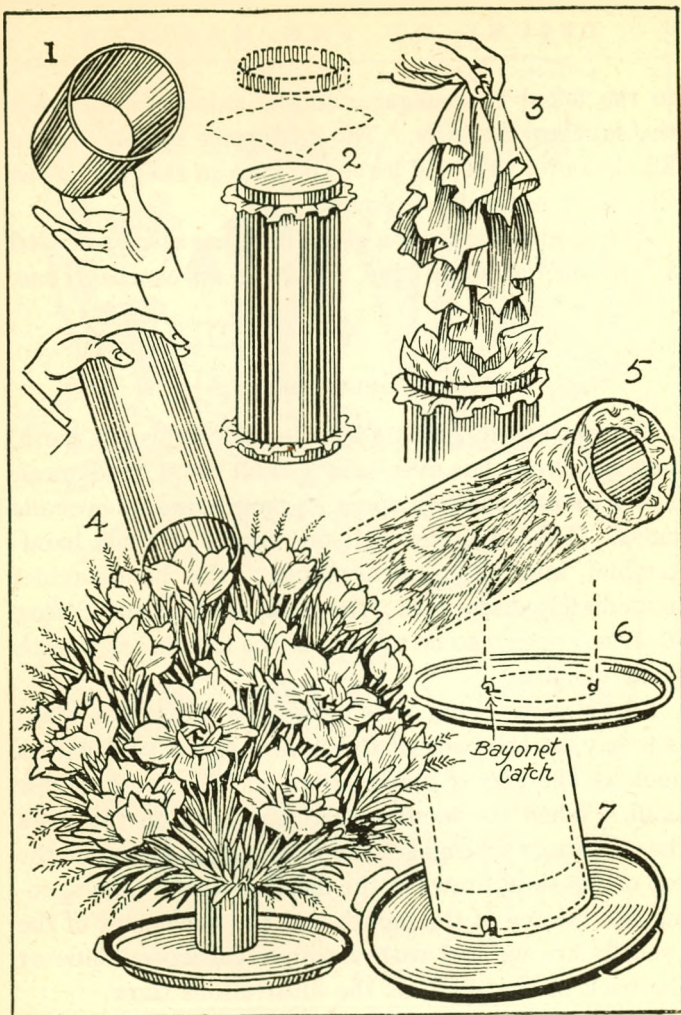
A good production trick which can be worked at very close quarters will be welcomed by every drawing-room magician.

The performer begins by holding up a large plated tube in such a way that the audience can see right through it. The ends of the tube are then closed by having pieces of tissue paper clamped on to them with rings (see Fig. 2). Breaking the paper at one end the performer at once produces a number of silk handkerchiefs from the tube. He then places the tube on a tray for a moment ; when he lifts it the audience see a large plant with coloured blooms in a plant pot on the tray.

The tube can then be examined by anyone. Perhaps the best way to get it examined, if the performance is being given to children, is to leave the tube within reach of a particularly inquisitive boy. The boy is sure to grab the tube and to start inspecting it, but as he may be allowed to examine the tube until he is tired the laugh is against him.

The tube is the well-known "ghost tube", but with a very important improvement. The "faked" inner tube is not fastened permanently to the outer tube.

The production of the handkerchiefs is managed in the usual way. Fixed to the tray is a little catch (see Fig. 6) of the bayonet kind ; a tiny rod attached



A GOOD PRODUCTION.

to the faked tube engages in the catch and so holds the fake to the tray. The performer merely has to lift the outer tube and leave the fake on the tray, when the plant naturally expands.

The production from a ghost tube has always needed a "finish" of some kind. Here is an excellent one.

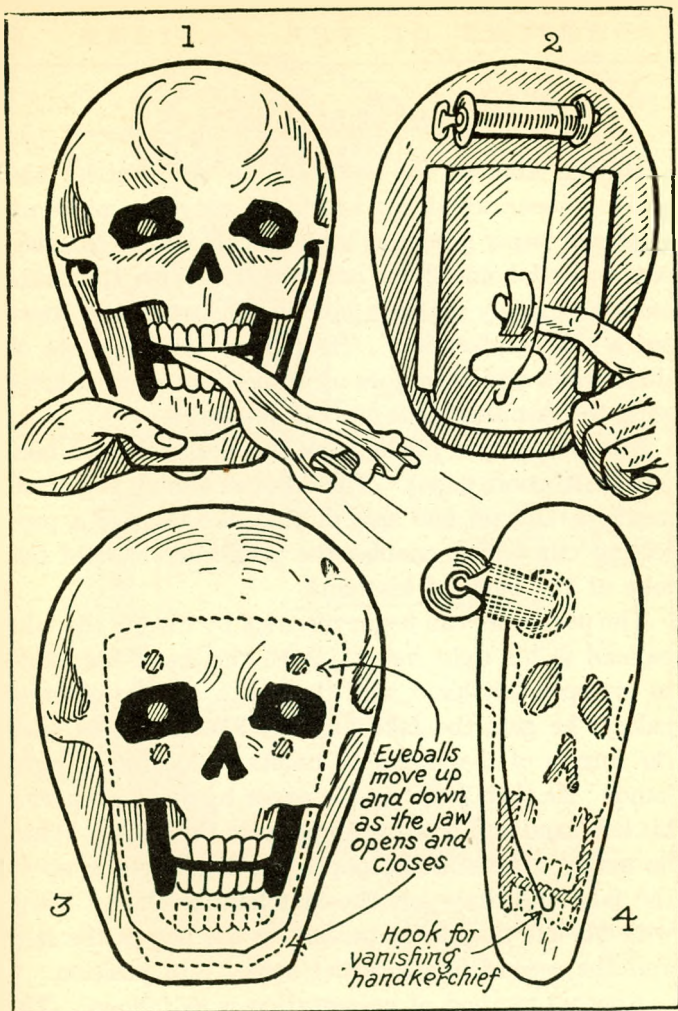


A GRIM JOKE

The performer, holding a little skull in his left hand, asks if anyone has ever seen a skull eat a good meal. The skull immediately opens its mouth and its eyeballs move. The performer puts one corner of a silk handkerchief into the skull's mouth; the handkerchief immediately disappears; the skull, opening and closing its eyes, appears to be munching the handkerchief with great delight.

Fig. 2 shows what goes on behind the scenes—that is to say, at the back of the skull. A fine wire with a hook at the end is drawn down to the mouth of the skull. When the handkerchief is placed on the hook the performer disengages the hook and a spring at the top of the skull draws in the handkerchief. The opening and closing of the mouth and the movement of the eyeballs are worked with a simple cardboard slide at the back of the skull, as the illustrations show.





A GRIM JOKE.

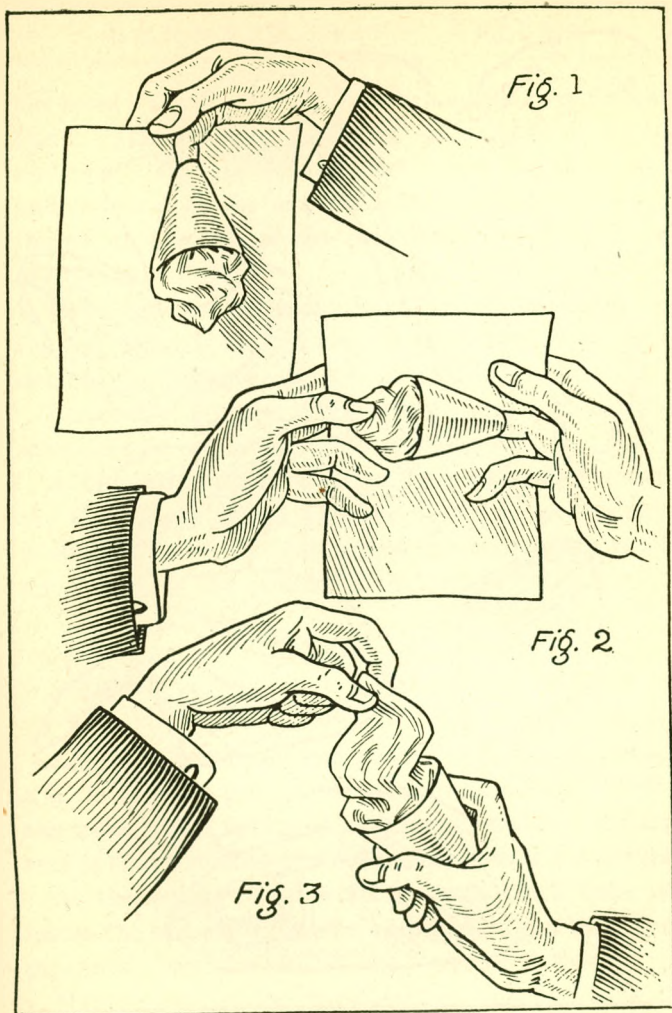
SILK FROM PAPER

Having allowed the audience to see that he has nothing concealed in his hands the magician picks up a piece of paper (about as large as half a sheet of newspaper), and holds it by one corner. With the other hand he quickly makes a hole in the paper and draws out a silk handkerchief. He repeats the trick two or three times and then goes on to perform another trick with the handkerchiefs he has produced.

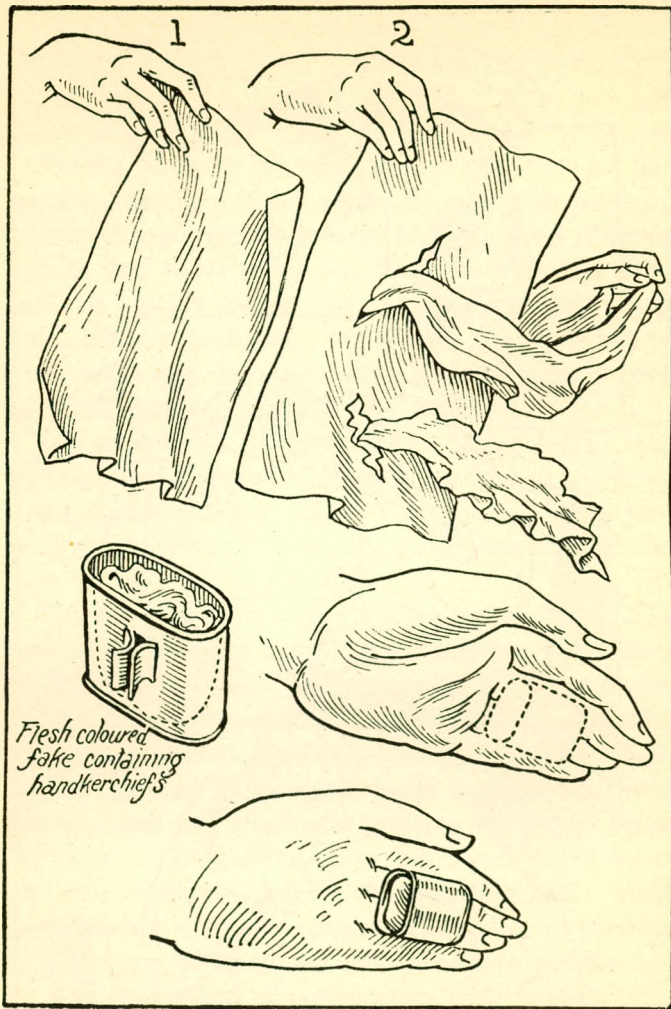
The main secret in the trick is a flesh-coloured fake (see illustration, p. 90). The fake has a small bag fitted inside it, and on one side of the fake there is a projecting clip which enables the performer to hold the fake at the back of his hand.

The performer can begin the trick by having the fake palmed in his right hand. With this hand he points to his open left hand, and then with a "change over palm" he gets the fake into his left hand and with the fingers of that hand he points to his empty right hand. He then picks up the paper by one corner with his left hand and is ready to perform the trick. When he makes a hole in the paper his fingers reach up to the fake and draw out the first handkerchief. Then, with his left thumb, he pushes up the bag of the fake and the second handkerchief comes into position.

Another method of presentation is as follows. The performer has the fake concealed on the back of his



SILK FROM PAPER.



HANDKERCHIEF TRICKS

left hand ; the clip enables him to hold the fake securely there. The left hand is shown with the palm to the audience. The right hand picks up a piece of paper and passes it to the left hand which holds it with the thumb on the top of the paper which hides the rest of the hand.

The fingers of the right hand break the paper and the left hand is turned slightly upwards ; this move enables the performer to get at a handkerchief.

Personally I prefer this method, and I think it is advisable to work the trick rather quickly.

At the end of the production the performer screws up the torn paper into a ball and tosses it on one side ; in doing this he also gets rid of the fake which is left, for a time, in the middle of the ball of paper.



THE VANISHING HANDKERCHIEF

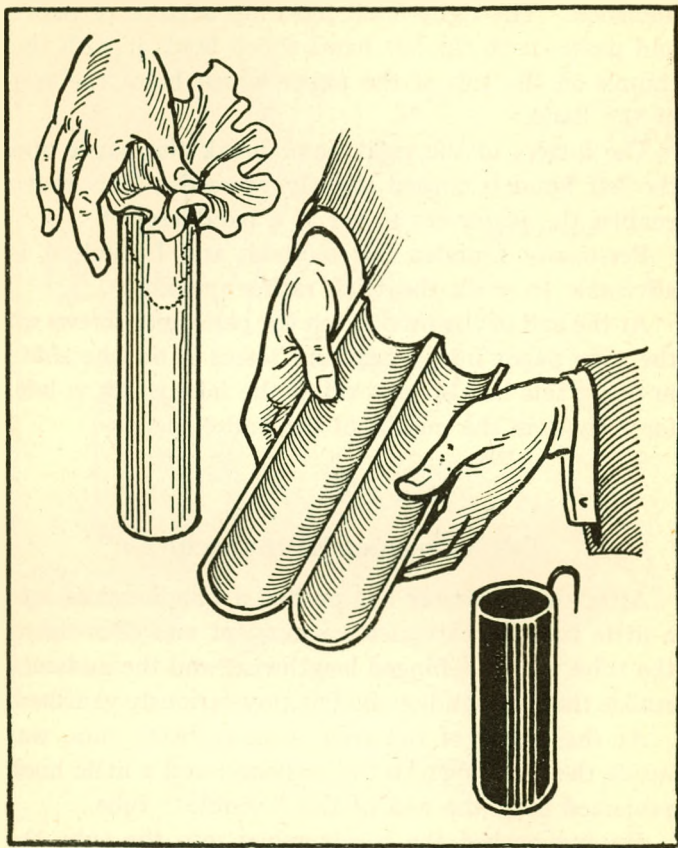
After the performer has pushed a handkerchief into a little tube he patters for a moment and then opens the tube, which is hinged lengthwise, and the audience realize that the handkerchief has mysteriously vanished.

At the outset of the trick a small black tube was inside the one shown to the audience, and a little hook projected over the end of the " visible " tube.

Having pushed the handkerchief into the tube the performer draws up his sleeves and in doing so engages

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

the hook on his coat ; when he drops his arm the sleeve hides the black tube. And that is that.



THE VANISHING HANDKERCHIEF.

CHAPTER VII

DE BIERE'S SECTION

ARNOLD DE BIERE

ARNOLD DE BIERE is a name that will be long remembered in magic. Although not a great originator in the sense that he freely devised new magical principles, he was at once a man of great personal charm and an artist of consummate skill. It was these attributes, together with a considerable flair for showmanship, that took him to the heights of the magical profession. That he never quite attained the renown of Goldin and Houdini was due, not to any lack of skill, but to a nature that was inherently artistic; he delighted in the art of manipulation. He was, of course, an illusionist of high merit, but he was never an illusionist in the grand manner. The egg-bag, the thumb-tie, and the vanishing bird-cage were as much part of him as his eyes, his nose, and his fingers. His Vanishing Lady and his Human Tortoise were in the nature of accessories to the act.

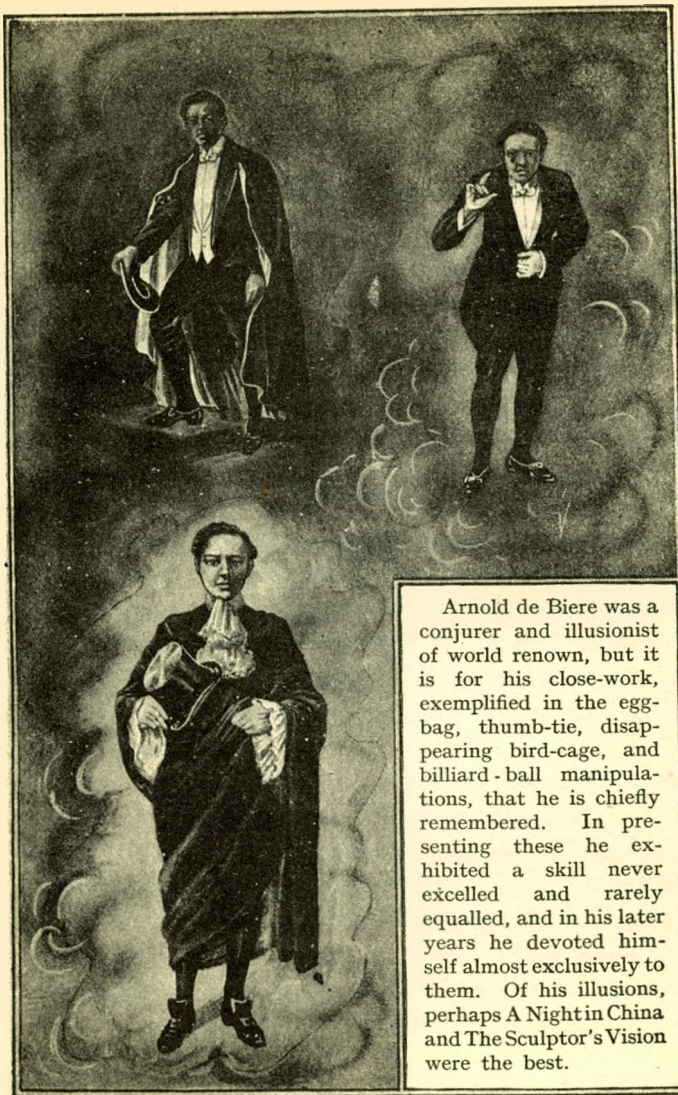
His real name was Bere, and in his early years he was apprenticed to a New York tailor. He was fifteen

years old when he witnessed a vaudeville performance by Carl Herman, and shortly afterwards presented himself at Matinka's magical store, where he purchased half a dozen small tricks. With these he practised hard, and profiting by the written advice of Hoffmann, made himself into a competent young conjurer. At seventeen, he was appearing in numerous amateur shows. A year later, he became a professional.

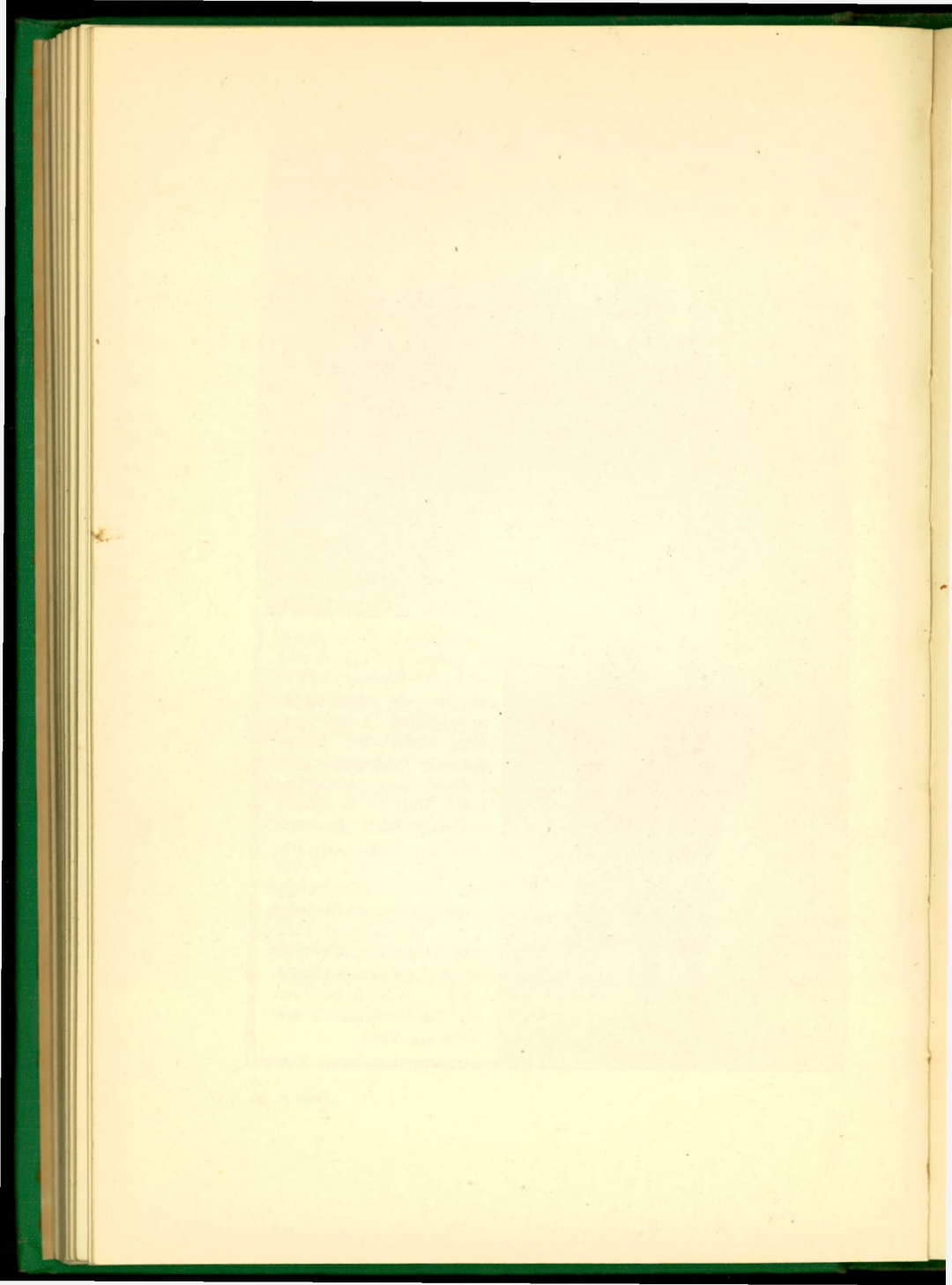
For some years he performed in the Dime Museums of the principal towns in the United States. At the same time as he was broadening himself with hard experience, he was reading enthusiastically, and taking lessons when and where he could. He learned the routine of the egg-bag from Herbert Laski, the performer who established this commonplace trick as a classic. Incidentally, Laski was also the tutor of Horace Goldin.

In 1905 de Biere made his first appearance in England. His tricks at this period were small and unambitious, though exquisitely performed. Thanks to the influence of Goldin, illusion acts were in great demand in British music halls, and within two years de Biere was presenting a programme that was a flattering imitation of Goldin's act. It was slick and spectacular, but his three outstanding tricks remained the egg-bag, the thumb-tie, and the vanishing bird-cage.

In the following pages I have explained in detail de Biere's method of working the egg-bag and the bird-



Arnold de Biere was a conjurer and illusionist of world renown, but it is for his close-work, exemplified in the egg-bag, thumb-tie, disappearing bird-cage, and billiard-ball manipulations, that he is chiefly remembered. In presenting these he exhibited a skill never excelled and rarely equalled, and in his later years he devoted himself almost exclusively to them. Of his illusions, perhaps *A Night in China* and *The Sculptor's Vision* were the best.



cage tricks. The thumb-tie has been explained in my *More Exclusive Magical Secrets*, on information supplied by Yettmah, and since this was the method employed exactly by de Biere, there is no point in again explaining the trick here.

In 1928, de Biere was at the height of his powers. Since the programme routine of a great magician must interest readers, I include a fairly detailed description of de Biere's full-length act at Maskelyne's Theatre, London, in that year.

* *The Act*

Curtain rises, revealing mauve tabs and pelmet and two assistants at either side. Tabs drawn back showing full stage with elaborate candelabra and hanging lights in centre. All assistants at attention. De Biere enters through back curtains, tosses white gloves into hat. Hat immediately turned upside down, but gloves do not fall out.

One : From a red handkerchief, de Biere produces ribbons and a butterfly, loaded from waistcoat.

Two : He produces girl from a dissected box.

Three : Girl placed in sack which is drawn into the flies. Girl has already made her escape, mingling unnoticed with other assistants on stage. Sack suddenly falls, caught in a sheet by de Biere and assistant.

Four : Egg-bag in front of tabs, sometimes per-

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

formed on orchestra bridge. Two volunteers from audience hold de Biere's wrists as he works.

Five : Bride of the Air. Levitation of a girl and final vanish from well table.

Six : With a small bow and arrow, de Biere splits in half small tissue strips held by assistant (his double). Climax when wig is shot from over-inquisitive assistant.

Seven : De Biere shows a nest of drawers containing several national costumes. Cards bearing the names of various countries are placed on a forcing tray, and a member of the audience selects one. Almost immediately girl wearing the costume of the selected country jumps from the nest of drawers.

Eight : De Biere dresses in cowled monk's habit, enters curtained cabinet, escaping unseen at rear in assistant's uniform, and mingling with assistants on stage. Curtains drawn back, revealing girl in cabinet. De Biere comes forward, removing assistant's coat.

Nine : De Biere says he will show how the trick is done. Dons monk's habit at a side screen, slips off stage and is replaced by a "double". De Biere returns as lady assistant, covering his face with a mirror. The "double" moves off stage, de Biere drops mirror, revealing himself.

Ten : A Night in China. As a Chinaman, de Biere juggles eggs, cup and tray. Produces two girls from a curtained litter. He shakes a large sheet, working it higher and higher, and slowly moving to back stage.

DE BIERE'S SECTION

He is replaced by a "double" under cover of the sheet. De Biere gets under sheet, which is drawn aside, revealing a large tortoise. The tortoise is removed; beneath it is a stout man touching his toes.

Eleven: Promising to show how trick is done, de Biere slips off stage through crowd of assistants and is replaced by "double", who enters small pagoda box with unseen back platform. Box is opened and shown empty. De Biere comes up from auditorium.

Twelve: Thumb-tie, in which thumbs are tied by members of the audience. Two volunteers hold his arms while he catches hoops on his arms thrown by assistant in the auditorium.

Thirteen: The Sculptor's vision. A cottage interior in which de Biere, as an artist, falls to sleep. A woman appears, finally disappearing by means of lazy tongs behind a couch. De Biere models statue of a woman; there is a transformation in which the modelling bench opens, and the interior changes to garden with fountain. On second curtain, the statue, previously standing, is sitting.

A study of the construction of this programme is certainly worth while since it affords an interesting study into the methods used by de Biere at what was probably the most successful period of his life. The early introduction of the egg-bag tends to focus interest on de Biere himself rather than on the company in general. The thumb-tie is definitely the climax, and

the intervening illusions have humour and colour. The Sculptor's Vision is a very fitting termination to a skilled and comprehensive exhibition of magic. It is a scene slickly performed and full of colourful changes.

An enlightening sidelight on de Biere's publicity methods at this time is afforded by his offer to give employment to the World's Ugliest Woman. The person he wanted had to have a low, receding forehead, skimpy hair, hooked or broken nose, bushy or non-existent eyebrows, high cheek-bones, large mouth, broad lips, protruding teeth, and receding chin. According to press reports he had plenty of offers but engaged none of the applicants, which is scarcely surprising. Incidentally, I believe Artemus, the comedy illusionist, claimed to be the originator of this stunt, and used it himself with considerable success.

When de Biere appeared in vaudeville, shortly after his successful season at Maskelyne's, he curtailed his programme considerably. The act, worked at high speed, was made up as follows: nest of drawers and national costumes; billiard ball manipulation; egg-bag; thumb-tie; Bride of the Air. His staff consisted of two men and a girl. With the introduction of talking pictures he disposed of his illusions altogether, concentrating exclusively on sleights and manipulations.

He assured me that he made as much profit in cabaret work as with his bigger illusion act on the halls,

since his expenses were small. What that profit was I am not in the position to say. I do know, however, that much of his money was lost in investments in the Houdini film printing business and in various theatrical productions.

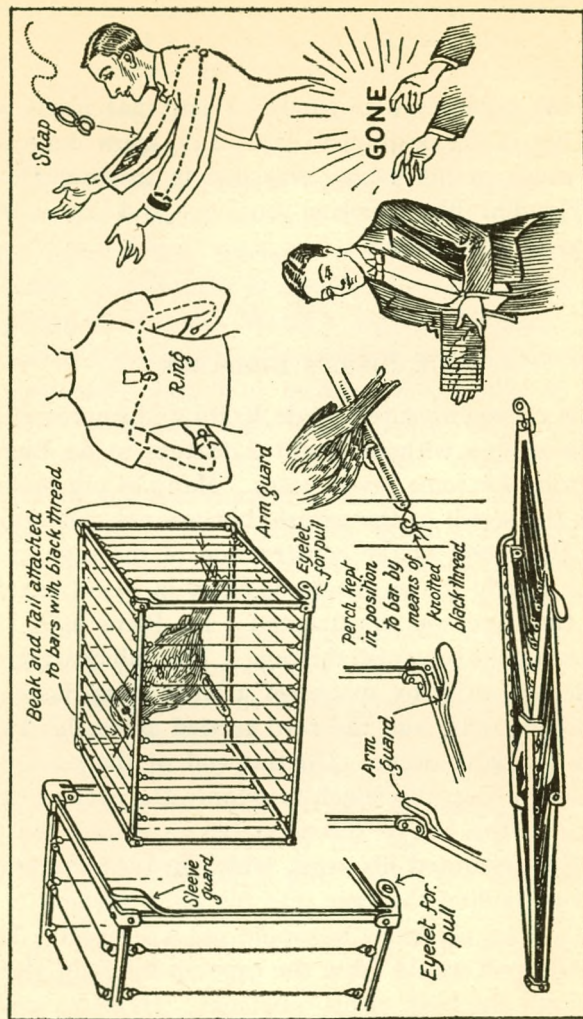


DE BIÈRE'S BIRD-CAGE

This classic, invented by de Kolta and improved by de Biere, was without doubt a feature in de Biere's répertoire for some seven years. Many of my readers know the secret of the vanish, but are not conversant with the secret of the construction of the cage.

The clearly drawn diagrams show in detail exactly how the cage was constructed. De Biere used two different pulls to vanish the cage. The pulley attached to the left wrist by means of a wrist strap fastened to the left wrist and the cord carried across his back down his right sleeve. On this end of the cord was attached a snap clip which fitted into the eyelet of the cage. In the act of throwing the cage into the air de Biere separated his arms, which in turn shortened the cord pulling the cage into his right sleeve.

On special occasions he would use a leg pull. This powerful pull would draw the cage up his right sleeve and down the back of his waistcoat. De Biere would secretly get possession of the cage and slip it into a



DE BIÈRE'S BIRD-CAGE.

special long pocket fitted in the back leg of his trousers. He could remove his coat and show his arms bare.

The bird used in the cage is of the rubber variety, and his right coat-sleeve was made wide enough to allow passage of the folded cage, thereby ensuring safe passage. Readers who are not conversant with the method of performing this trick will find complete details of the ordinary method in my book, *Tricks and Illusions*, on page 35, published by George Routledge & Sons, Ltd.



THE BEST WATCH-BOX

The advantage of this watch-box is that even after the watch has been secretly removed a member of the audience, to whose ear the box is held, can hear the ticking of the watch!

There is a great improvement about the concealed little spring which opens the end of the box by forcing the ball ornament fitted to the bottom of the box, shown in the diagram, thus allowing the watch to slide into the hand. The bottom of the box is closed again immediately.

The performer locks the box in the usual way, but he secretly gives the key a second turn and this, as the lower diagram shows, releases the works of a watch concealed in the bottom of the box. De Biere brought



THE BEST WATCH-BOX.

DE BIÈRE'S SECTION

every trick he performed to as near perfection as possible.

De Biere produced the borrowed watch, after the box was unlocked and found empty, from a turnip. I suggest the Chung Ling Soo method for the production of the watch as a climax to the de Biere watch-box.

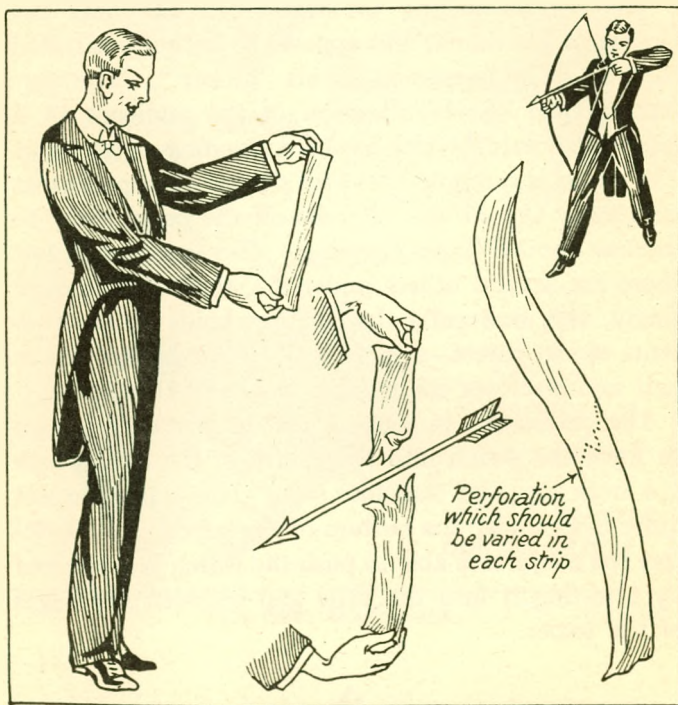
The person holding the watch-box can hear the ticking of his watch, and appears to be quite satisfied that he is in possession of his "ticker". The performer then directs attention of the audience to a large paper parcel which has been standing on his table. The parcel is carefully tied with string. The performer cuts away the string and pulls off the paper, only to disclose another paper covering. This is removed, but there are several others under it; they are removed singly, and eventually the conjurer holds up the contents of the parcel—a large loaf. He cuts the loaf in half and discloses the missing watch in the centre.

The performer, in picking up the parcel, manages to force the watch into the centre of the loaf, which is a fresh one, and therefore soft. The papers do not quite meet under the bottom of the parcel, and therefore the conjurer is able to push the watch into the loaf by inserting it into the little gap between the edges of the paper.



A GOOD SHOT

The assistant holds up a strip of paper. The magician retires to the far corner of the stage and, with a bow and arrow, shoots at the paper and hits it. The performance is repeated several times.



A GOOD SHOT.

The magician is not such a good shot as his audience believe him to be, for every strip of paper held up is prepared beforehand by being perforated. The position of the perforation is slightly varied with every strip. At the moment when the arrow reaches the strip the assistant merely has to pull on it to break it, and thus the magician gets the reputation for being a remarkably good shot with a bow and arrow. The effect is perfect.



DE BIÈRE'S EGG-BAG

The "egg-bag", as every magician knows, was one of Arnold de Bière's pet tricks, and during his lifetime many hundreds of magicians probably tried to discover the secret of the particular bag that de Bière used so effectively. I imagine that de Bière must have been secretly amused by his fellow-magicians' curiosity, for he had a keen sense of humour.

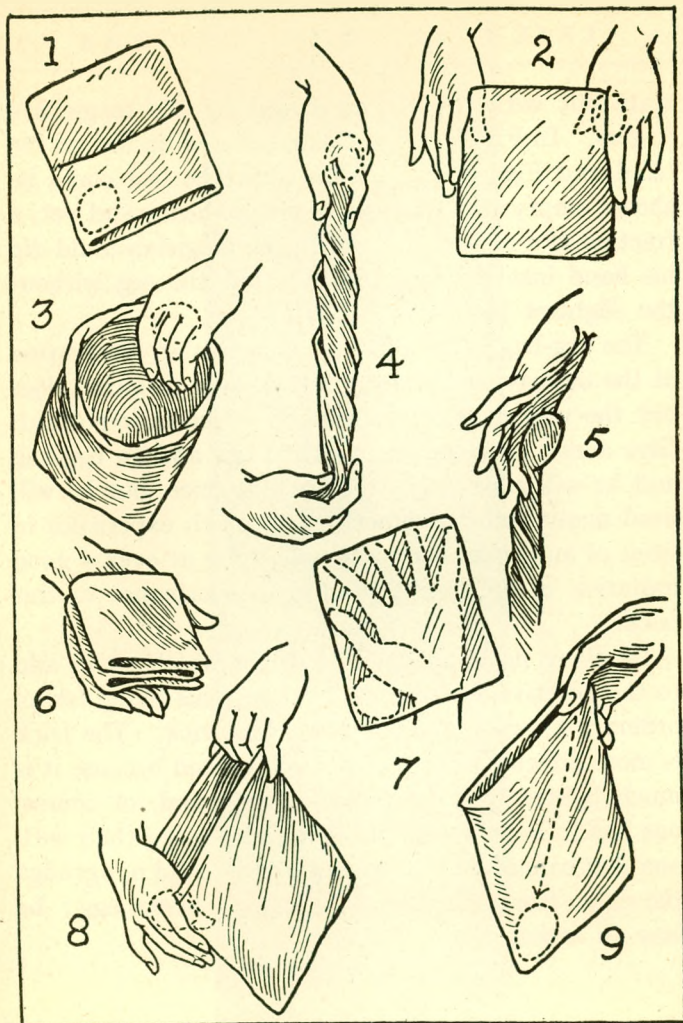
De Bière's egg-bag was the ordinary one, with the secret pocket about half-way on one side of the bag, but de Bière always made his own bags, for he knew the importance of having the right material—neither too thick nor too thin—and of having the pocket neatly made; a pocket slightly too large might have been "dangerous", but as he always worked the trick rather quickly and had to get at the egg without the

slightest fumbling, it was important that the pocket should not be too small.

In shape de Biere's bag differed slightly from the one generally used by magicians. De Biere made his bag in such a way that he could easily show it as a circular bag (see Fig. 3). Perhaps it was this little detail which helped to put magicians on the wrong scent when they were trying to discover de Biere's method. He had another good reason for making his bags himself. Sometimes, when he was performing on the stage of a music-hall he would begin the trick by tossing out the bag for inspection by the audience. The bag so given out was, of course, an ordinary bag, but an exact copy, as regards shape, size, and material, of the bag which he used for the trick. The exchange was made when he took off his coat; the bag which the audience had examined was left in the sleeve of the coat. The illustrations show the position of the egg at various stages in the trick.

In Fig. 1 we see the egg in the pocket, with the bag turned inside out. Fig. 2 shows how the egg was held at the top of the pocket when a member of the audience was asked to put his hand in the bag and satisfy himself that it was empty, and Fig. 7 shows how that hand failed to discover the presence of the egg.

Figs. 4 and 5 show the position of the egg when the bag was being twisted up to convince the audience that it was empty, and Fig. 3 shows the bag in its normal



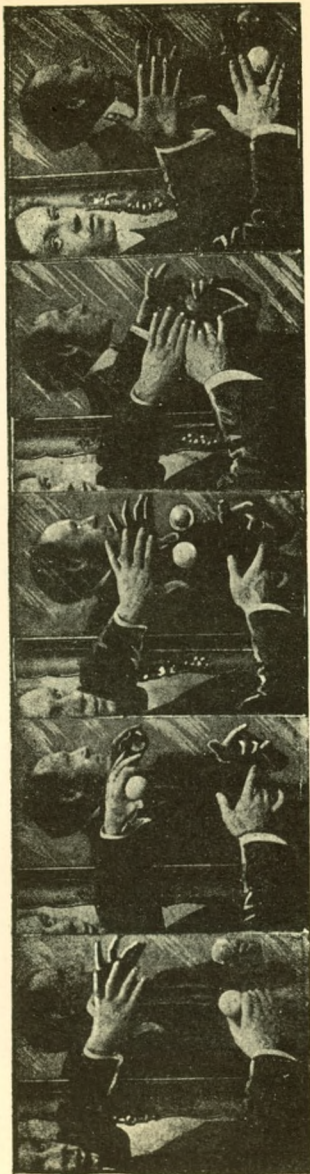
DE BIERE'S EGG-BAG
107

state but with the egg concealed by the magician's fingers. In Fig. 6 we see the bag folded up flat on the hand and Figs. 8 and 9 show how the bag could be shown empty to a member of the audience and yet, a fraction of a second afterwards, the magician could dip his hand into the bag and take out the egg without the slightest hesitation.

The egg-bag in de Biere's hands was an illustration of the old saying that it is not what a magician does but the way in which he does it which is important. Give a raw amateur an imitation egg and an egg-bag and he will start doing the trick at once, but he will need many hours of practice and much experience in front of audiences before he will arrive at even a good imitation of de Biere's masterly performance of this trick.

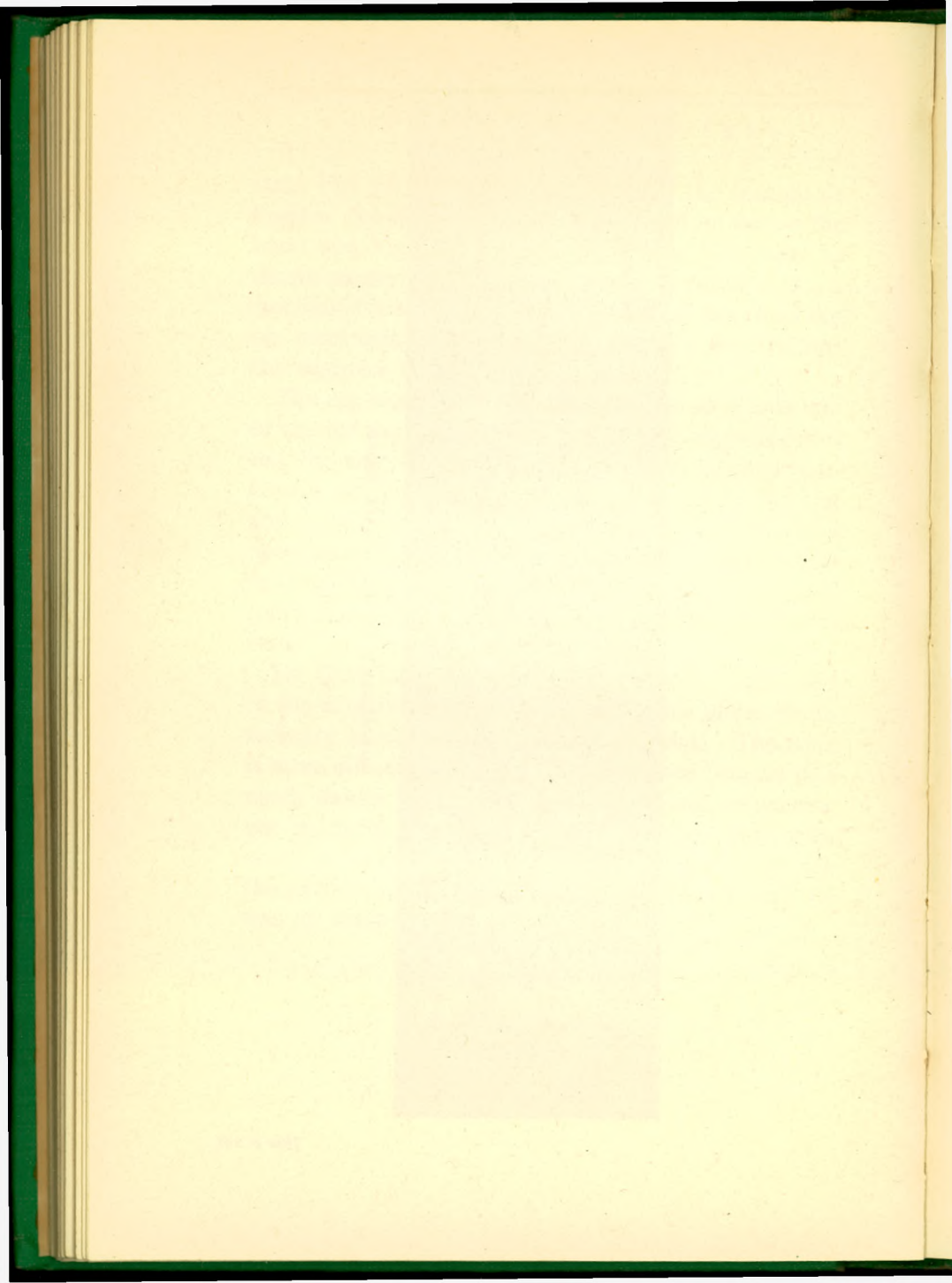
De Biere never omitted anything which could add to the effectiveness of a trick ; hence his liking for an ordinary blown egg when doing this trick. The trick is more difficult when a blown egg is used because it is much lighter than an imitation egg, and, of course, one has to be more gentle with a blown egg than with one that cannot be broken, but de Biere did not grudge the extra trouble involved by using a blown egg ; he was an artist.





DE BIÈRE'S BILLIARD-BALL MOVE.

[face p. 108.



DE BIERE'S SECTION

DE BIERE'S BILLIARD-BALL MOVE

The photographs of de Biere accompanying this sleight will greatly assist the reader in learning exactly how this pretty move is accomplished.

Stand right side towards audience. Left hand is held away from body, back towards audience. The right hand, held about twelve inches below the left, holds a billiard-ball openly between the fingers. The performer now throws the ball from this distance into the left. This hand seizes the ball without moving, but allows it to fall a moment later into the right. This hand now moves about six inches towards the left, and repeats the throwing into the left. Again the latter takes the ball and returns it to the right, which now moves from within one or two inches from the left. In throwing the ball for the third time, however, the performer makes the same throwing movement as before, but palms the ball in his right hand, closing the left, as if it contained the ball. While the left appears to throw the ball into the air, it is disposed of by the right, or produced elsewhere.



DE BIERE'S METHOD OF CAUSING THE APPEARANCE
OF A BILLIARD-BALL

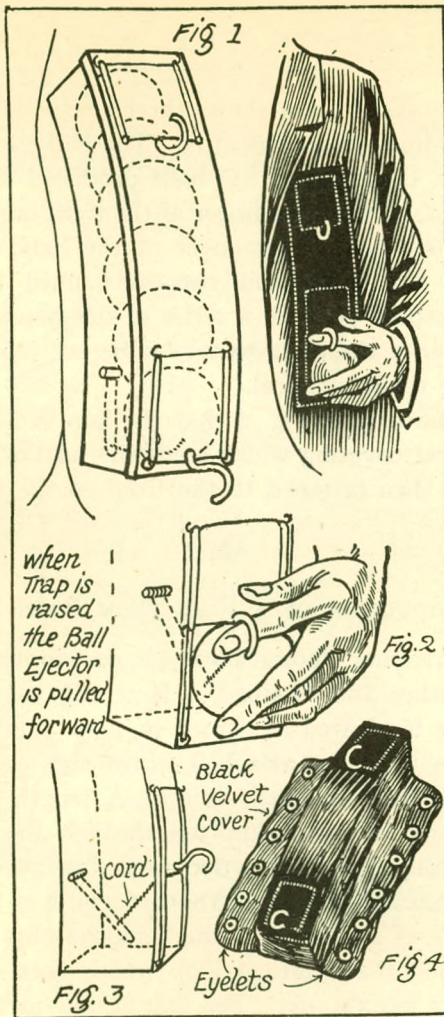
The performer stands right side to audience, hands stretched out sideways, so that the right hand has the

back and left palm towards audience. The right hand has palmed a ball. Performer now puts the finger-tips of his right hand in front of those of his left, and closes the latter into a fist. The right hand then moves away again, always keeping the fingers open, and the left hand, making a rubbing movement, opens again and shows it empty. Once more the right hand approaches the left and closes it in the same manner. The left opens again, showing it empty for the second time. At the third time, however, the right, in closing the left, leaves the palmed ball in the latter hand. The appearance of the hand, being the same as before, no suspicion is aroused, especially as the right hand was held open, as if containing nothing. The left now opens slowly, and shows the ball, at the same time also showing the right hand in a casual way as being empty. The effect is great, and a study of the move is recommended.



DE BIÈRE'S BILLIARD-BALL PRODUCTION FAKE

Readers who have not witnessed de Biere perform his billiard-ball production have indeed missed a real treat. De Biere appeared dressed in a black velvet jacket smoking a cigarette. From the smoke he would apparently produce a large billiard-ball, and continue to produce ball after ball of various colours.



DE BIERE'S BILLIARD-BALL PRODUCTION FAKE.

The fake illustration shows the construction of this novel and ingenious apparatus. The ball container is loaded via the top and the balls produced singly via the bottom. The index finger of the right hand would lift the hook and under cover of the hand the ball falls into the palm and concealed until required. De Biere would perform a series of sleights with each ball and since the balls were of different colours, the effect was really magical.

It will be seen in Fig. 4 that the fake is fitted in a black velvet covering which holds the load of billiard-balls, and then fastened to the front of the jacket.



THE PRODUCTION OF A FLAG FROM BARE HANDS

The performer shows both hands empty, brings them together and produces a large silk flag.

The flag is pleated as shown in Figs. 1 and 2. A wire clip with a ring attached to the top (see Fig. 4) is used to hold the flag secure. A length of flesh-coloured silk thread is knotted through the ring on the top of the clip and then tied around the waist under the performer's waistcoat. Another length of the same thread is tied around the ring into the clip and the opposite end made into a loop which goes over the performer's left thumb. The flag is now arranged as shown in Figs. 5 and 6. The thread belt and the flag

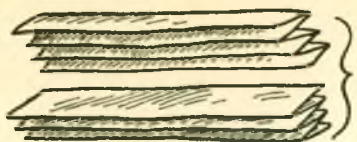


Fig. 1

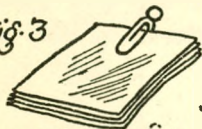
showing the first pleating of flag



Fig. 2

second & final pleating of flag

Fig. 3



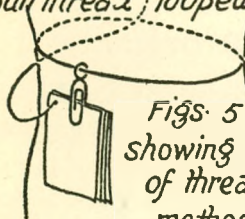
a clip securing flag

Fig. 4



clip on the thread loop

pull thread looped to button



Figs. 5 & 6 showing attachment of thread to flag & the method of fixing

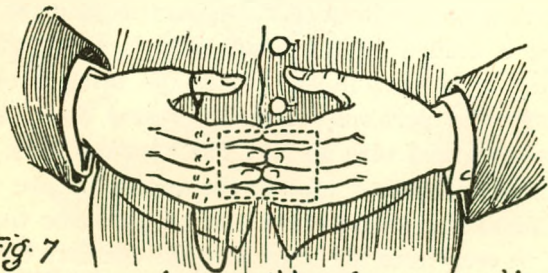
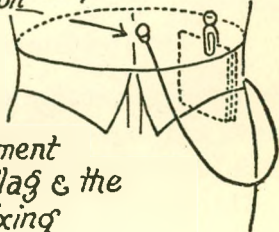


Fig. 7

Flag now in position for production

PRODUCTION OF A FLAG FROM BARE HANDS.

are under the waistcoat, the thread attachment is on the outside of the waistcoat.

All the performer has to do is to bring his hands together; this movement brings the flag to the front of his waistcoat—under the performer's fingers. The flag is secured, removed from the clip and opened. De Biere worked this effect during the Great War touring the music-halls.

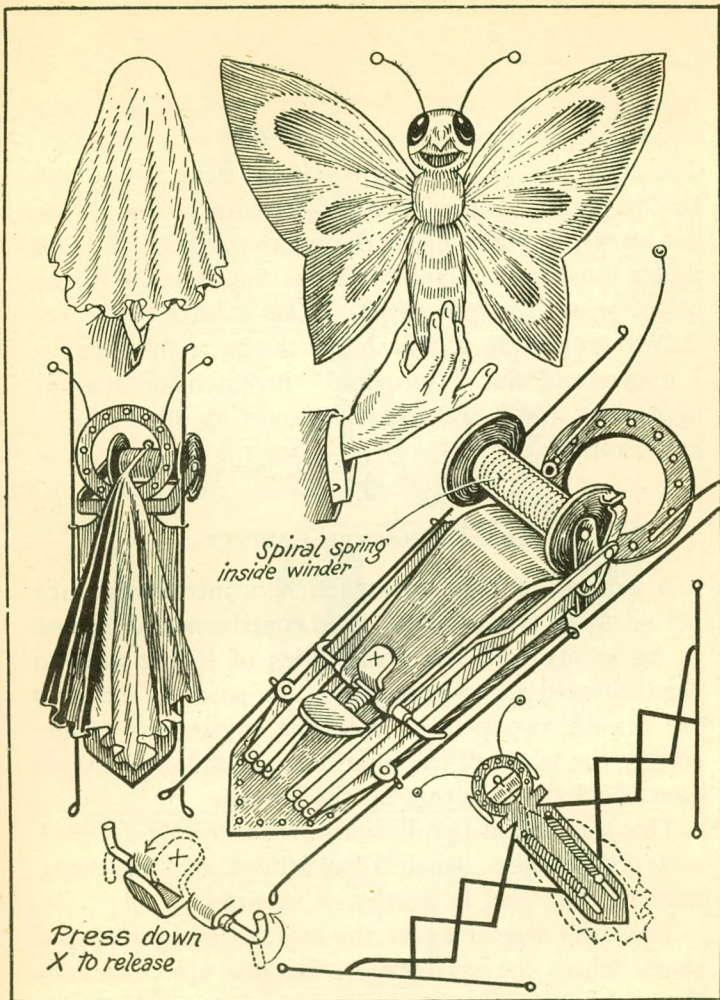


THE BIRTH OF A BUTTERFLY

The sudden change of three large silk handkerchiefs into a gaily coloured butterfly makes a very good finish to a series of handkerchief tricks.

This effect can be produced with the piece of apparatus which is here illustrated. The silk butterfly is folded up on the front of the apparatus, and the whole thing is hidden by the handkerchiefs which the performer is holding in his hand. To bring about the change the performer merely presses down on the release marked with an X. The handkerchiefs, which are fastened with a tape to the apparatus, are wound up round the spring drum and at the same time—as will be seen from the lower sketch—the lazy tongs are released and fly outwards and so produce the wings of the butterfly.

A good way of presenting the trick is to count about



THE BIRTH OF A BUTTERFLY.

nine or ten handkerchiefs in the hand. Take three away and ask the audience how many you have left. The answer is six. Take three more away and repeat the question. The answer will be three. But before the answer is really given the performer gets his hand under the handkerchiefs with one hand and with the other presses on the catch. The handkerchiefs are drawn out of sight in a flash and the butterfly appears. I understand that "Germaine" invented the original apparatus, and it was later improved by Messrs. Bate and Bretma.

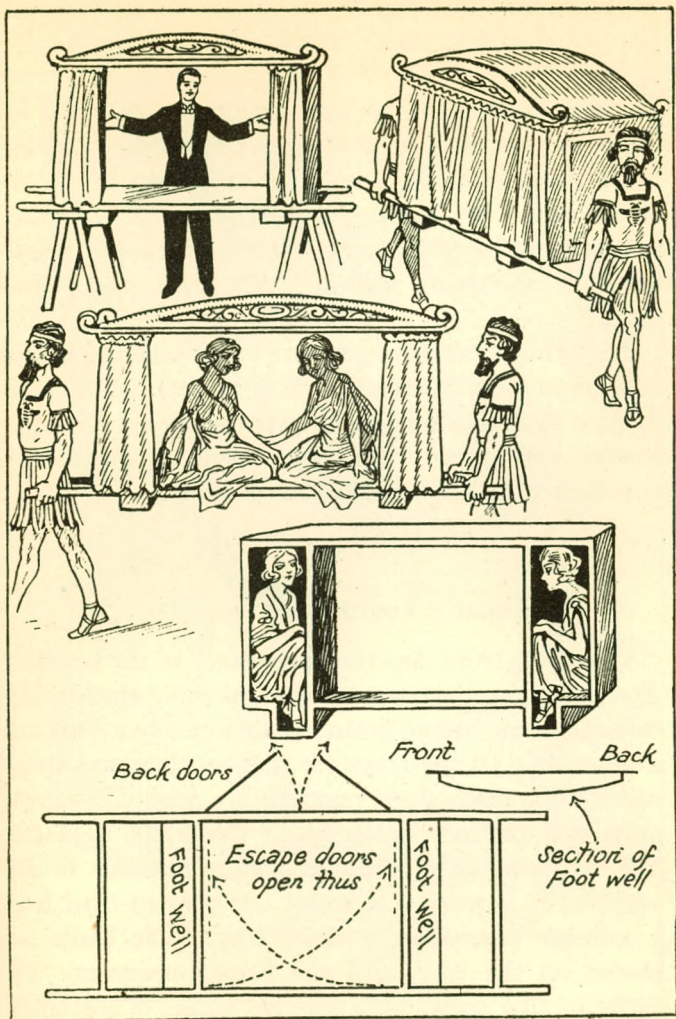


THE ENCHANTED CABINET

A cabinet of light construction is introduced supported upon two trestles. The contrivance is proved to be empty and the possibilities of hiding anyone demonstrated to be impossible. So soon, as curtains are drawn, two persons by some mysterious means occupy the whole of the interior, this while two attendants hold the structure by the handles.

This was one of the illusions performed by de Biere with great success, which is independent of stage-traps, mirrors, etc., and is worthy of attention.

The lower diagrams give the key to the mystery and shows where the mysterious assistants are concealed. Their place of concealment is masked very craftily by the curtains which are negligently folded at each side.



THE ENCHANTED CABINET.

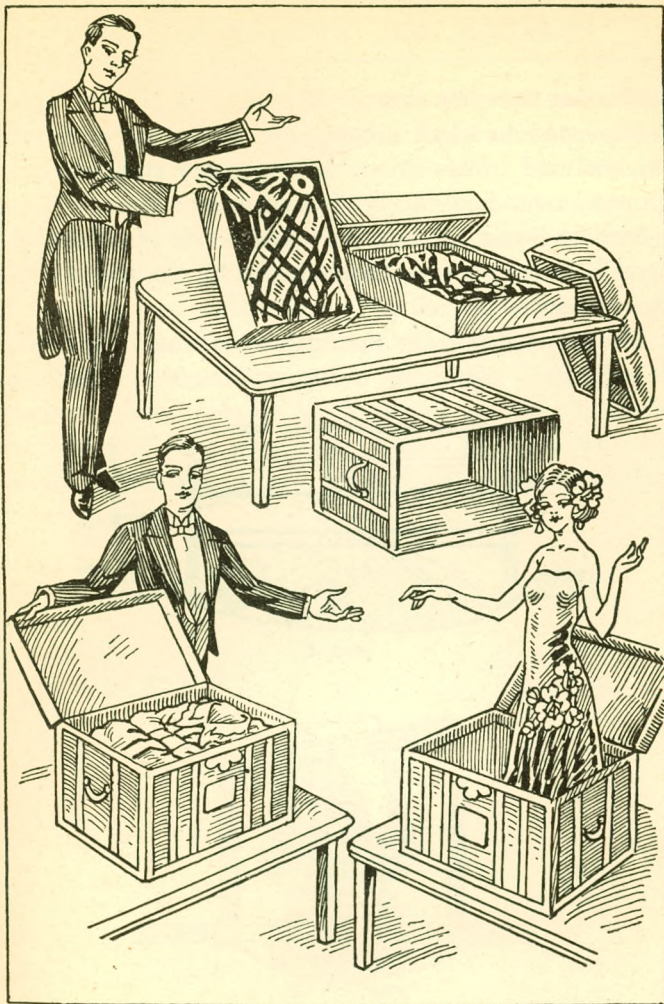
The feet of assistants go into receptacles provided for them, by hollows formed of cross beams placed underneath apparently for strength. It should be understood that the explanatory diagram showing the arrangement is greatly exaggerated for the sake of clearness, the plan more accurately conveying the correct idea.

The cabinet can be shown empty by taking the back away, and diverts attention from the real hiding place. As soon as the curtains are drawn, the hidden assistants emerge and spread themselves inside to make their appearance look as magical as possible.



DE BIÈRE'S COSTUME TRUNK ILLUSION

This dress-trunk has the appearance of the ordinary American travelling wardrobe trunk save that in this case the frame has no bottom, being merely a shell and a loose lid. Of the trays for dresses, there are three, which after the body is removed are openly displayed on a thin platform upon which the trunk is placed. The costumes are exhibited and a member of the audience is requested to select one printed card from a number placed on a small tray. The cards are placed on the tray with the blanks upwards. The cards are first shown with different names of costumes; these cards are palmed and substituted for others



DE BIERE'S COSTUME TRUNK ILLUSION.

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

containing the same name. A member of the audience is requested to select a card and call out the name of the costume. This done, the trays are stacked, box dropped over and the lid placed on the lot.

Almost immediately a lady jumps out of the trunk dressed in the very costume chosen by the member of the audience.

The secret lies in the platform upon which the trunk is exhibited. This has a top surface very much in

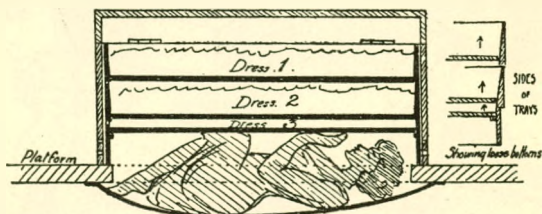


FIG. 1.



FIG 2.

DE BIÈRE'S TRUNK.

DE BIÈRE'S SECTION

excess of the size of the trunk, and although very thin it sags in the centre as shown in Figs. 1 and 2. Two of the trays are removable, but the third (the bottom one) is permanently fixed in position about centre of the platform and, hidden by the costumes carelessly laid in it, the lady is concealed, part of her bulk being in the tray and part concealed by the sag in the bottom of stand. The diagrams should render this quite clear without further description. Needless to say the choice of the costume being forced by the de Biere method is a very good one. Other methods may be used. The changing bay, for instance, is also excellent.

CHAPTER VIII
MISCELLANEOUS MAGIC

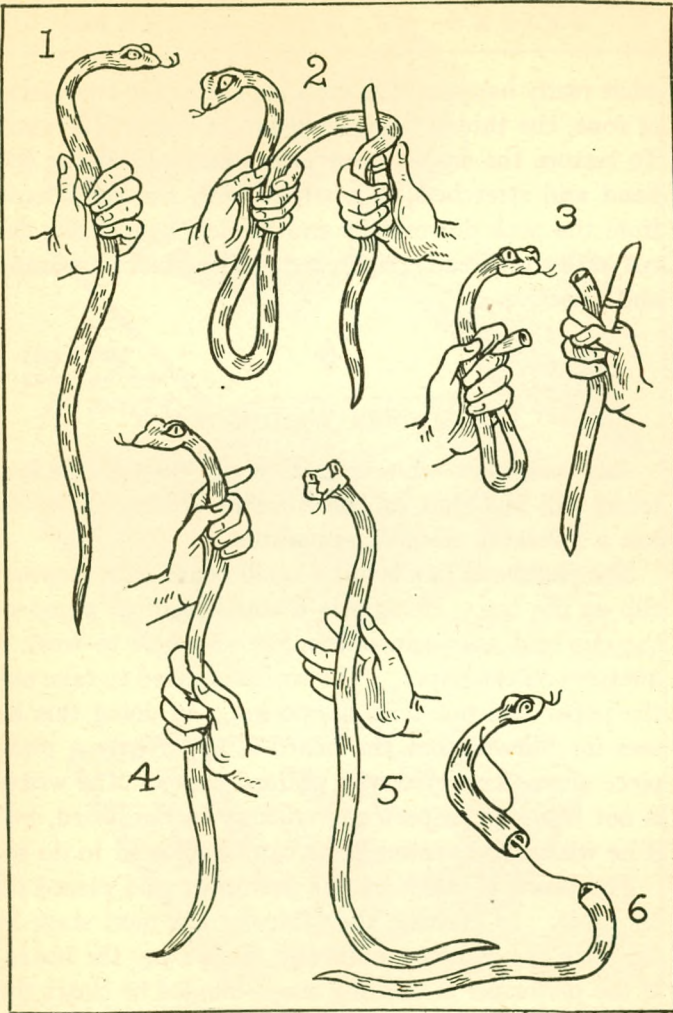
MAGICAL SURGERY

THE magician comes forward with a snake about 4 feet long, holding it in his left hand, and in his right hand a long pocket knife.

"I'm going to show you some magical surgery, and can assure the ladies it is perfectly painless—to me," says the performer. The snake is cut, right through its middle. A stroke of the hand and the "fellow" is fully restored.

Figs. 1 to 5 show the effect and restoration. The secret is shown in Fig. 6. The snake is made out of soft rope with a property head fitted to one end of the rope, and the bottom end is tapered. The rope is in two pieces, sewn to the lower half is a length of black fine thread which runs up into the top half ending near the head. A straight pull of the rope joins both pieces, giving the appearance of a perfect snake.

The knife used must have a smooth edge—one that cannot cut. The performer holds the snake as in Fig. 3. The knife apparently cuts through the rope ;



MAGICAL SURGERY.
I23

what really happens, the knife separates the two pieces of rope, the thread being invisible at a short distance. To restore the snake, both pieces are held in the left hand and stretched by a stroke with the right hand from the neck downwards and the left hand holds the cut until the thread is tightened. The effect is uncanny and effective.

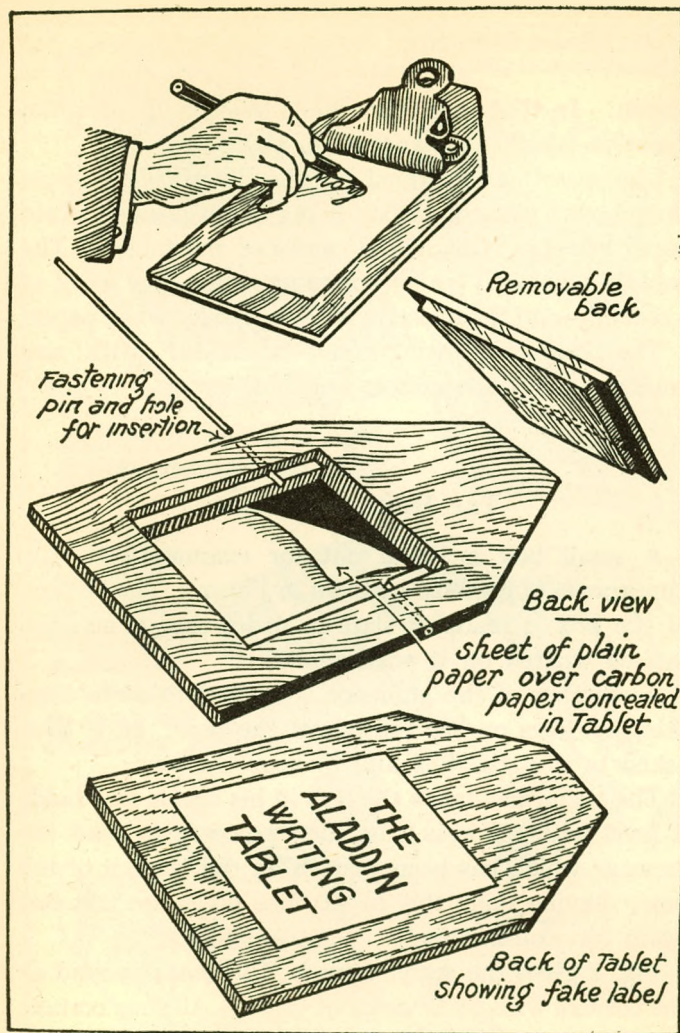


THE ALADDIN WRITING-TABLET

Any magician who specializes in thought-reading tricks will find that in The Aladdin Writing-tablet he has a splendid piece of apparatus.

The performer hands out a small board with a spring clip at the top. He inserts a small piece of paper in the clip and asks someone in the audience to write a question on the paper. The writer is asked to take out the paper and put it in his pocket ; in doing this he sees for himself that the board is apparently a plain piece of wood covered with grained paper. The writer is not likely to suspect any trickery in the board, but if he wishes to examine it he can be allowed to do so.

The board is taken by the performer and placed on his table. In clearing the table for the next stage in the trick the assistant naturally takes away the board. If the performer is working single-handed he clears the table himself and disappears for a moment behind his



THE ALADDIN WRITING-TABLET.

screen. In that short time he is able to discover the question which was written on the paper.

The secret is explained by the illustrations which show how a piece of carbon paper and a piece of white paper are concealed in the centre of the tablet. The back is taken out by withdrawing a pin—the work of a second—and the question is then visible on the paper.

The Aladdin Writing-tablet is “safe” with any audience, for the secret is well hidden.



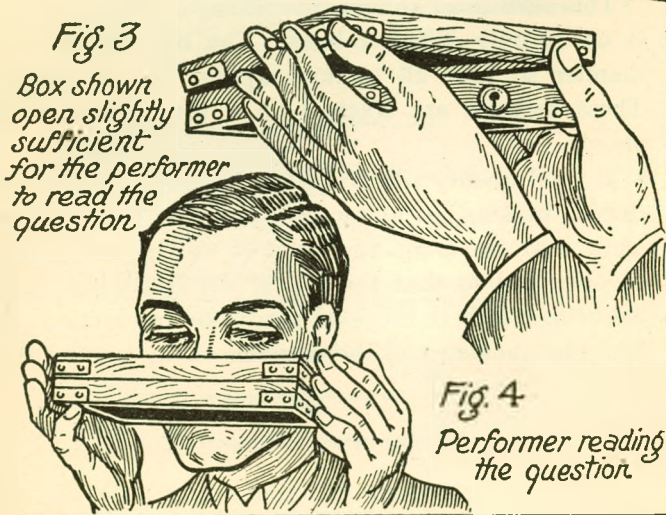
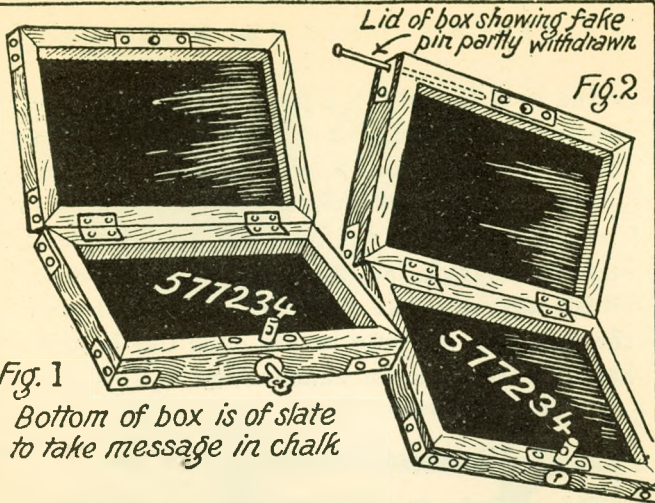
THE HIDDEN MESSAGE

A small box is given out for examination; the appearance of the box is shown in Fig. 1. The bottom of the box is made of slate in order that a message can be written on it with chalk.

A member of the audience is invited to write anything he likes on the bottom of the box; he is then asked to lock the box and to keep the key.

The performer takes the box in his hands and holds it level with his eyes; he then proceeds to read the message which has been written on the bottom of the box; having done this he at once gives the box out again for examination.

Fig. 2 gives the secret away. The box is bound at the corners with little strips of brass. All four corners are alike in appearance, but in one of them the head



TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

of the brad is really the head of a long pin, and by merely withdrawing this pin the performer can raise the lid of the box and so get a glimpse of the message within. Fig. 3 shows the lid of the box slightly raised. The performer does not read out the message at this stage in the trick, but memorizes it. He then lets the lid fall back into place, pushes in the pin, and announces the message. Directly he has done this he is able to hand the box out for examination.



DE COURCY'S PRODUCTION BOX

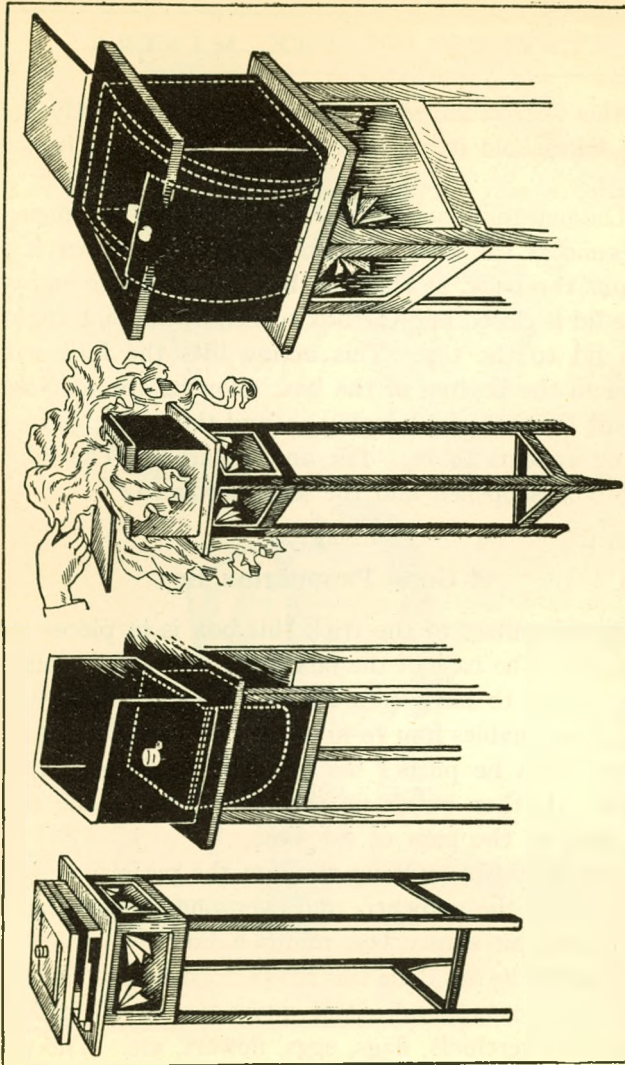
This outfit is of an attractive design, and the method is on entirely different lines. The box is built in a manner so that all sections appear to be separate. These sections are stacked on a three-sided folding stand.

If good quality silk is used, a large load can be produced, making an attractive display. The diagrams show that the front and sides of the box are hinged to open out so that the top of the box when pulled up brings with it the load ready for production, and also the stacking and the working of the loading fake.



ANOTHER ORIGINAL PRODUCTION BOX

This box has been invented chiefly for the production of solid articles. The measurements are shown



DE COURCY'S PRODUCTION BOX.

in this apparatus, since the size works perfectly and the fakes hold items large enough to be seen from a stage.

The material covering the table hanging is sufficient to conceal the fake. When the box is shown it is minus the back, so that the box is seen to be empty. The lid is closed and the box turned upwards, bringing the lid to the top. This action lifts the fake with load to the bottom of the box, allowing the magician to lift the material hanging around the table. Everything appears to be "fair and square". The lid of the box is opened and the load produced.

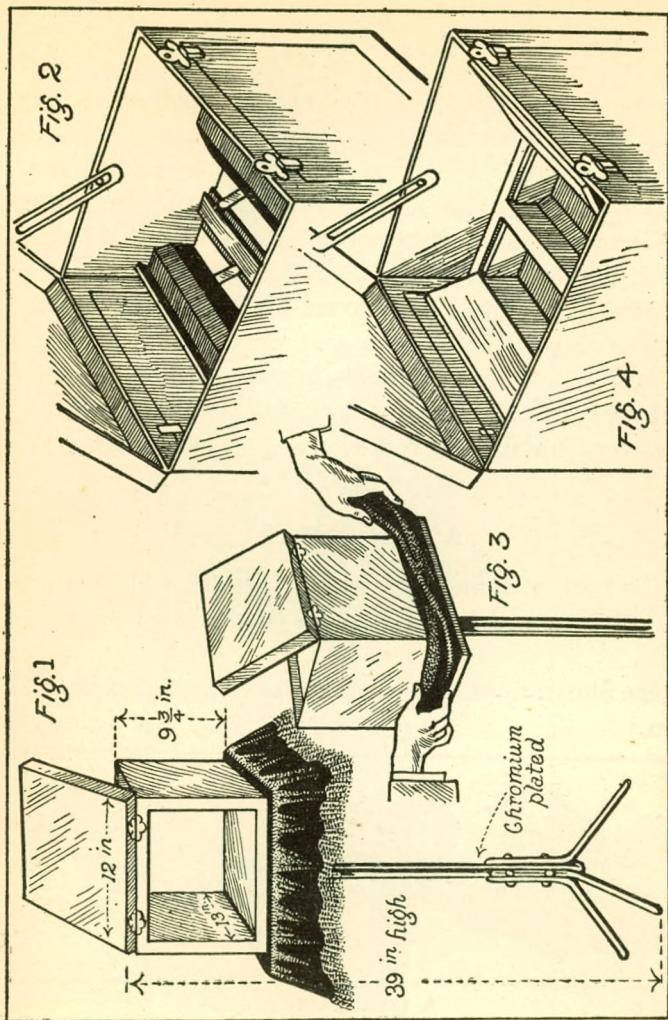


A GOOD PRODUCTION BOX

At the outset of the trick this box is in pieces (see Fig. 1). The base of the box has a hole in it; suiting the action to his words the performer explains that this hole enables him to hold the box easily in his left hand when he pushes his middle finger through the hole. He then builds up the box by fixing the sides in slots in the base of the box.

When he has built up the box the performer turns it towards the audience, and everyone can see that it is merely an empty box minus a lid.

Directly he has done this the performer dips his hand into the box and takes out quantities of silk ribbons and handkerchiefs, flags, eggs, flowers, etc. The pro-



ANOTHER ORIGINAL PRODUCTION BOX.

duction is so large that it cannot be replaced in the box, and it is shown as in Fig. 2.

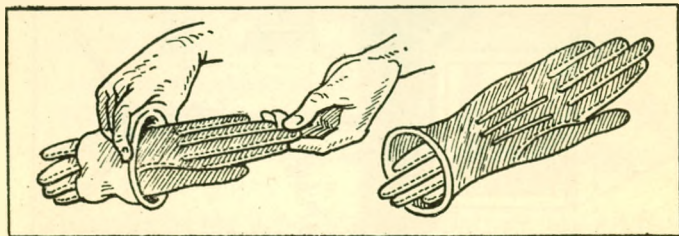
All four sides of the box are hollow and are fitted with hinged flaps kept in place with small turn-buttons. Fig. 3 shows the working of one of the flaps. Under cover of the articles produced the performer fastens up this flap, turns the box on his hand, and opens another flap. The flowers and eggs are, of course, collapsible. A very fine production can be worked with this trick at close quarters, and the box is, therefore, very suitable for a drawing-room performance.



A QUICK ONE!

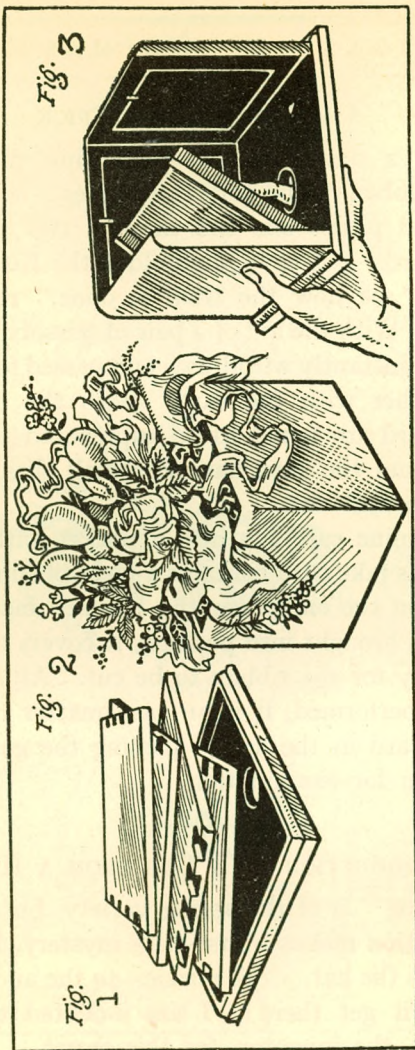
The trick of changing a white glove for a black one, could be used to follow a colour change with billiard-balls.

The illustrations fully explain the effect and explanation.



A QUICK ONE!





A GOOD PRODUCTION BOX.

A "KNAVE" OF A TRICK

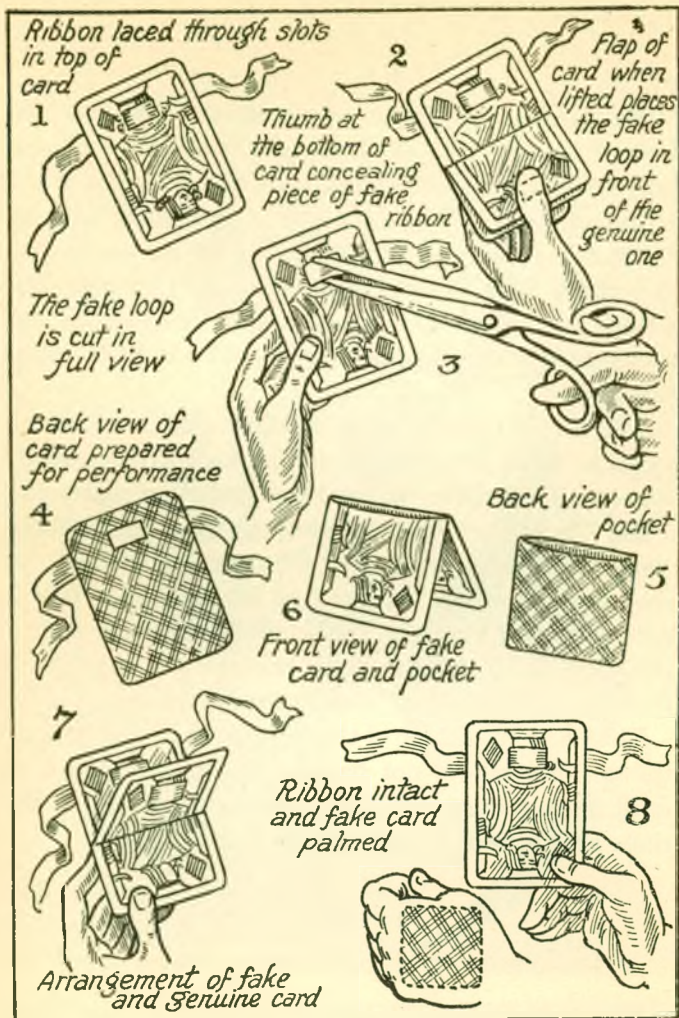
This is a novel way of presenting the cut and restored ribbon. The performer takes a length of silk ribbon and passes one end through two slots in the playing card. "I have blindfolded the Knave so that he cannot see how the trick is done," remarks the conjurer. With the aid of a pair of scissors, the ribbon is cut, and instantly withdrawn and passed for examination together with the card. Both the ribbon and playing card are found to be unprepared—the ribbon is intact and the card has two small slits. There is nothing to find out.

The genuine card fits into a pocket with a hinged card. This fake card contains a piece of similar ribbon gummed on the ends over the Knave's face, so when the card is brought into position, it covers the genuine card, ready for the ribbon to be cut. After the trick has been performed, it is an easy matter to palm off the fake card in the act of passing the genuine card and ribbon for examination.



PRODUCTION OF A DOG FROM A HAT

The "dog" is of the spring variety, but even then its production makes a first-class mystery, for it completely fills the hat. The puzzle—to the audience—is: How did it get there? I am indebted to Howard de Courcy, the inventor, for this secret.



A "KNAVE" OF A TRICK.

The illustrations answer the question. Fig. 1 shows how the load is suspended from the performer's shoulder and hangs in the most convenient place, under his coat, at the waist-line. Fig. 2 shows how by slightly bending his body and turning at the same time the performer causes the load to swing into the hat. Directly the load is in the hat it is automatically released by the elastic cord within the hook which held it in place under the coat.

The bag is really a piece of black cloth with metal rings at three corners and a tape loop at the fourth corner. To prepare the load the performer places the "dog" in the centre of the cloth, gathers up the three rings and places them over the tape loop, which he then fastens to the "hanger" on his shoulder. It will be understood that the elastic cords shown in Fig. 5 pull the corners of the cloth through the tape loop, thereby releasing the "dog".

The great advantage of this method of loading is that the performer does not have to use his hands at all until he is going to produce what is in the hat; the rings are slipped off the tape loop in a second.



THE PRODUCTION OF LIGHTED CIGARETTES

One of the most effective of all the modern tricks is the production of a number of lighted cigarettes.



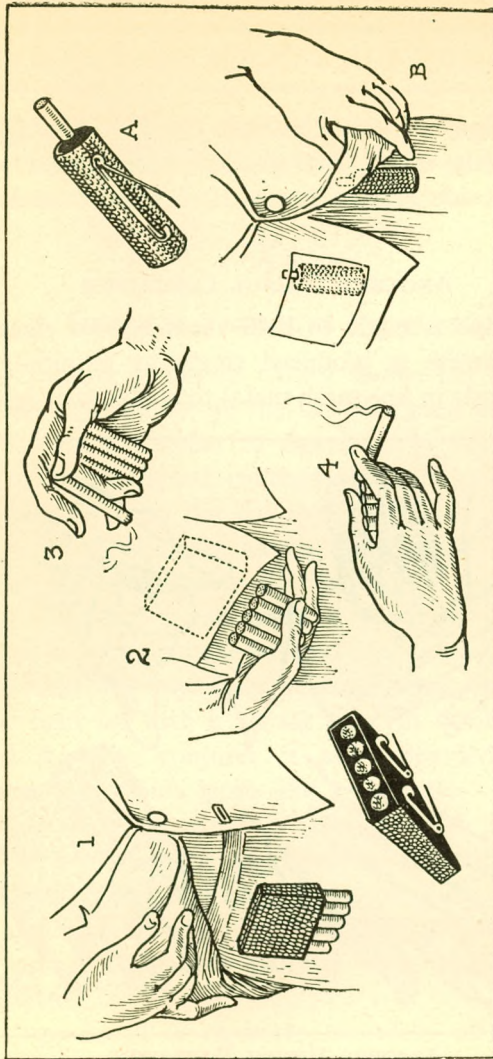
PRODUCTION OF A DOG FROM A HAT.

The accompanying illustrations show a very good method of performing the trick.

Five lighted cigarettes are placed in a perforated metal fake which is pinned on to the performer's trousers; the fake is covered by the waistcoat, and there is just sufficient "spring" in the fake to hold the cigarettes securely. The lighted ends of the cigarettes are at the top.

The performer points upwards into the air with his left forefinger, as though he could see something there. The eyes of the audience are turned in the same direction. The performer turns slightly to the right, and with one movement, explained in Fig. 2, gets all the cigarettes from the fake into his right hand. Fig. 3 shows how they are held there and how each is produced singly; of course, by this time, the performer has turned round to the left, so that the back of the right hand faces the audience. The production is easily managed by putting the middle finger under a cigarette, when it can be shown as in Fig. 4. In this sketch the tops of the other cigarettes are shown by way of explanation, but of course in practice the hand is turned a little more towards the performer, so that the audience do not see the tops of the cigarettes.

When the performer has produced the fifth cigarette he takes a few puffs and then, turning slightly to the left, puts the cigarette on an ash-tray. He then swings round quickly to the right and produces one more



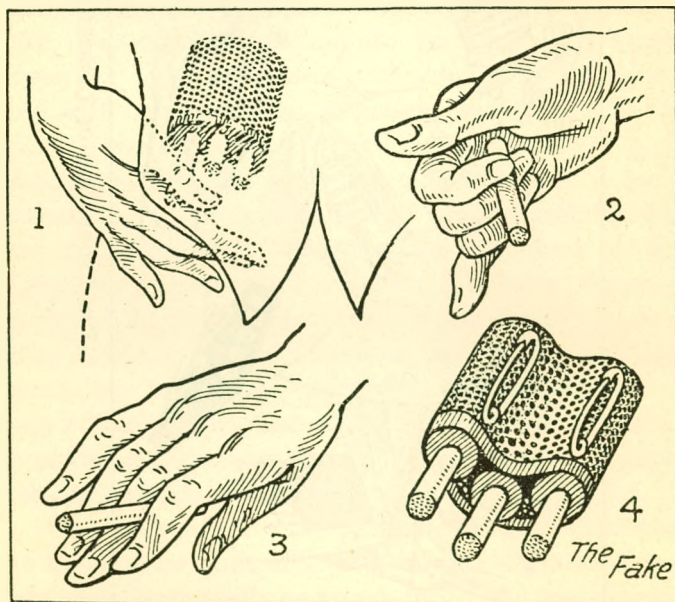
THE PRODUCTION OF LIGHTED CIGARETTES.

lighted cigarette with his left hand. This cigarette was secretly taken from a small fake pinned on the left-hand side of the trousers (see Figs. A and B).



ANOTHER USEFUL CONTAINER

This fake is made to hold three lighted cigarettes, each cigarette is produced singly as required. The case is made in fine mesh metal to enable the cigarettes



ANOTHER USEFUL CONTAINER.

to keep burning until required. A good puff of each cigarette as produced will produce a glow and continue to burn until the end. Cigarettes should be dry before using.

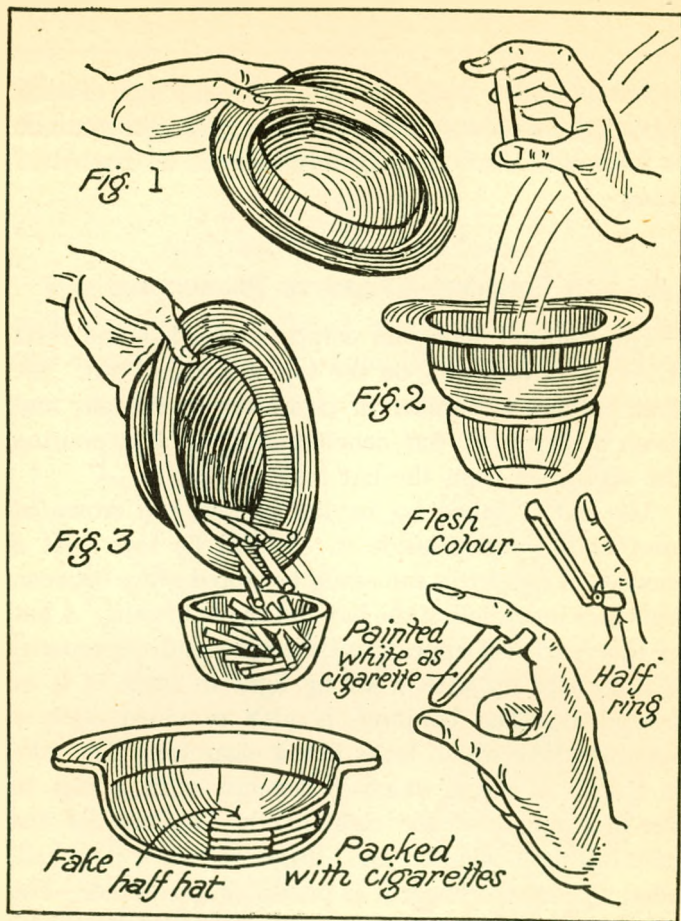


A COMPLETE CIGARETTE PRODUCTION

The conjurer shows an empty bowler-hat and rests it, crown downwards, on the top of a glass bowl. He then catches a number of cigarettes in the air, and drops them into the hat, concluding the trick by pouring the cigarettes from the hat into the bowl.

The hat is faked by having half of the crown of another hat fitted inside it. It will be seen that a number of cigarettes can easily be stored away between the extra inner half of the hat and the hat itself. A hat of this kind will appear to be empty and unprepared if it is held up with a strong light in front of it or behind it. The conjurer is also provided with a cigarette fake which looks like a cigarette. The fake is a strip of metal which is fastened with a clip to the first finger of the right hand. One side of the metal is flesh-coloured and, therefore, when it is held close against the finger it is practically invisible. The other side of the fake is painted white and resembles a cigarette.

To "produce" a cigarette, therefore, all that the conjurer has to do is to allow the fake to swing down-



A COMPLETE CIGARETTE PRODUCTION.

wards on the hinge by which it is attached to the clip on his finger, and catch the end with his thumb. The hand then, apparently, places the cigarette in the hat, but, of course, the fake is merely pressed back into position, ready for the production of the next cigarette. The process is repeated until some twenty cigarettes have been produced. The cigarettes are poured into the glass bowl from the hat. The diagrams show the effect and faked hat and cigarette fake. I am indebted to "Delveen" for this secret.



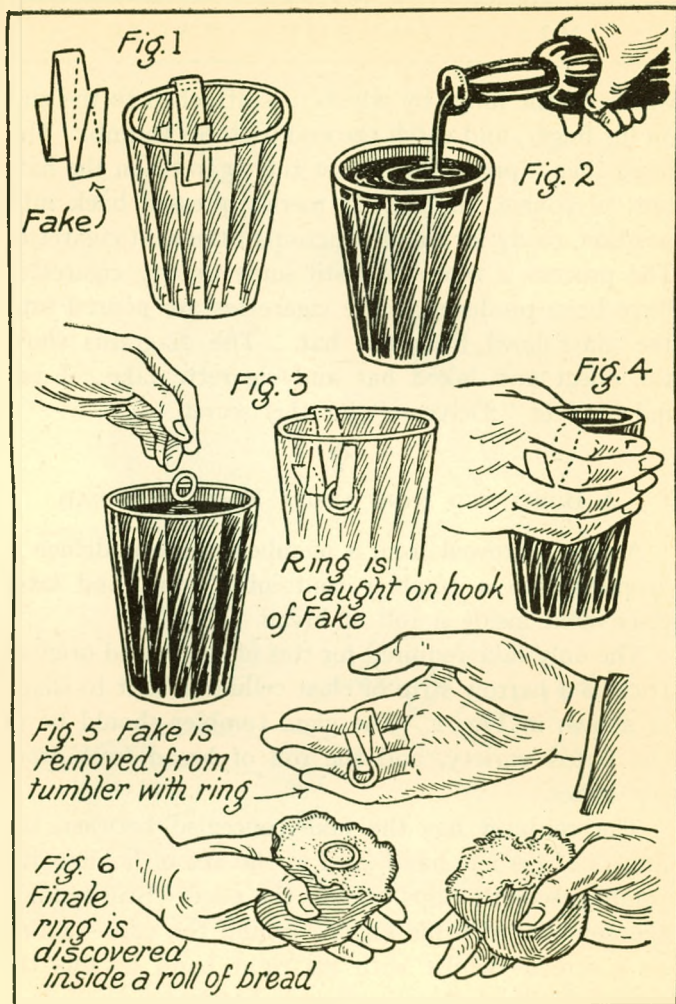
A BORROWED RING AND A ROLL OF BREAD

A ring borrowed from a member of the audience is dropped into a tumbler containing wine, and later discovered inside a roll of bread.

The only fake required for this effective and original trick is a narrow strip of clear celluloid bent to shape as shown in Fig. 1. The glass tumbler should be of the fluted variety, and the roll of bread fresh from the baker.

The conjurer has the fake concealed between the fingers of his left hand, and in the act of holding the tumbler secretly slips it over the edge. Still holding the tumbler with his fingers around the edge—acting as a screen—whilst with his right hand he fills the tumbler with dark wine from a bottle.

A borrowed ring is dropped into the tumbler of



A BORROWED RING AND A ROLL OF BREAD.

liquid, so the audience imagine ; in reality, the ring is caught on the hook, where it remains until required. Fig. 4 shows the get-away of the fake containing the ring. The performer slips the ring off the fake in the action of picking up a roll of bread from a tray, leaving the fake behind. The roll being fresh it is an easy matter to push the ring through the crust into the centre. The roll is broken open, revealing the borrowed ring.

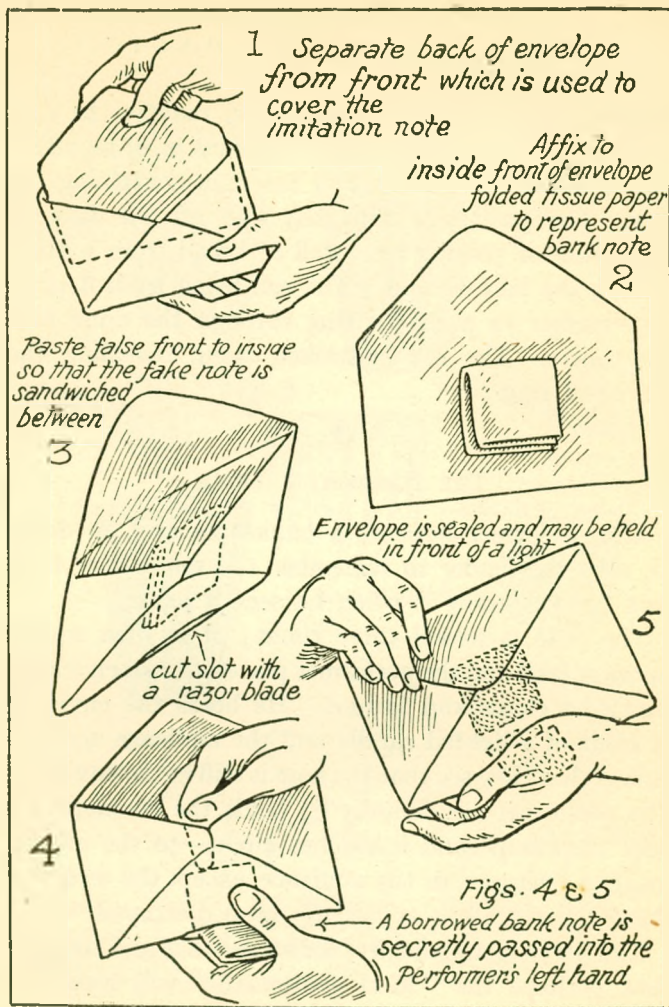


THE BANK-NOTE TRICK

The performer borrows a bank-note and, in doing so, asks the lender to remember the number of it so that he will know it when he sees it again.

The note is folded three times ; it is then square (more or less) and the performer places it in an envelope, which he closes and fastens. He holds the envelope in front of a lighted candle and the audience are convinced that they see that the note is still in the envelope. The performer accidentally (?) holds the envelope too near the candle and it catches alight—to the amusement of everyone in the audience, except the owner of the note, which has apparently been destroyed.

The performer apologizes for his mistake and suggests that perhaps the "kind gentleman" will lend him another note, so that he can do the trick properly. The "kind gentleman" naturally declines, whereupon



THE BANK-NOTE TRICK.

MISCELLANEOUS MAGIC

the performer admits that there is really no cause for alarm because the note, not liking the heat of the flames, passed invisibly into a paper bag standing on the table. The performer picks up the bag, takes out a small roll, breaks it open and shows the note in the centre. The owner identifies it as his note.

The envelope is specially prepared for the trick. A small piece of tissue-paper is folded up and gummed to the inside of the front of the envelope, and a slit is cut in the bottom of the envelope. Thus, when the performer puts the note into the envelope he really pushes it out through the slit and palms it in his left hand. But on closing the envelope and holding it in front of the candle the performer is able to convince the audience that the note is still in the envelope ; of course the audience really see the folded tissue-paper. As the envelope is burnt there is nothing to " get away with ". On taking the roll from the bag the performer places it over the note in his left hand. He then puts his thumbs on the top of the roll and moves his hand upwards. This breaks the bottom of the roll and the performer is able to slip the note into the roll. He immediately reverses the operation, breaking the roll at the top, and the audience see the note in the centre of the roll. The performer takes the two halves of the roll apart and the owner of the note identifies it as his property.

Some performers bring the trick to a conclusion by

“finding” the note in an egg, and others use a lemon (previously prepared by having a slit cut through the peel), but broken eggs and cut lemons are messy things. I much prefer to use a penny roll.

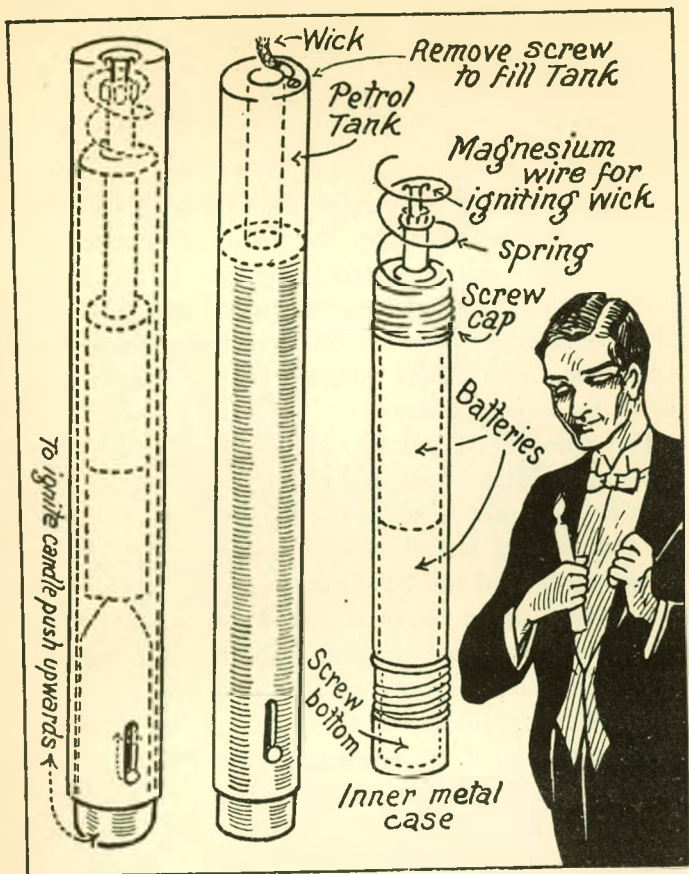


IMPROVED LIGHTED CANDLE FROM THE POCKET

The old method of producing a lighted candle from the inside pocket is still performed by many magicians with success. The candle is the usual kind made of tallow with the wick removed. In the place of the wick a wax vesta match is substituted, and this match is struck into the top of the candle with about half an inch containing the head protruding. Sewn into the inside pocket near the top is a strip of sandpaper. The magician, when producing the candle from his pocket, rubs the head of the match on the strip of sandpaper; this action will ignite the match head, then the candle is produced lighted.

The improvement is entirely mechanical. The inner tube contains the works. In the production of the candle, the magician pushes up the outer case and the candle immediately lights up. The diagrams are explanatory. The entire working parts show in detail how the apparatus is constructed. The outer case is enamelled tallow colour, and the whole of the apparatus is made of metal.





IMPROVED LIGHTED CANDLE FROM THE POCKET.

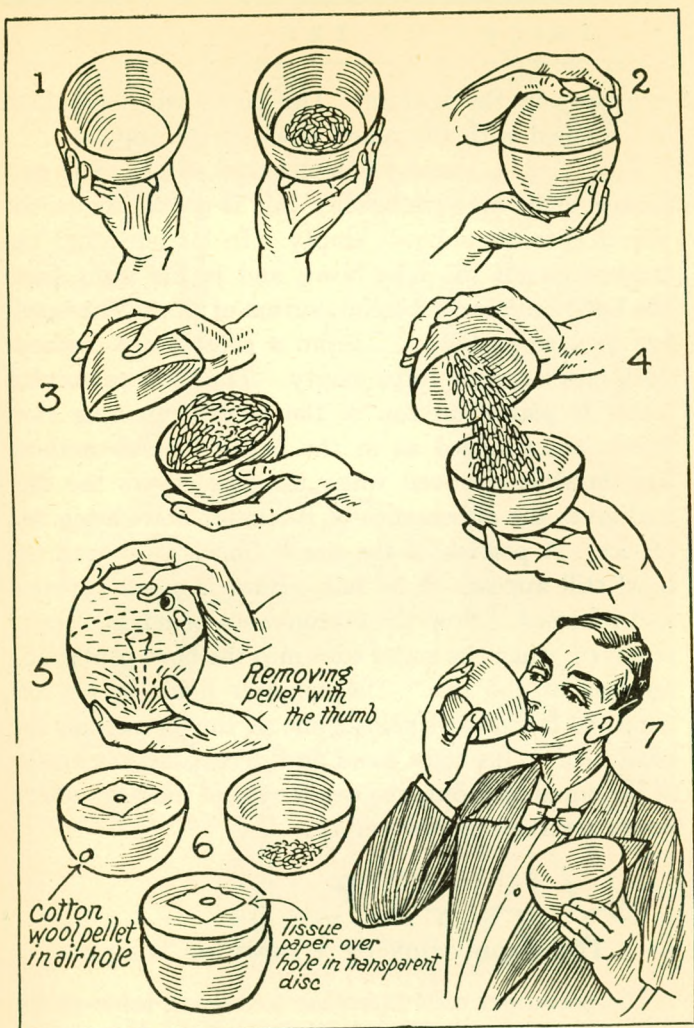
THE "REAL" CHINESE RICE-BOWLS

I am now able to pass on to my readers the correct Chinese method of performing the Chinese Rice-bowls. The version performed by the majority of magicians is incomplete, and is, in fact, only part of the secret.

I am grateful to that great conjurer, Long Tack Sam, who has passed on to me this secret for publication, which has been closely guarded by the Chinese conjurers for over a century.

The effect is as follows: The conjurer introduces two empty China bowls, and placing one over the other for a few seconds, removes the top bowl, showing that the lower bowl is full of rice. Some of the rice is blown away, and the bowl again covered in the same way. Bowl again removed and water is seen in the lower bowl. Water is poured from one bowl into the other, then the conjurer takes a long drink and the other bowl is still shown to be full of the liquid.

The diagrams 1 to 4 illustrate the effect. Fig. 6 shows one bowl contains a small hole; this is plugged with a pellet of cotton wool; fixed to the top of this bowl is a clear mica disc with a small hole punched out of the centre; a piece of tissue-paper covers this hole. This is the bowl containing water. The mica disc fits over this bowl firmly by means of suction, and is not removed during the trick. In the other bowl shown in the same diagram, about one third



THE " REAL " CHINESE RICE-BOWLS.

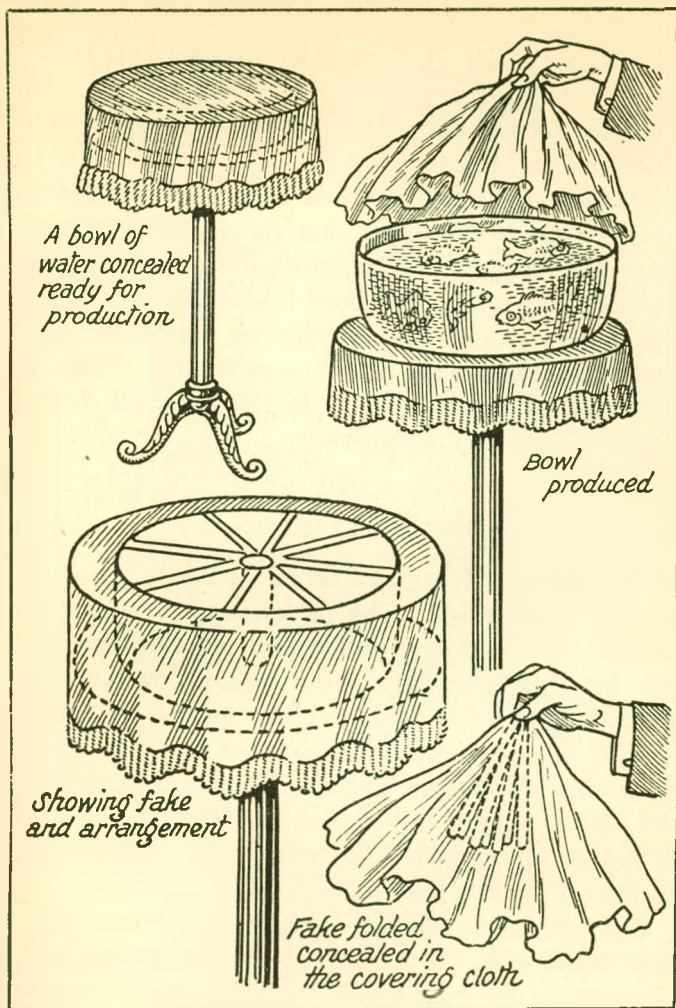
rice rests in the bottom. The bowls when prepared are stacked with the faked bowl on the top.

Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 illustrate the effect. The performer holds up both bowls; this is a bold move, the object is to show bowls empty. In his left hand the conjurer holds the fake bowl, and in his right hand the bowl containing a small portion of rice. The bowls are held as in Fig. 1. From a short stage distance both bowls appear to be empty. The bowl containing water is placed on top of the bowl containing rice. Bowls are reversed as in the better known method. Top bowl is removed when the rice covers the disc and gives the appearance of the lower bowl being full of rice. A portion of the rice is blown away and the bowl still appears to be full. Bowl is again covered, and reversed. Now the cotton wool pellet is secretly removed, when the water runs into the bowl containing remains of the rice. The conjurer holds in his left hand the faked bowl, spills some of the water from the bowl held in his right hand and drinks the remainder of the liquid including the swallowing of the rice. Both bowls are then shown empty.



THE PRODUCTION OF A BOWL OF WATER

The performer calls attention to a small table at the side of the stage. He throws a cloth over the table



THE PRODUCTION OF A BOWL OF WATER.

for a second and on removing it shows a large bowl of water on the table.

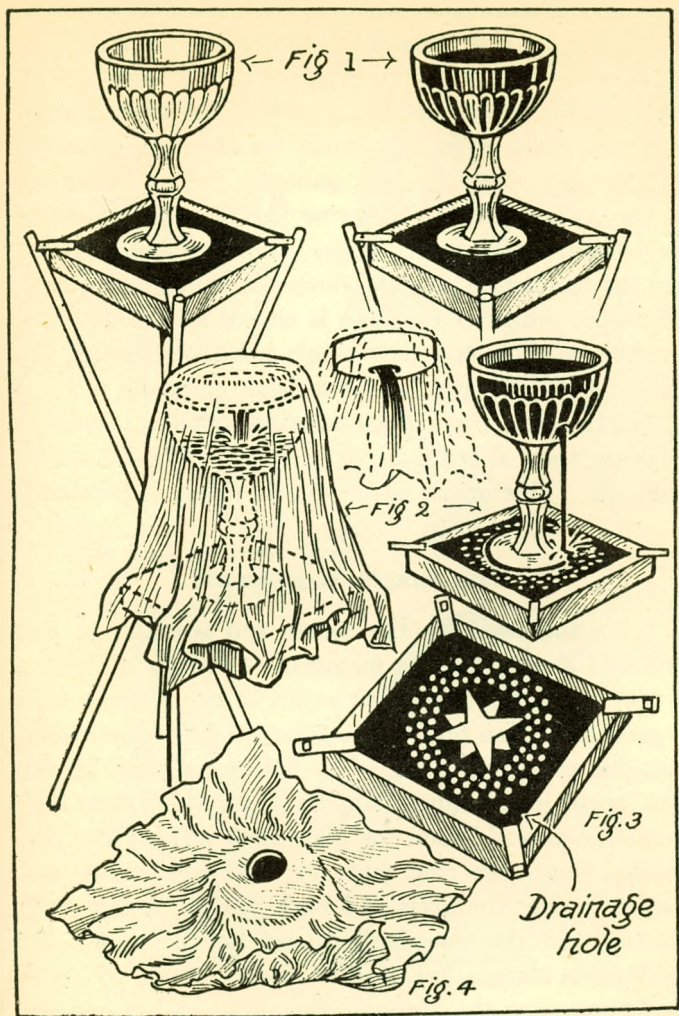
Many complicated methods have been devised for bringing about this effect, but the simple one shown in the illustrations has this great advantage—it cannot possibly go wrong. The bowl is already on the table, but is covered with silk stretched on a wire fake made on the principle of the ribs of an umbrella. When the performer pulls off the cloth he takes the silk with it and the wire fake collapses.



FROM GOBLET TO GOBLET

Two glass goblets stand on two small tables in the centre of the stage. The performer fills one of the goblets with wine and covers both goblets with dark silk handkerchiefs. He patters for a few moments, reminding the audience that the goblet on his left is filled with wine and that the other is empty. Then he quietly removes the handkerchiefs and the audience see that a remarkable change has taken place. The goblet which contained the wine is now empty; the empty goblet has been filled.

The goblet into which the wine is poured has a small hole drilled in it. This hole is closed, at the beginning of the trick, with a piece of wax. In the act of covering the goblet with a handkerchief the performer secretly removes the wax, and the wine escapes on to the top



FROM GOBLET TO GOBLET.

of the table, which, as Fig. 3 shows, has a number of drainage holes in it. So much for the disappearance of the wine from the first goblet.

The appearance of the wine in the other goblet is brought about by a metal fake hidden in, and attached to, the handkerchief with which the goblet is covered. The appearance of the fake is shown in Fig. 4. The performer holds this flat on his hand and brings the goblet over it. Fig. 2 shows what happens.

Tricks with liquids are always popular, possibly because they appear, to an ordinary audience, to be difficult. This one is easy, but the effect is excellent.

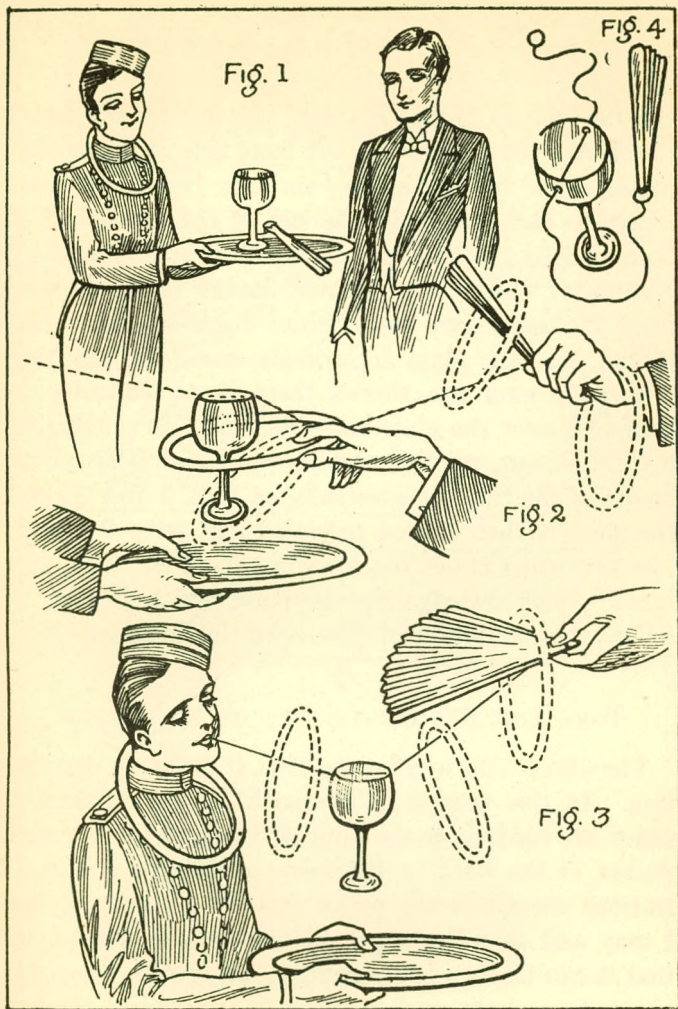


THE RISING WINE-GLASS

I am indebted for the secret and working of this trick to a very famous magician—Cardini.

The performer's assistant enters carrying a tray with a glass and a fan on it; the assistant has a metal ring hanging round his neck. The performer picks up the fan, opens it and slowly fans the glass which then rises from the tray. When the glass is in mid-air the performer takes the ring from his assistant's neck and passes it over the glass and back again. A few more passes, and the glass sinks down to the tray; the performer returns the ring to his assistant.

Unknown to the audience the assistant has one end of a long piece of thread in his mouth. When the



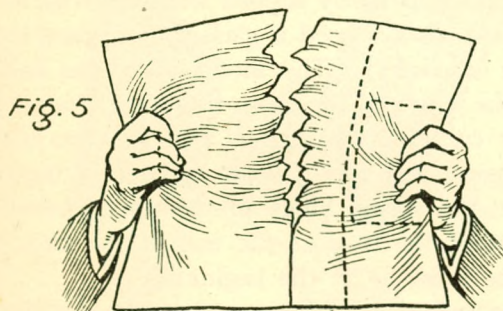
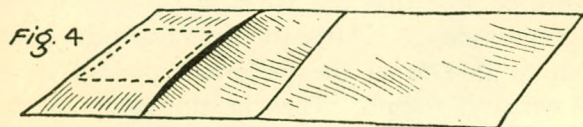
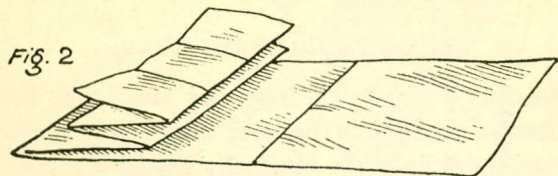
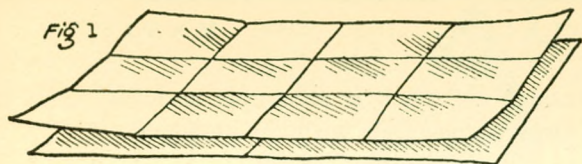
THE RISING WINE-GLASS.

assistant enters he has his right side to the audience ; the thread, which is in the left-hand side of his mouth, passes down his left sleeve, through two small holes (opposite each other) in the rim of the glass, and is then tied to the ring on the fan (see Figs. 1 and 4). Naturally, when the performer, having taken the ring from his assistant's neck, steps back he raises the thread, and the glass accordingly rises. As the ring is already over the thread there is no difficulty in passing it over the glass, over the fan, and putting it, for a moment, on the performer's arm. The movements of the ring are reversed (see Figs. 2 and 3), and the glass is then caused to sink back on to the tray. The performer closes the fan, puts it on the tray, and turns to acknowledge the applause which is sure to follow the exhibition of this beautiful little mystery.



TORN AND RESTORED SHEET OF NEWSPAPER

The effect is so well known that it needs no description. In this version of the trick the torn pieces of paper are hidden, at the close of the trick, in a paper pocket at the back of the restored sheet. The illustrations show how the paper should be prepared, but I may add that the paper should be well creased, so that it can be torn fairly neatly ; otherwise, when the pieces have been tucked away in the secret pocket there is apt to be a slight " bulge " in the paper.



THE TORN AND RESTORED SHEET OF NEWSPAPER.

Although the trick is so simple and easy it is one that always goes well with an audience.



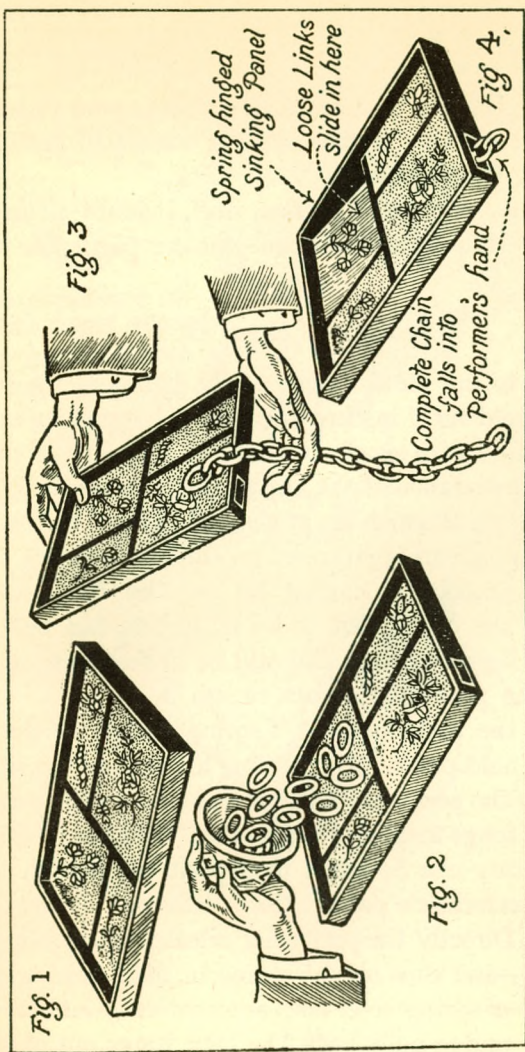
NIKOLA'S CHANGING TRAY

I purchased this trick from the late Louis Nikola, who always used it for the trick in which a number of separate metal links are magically joined together into a chain.

Figs. 2, 3 and 4 show the secret of the tray and its working. The exchange of the loose links for the chain was a beautiful piece of deception.

It will be seen that one panel of the tray is fitted with a spring hinge. After the links had been poured out on to this panel the performer pressed on the panel with his thumb. Then he tipped up the tray and the links apparently slipped from the tray into a glass (Nikola always used a glass, but a glass is not absolutely necessary). This move caused the links to slip into the tray and the chain to appear from a hole in the far corner of the tray. Fig. 4 shows clearly what happens, and Fig. 3 what apparently happens. Thanks to the spring hinge in the upper panel the appearance of the tray at the end of the trick was exactly the same as at the beginning.

It will be understood, of course, that when he tilts the tray the performer holds it with his thumb on the top panel and tilts the tray towards him. If he is not



NIKOLA'S CHANGING TRAY.

using a glass the performer should take care to let the audience see that he has nothing concealed in his left hand at the beginning of the trick.

It is a very clean change, and I doubt if anyone will ever think of a better one—for this particular trick.



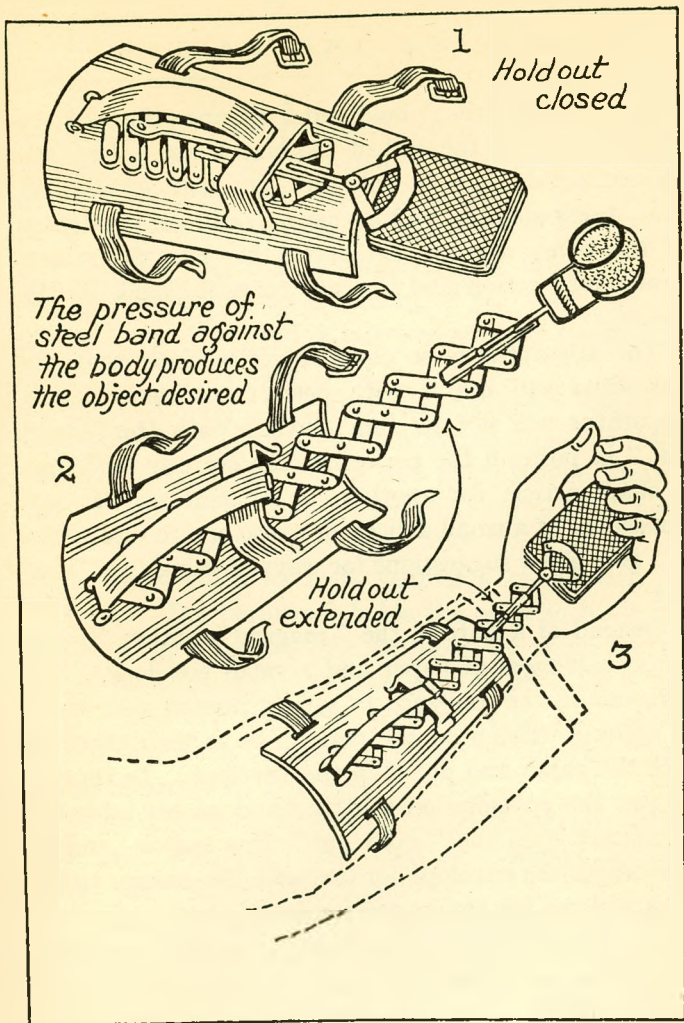
A GOOD "HOLD OUT"

This, to my mind, is one of the plums of the book. This "hold out" is silent and sure in its working and it can be used with excellent results in a variety of tricks.

The appearance of the apparatus is shown in Fig. 1. Note the cards which are at the end of the "hold out".

The apparatus is strapped on the inside of left arm; in that position it cannot be seen by the audience because the coat-sleeve hides it, and it can be there for any length of time and still be in readiness for use when the performer wants to use it.

Note the little strip of "spring" steel at the top of the "hold out". By pressing his arm on the side of his body the performer flattens this spring and so causes the lazy tongs to extend; thus the "hold out" secretly and silently can be made to deposit the hidden cards in the performer's palm; the "delivery" is shown in Fig. 3. Directly the performer releases the pressure on his arm—and thus on the spring in the "hold out"—the strip of spring steel rises automatically into its first position and so pulls back the lazy tongs out of sight.



A GOOD "HOLD OUT."

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

Fig. 2 shows the "hold out" in operation with a ball in a clip at the end of the lazy tongs. The performer merely has to hold his left arm against his coat, press slightly, and he can secretly get possession of the ball; directly he moves his arm the spring comes into action and the lazy tongs fly back up the sleeve.

The apparatus is so clean in its working that the performer can use it with perfect confidence; this apparatus will not let him down. With this "hold out" in position the performer can secretly exchange a small article for another, or he can secretly get possession of a small article, or cause one to disappear.

I give a few suggestions for ways of using the "hold out".

Instead of a slate in the "magical addition" trick, use a half-sheet of paper and a small envelope. Ask someone in the audience to satisfy himself that there is nothing written on the paper; he is then asked to fold the paper and put it in the envelope. In turning to put the envelope on a little stand on his table the performer gets the "hold out" into action, and so exchanges the envelope for one with the answer to the sum written on the paper inside it.

At the end of a series of card tricks the performer asks someone to hand him twelve cards without looking at their faces. The performer takes the cards in his right hand, passes them to the left hand and throws

a handkerchief over the hand ; he calls attention to the fact that he cannot possibly see the cards. This move enables the performer to exchange the twelve cards for twelve delivered into his hand by the " hold out ", and as he has memorized these cards he can easily proceed to " read " them.

Where will you find a more convincing method of doing the card-reading trick ?

Here is another. The performer takes a new, unopened pack of cards to a man in the audience, asks him to break it open, take out any card he pleases and put it in an envelope. With the aid of the " hold out " the performer exchanges this envelope for an empty one, which he rests against a candlestick on his table. The performer holds the pack in his hand and in turning to take the envelope up again at the end of the trick quietly exchanges the pack for a full pack. Thus the man who took the card can satisfy himself that it has vanished from the envelope and that it has returned to the pack.

I think it would be difficult to find a more convincing little card trick than that, and yet, thanks to the " hold out ", it is quite simple.

I have no doubt that these suggestions will lead readers to think of many other tricks in which this piece of apparatus can be used with good effect. James Rogers kindly supplied details of this ingenious apparatus.

THE WANDMAN IMPROVED DRAWER-BOX

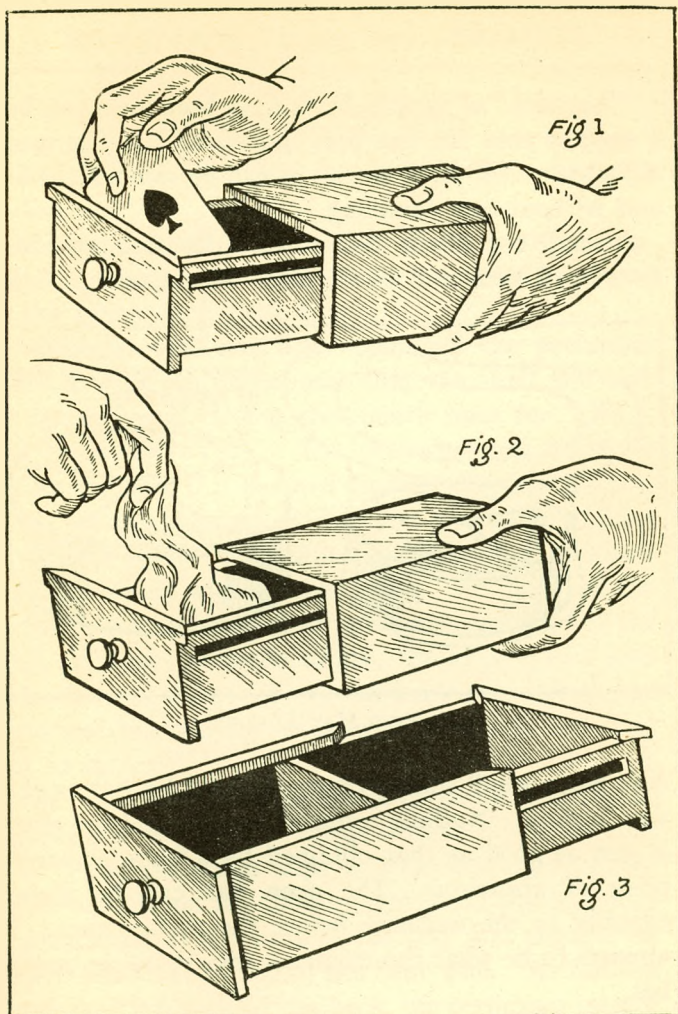
The youngest of magicians has probably heard of that good old piece of apparatus—a drawer-box. Some of our most famous magicians use a drawer-box for the appearance or disappearance of an article, though they are well aware that a drawer-box has two disadvantages ; its secret is well known, and a drawer-box is one of those pieces of apparatus which a member of the audience cannot be allowed to examine.

This drawer-box can be examined at the close of a trick, because the secret inner compartment is held securely in the outer by means of springs. Fig. 1. shows the performer dropping a card into the box ; the inner compartment is now within the box itself and a handkerchief is inside it. The performer closes the box and hands it to a member of the audience who, on opening it, discovers the handkerchief. The inner compartment is held perfectly securely in the drawer, and even a man who knows the secret of the old drawer-box will be unable to discover the secret of this one. This improvement is due to the skill of Walter Wandman, to whom I am indebted.



A GOOD HAT LOADER

The simplest plan of magically producing a quantity of silk handkerchiefs, flags, etc., from a hat is to have the things concealed in the hat.

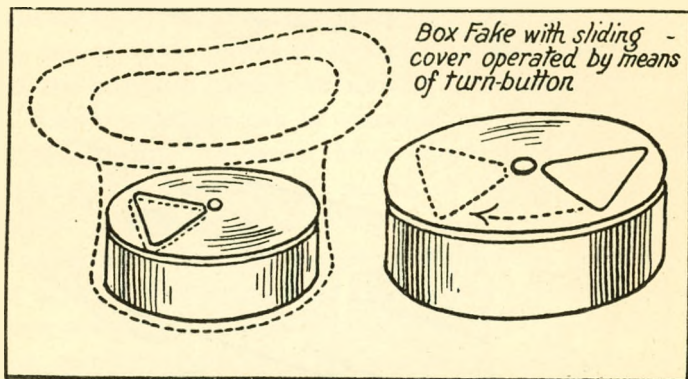


THE WANDMAN IMPROVED DRAWER-BOX.

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

“Loaders” of various kinds have been invented, but I suggest that the one here illustrated has one great advantage over all of them ; it can be worked quickly and without any fumbling.

A small box fills in the crown of the hat ; the box is covered with dull black silk. The opening of the



A GOOD HAT LOADER.

fake has a small sliding cover operated by means of a turn button. Nothing could be simpler and the effect is just as good as that obtained by a more elaborate piece of apparatus. The open hat can be shown casually to the audience before the performance ; it appears to be what the magician says it is—an empty hat.



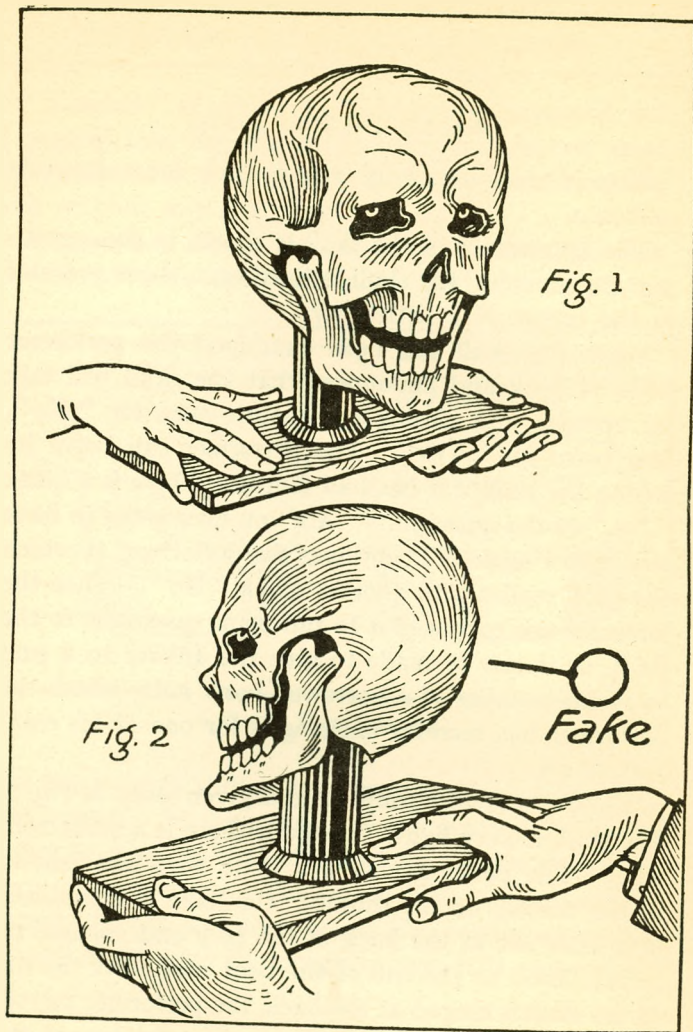
GRANT'S TALKING SKULL

This is most decidedly NOT a trick for a juvenile audience.

The appearance of the skull is shown in the accompanying sketch ; the skull is fixed on a short pedestal in the centre of a little tray.

After the skull has been examined the performer takes it back and announces that the skull will talk by opening and closing the mouth once for "No", and twice for "Yes". The performer can begin by asking the skull if it has had dinner. There is a quick "No" to the question. "Are you ever going to have any dinner again?" continues the performer, to which the skull replies with another quick "No". Then the audience are encouraged to put some questions to the skull, or it can be made to give the answer to a sum or to the number of a borrowed bank note (which the performer has secretly exchanged for one of his own) and so on.

The secret is very simple and is given away in Fig. 2. The skull is very light. Inside it there is a stout bent wire. The performer slips a little wire-fake (shown in the sketch) on his thumb ; this fake is introduced in a little slit at the back of the tray and engages on a little knob at the end of the bent wire. As the top of the skull is hinged at the back, the performer merely has to press with his thumb to raise the top of the



GRANT'S TALKING SKULL.

skull and when he withdraws his thumb the mouth closes.



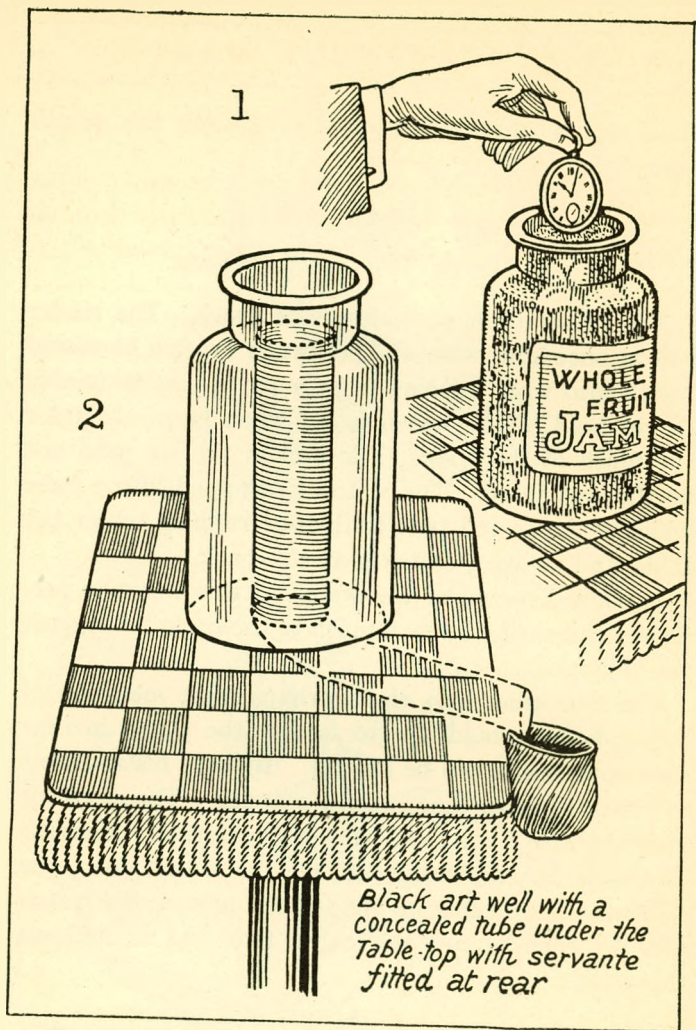
A JAR OF JAM AND A WATCH

The illustrations give this trick away. The reader sees at once how, when the performer drops a borrowed watch into what appears to be a jar of jam he is able to get hold of the watch again when he needs it for the finish of the trick. The jam in the jar need not be the real thing. The watch is dropped into a tube which is connected to a cloth tube running under the table and so to a *servante* at the back.

Having disposed of the watch in this way the performer can easily devise a finish to the trick. I suggest the following :

The performer says that perhaps some members of the audience would like to sample the jam ; in that case some bread will be needed. He asks his assistant to bring a loaf, a knife, plate, etc. etc. The assistant comes in with a tray, and while the performer is clearing the table he can easily extract the watch from the *servante*. In picking up the loaf he presses the watch into it ; then he cuts the loaf in two, and so discloses the watch.





A JAR OF JAM AND A WATCH.

THE LATEST RING TRICK

This, in my opinion, is one of the "plums" of the book, and I have no doubt that the trick will soon be added to the programme of many drawing-room magicians. I am indebted to Peter Warlock for this secret.

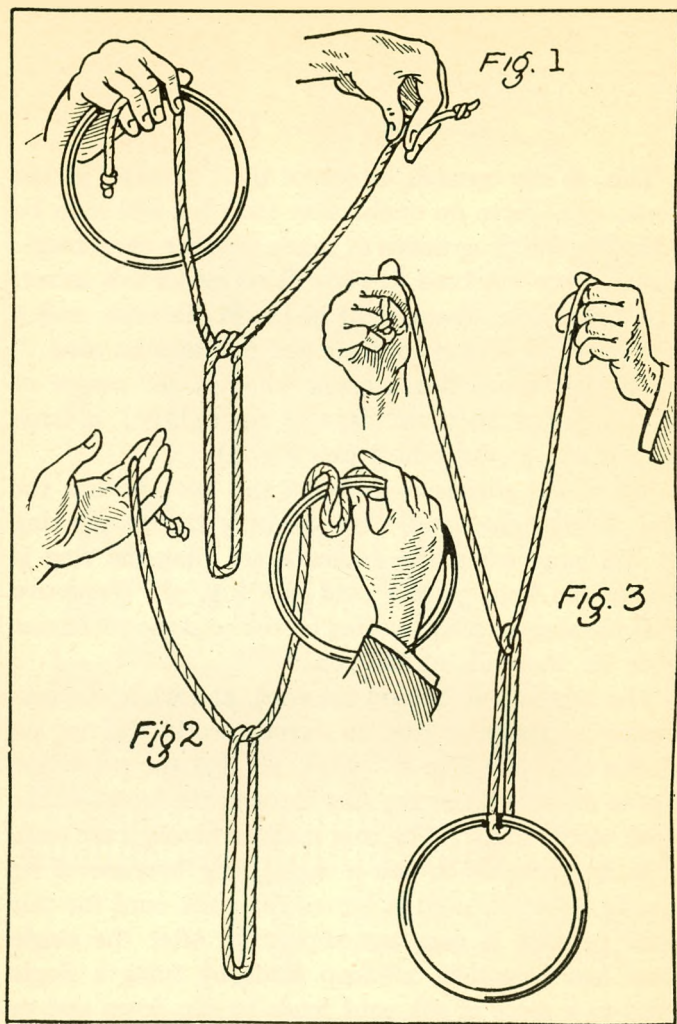
A metal ring, about eight inches in diameter, and a long piece of cotton cord are the two articles used.

The performer ties a single knot in the centre of the cord, but does not draw it up tightly; a large loop is left in the centre (see Fig. 1).

While the performer is tying the knot he has the ring in his right hand. He suddenly throws the ring at the loop, when the audience see that the ring is within the knot on the cord (see Fig. 3). To prove that the ring is really knotted on the cord the performer pulls on the ends of the cord.

The ring is held behind the cord, and while the performer is tying the knot he secretly works the ring on to the cord (see Fig. 2). Now, all that the performer has to do is to throw the ring through the loop, and the trick works itself. The ring must go through the loop.

It is advisable to use a metal ring because of its weight. Cotton cord is better than silk cord for this trick because it does not slip easily after the single knot has been tied. A loop made by tying a single knot in a piece of silk cord tends to slip down and so becomes too small for the trick.



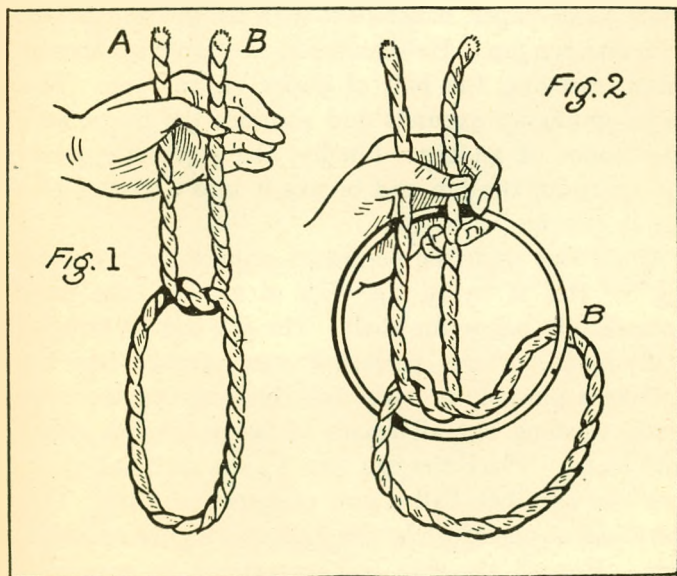
THE LATEST RING TRICK.

Five minutes practice will enable anyone to do the trick, the effect of which is really excellent. On paper there may not seem to be much in it, but in practice it is a real little mystery.



Second Method

In this method a shorter length of rope is required. A loop is made with the rope slightly larger than the metal ring to be used. Hold rope in position as shown



THE LATEST RING TRICK

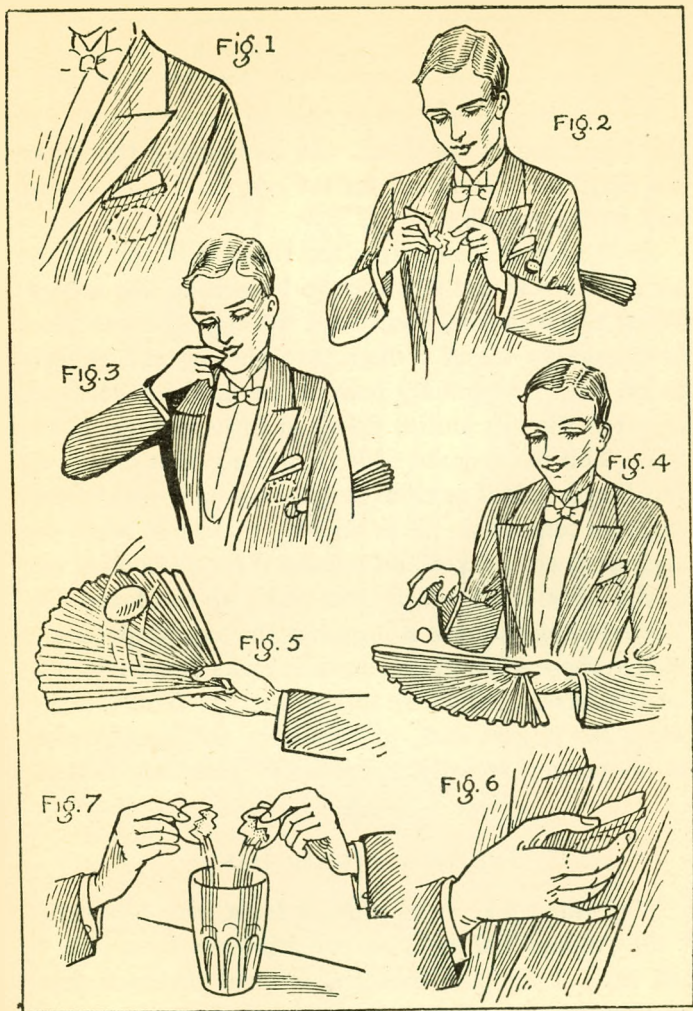
in Fig. 1, the ends gripped by the thumb of the left hand, and introducing the ring the performer places it into position, as in Fig. 2. The ring is released, and with a swinging movement it is seen securely tied inside the loop of rope. For this secret I thank the inventor, Peter Warlock.



THE STERLING EGG

In this trick the performer tears off a little piece of white tissue-paper, moistens it with his lips and places it on an open fan. He then tosses the paper up several times, catching the ball of paper on the fan. The paper gradually expands and assumes the shape and appearance of an egg. Finally, the performer takes the egg from the fan and breaks it into a glass; the egg is genuine.

To do this trick the performer requires a "Sterling egg"; this is really the skin of an egg, the part immediately below the shell. The egg can be bought ready-made, or the performer can prepare one by making a pin-hole in both ends, blowing out the contents, washing out all traces of the yolk with clean cold water. Place the egg into a glass dish and pour over the egg shell half a pint of spirits of salts. The spirit will at once destroy the shell, leaving the required skin. Rewash the skin and preserve it in pure talc powder.



THE STERLING EGG.

The "Sterling egg" is in the performer's mouth at the beginning of the trick. In moistening the paper the performer changes it for the egg, leaving the paper ball in his mouth.

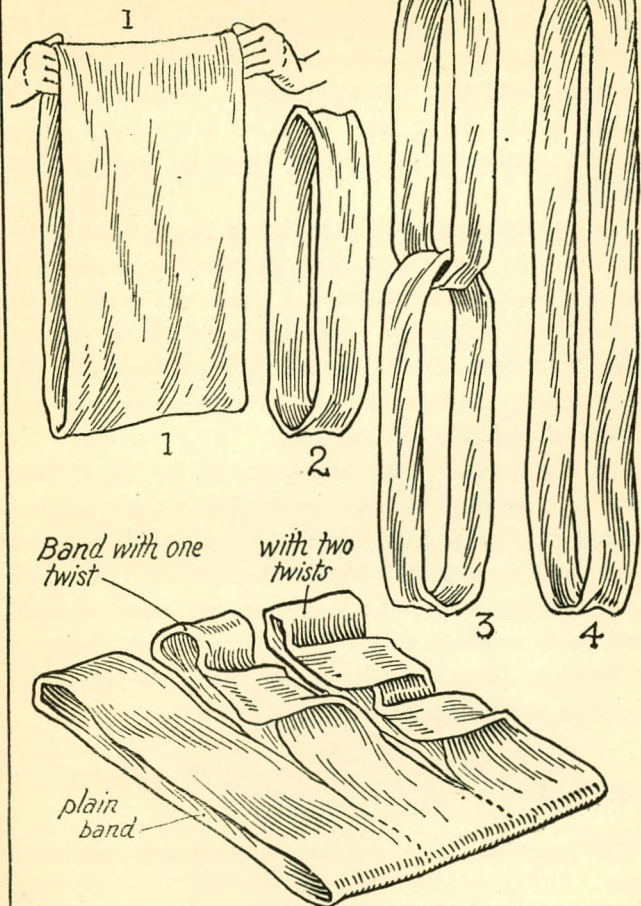
As the egg is tossed up a few times with the fan the air gets into it and it is seen to be getting like an egg. When the performer has tossed the egg up a few times he purposely tosses it high into the air and slightly to his left. He quickly puts his fan into his left hand to catch the egg and in doing so turns slightly to the left. This move enables him to get his right hand near the handkerchief pocket of his coat in which a real egg was concealed. It is an easy matter to work the egg out of the pocket and to palm it for a second or two in the right hand, which then picks up the faked egg. The faked egg at once collapses in the hand and is easily hidden there while the performer breaks the genuine egg into a glass. He then takes out his handkerchief, wipes his fingers and, in returning the handkerchief to his pocket, secretly includes the faked egg with it.



THE NEW AFGHAN BANDS

Why this trick, in its original form, was ever called "the Afghan Bands", no one has ever been able to tell me; I imagine that the original inventor acted on the principle that a trick has to have a name of some kind, and that one name is as good as another.

*Prepared wide sheet of paper
as seen by the audience.*



THE NEW AFGHAN BANDS.

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

In the original trick the performer showed three loops of paper. He cut the first in half, and thus divided it into two separate loops. When he cut the second in the same way the two loops were linked together, and when he cut the third he produced one large loop.

The one drawback to the trick was the rather obvious fact that the loops had been prepared in some way. The first was not prepared. A twist was made in the second band before the two ends were joined and two twists were put into the third band. Then, all that the magician had to do was to use a pair of long scissors as quickly as possible.

The new form of the trick is shown by the illustrations, and anyone can see at a glance that the new method is a great improvement on the old. Instead of using three separate bands of paper the performer apparently uses one large unprepared band, for the front of it appears to be "ordinary". A glance at the sketch, however, shows the back of the band, prepared in the usual way.



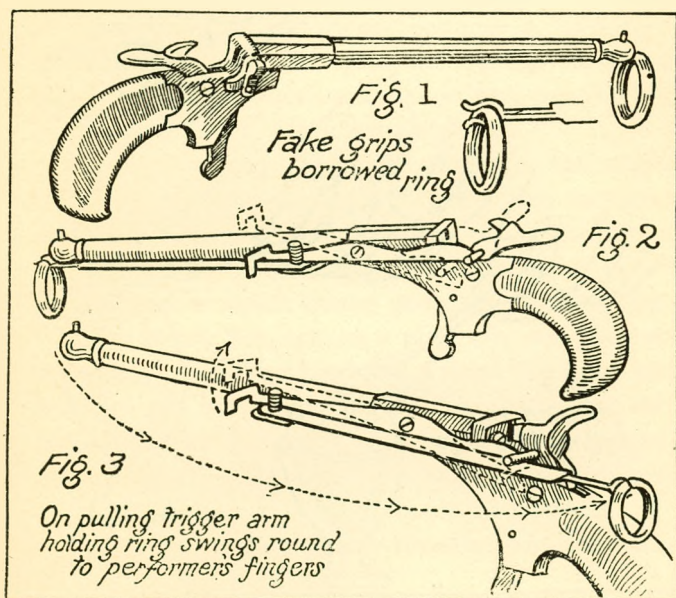
THE RING PISTOL

This ingenious pistol vanishes a borrowed ring in full view. The performer attaches the ring to a clip fitted to the point of the pistol, he fires and the ring has gone.

MISCELLANEOUS MAGIC

The pistol contains a blank cartridge, and the hammer is cocked. A spring arm containing a clip to hold the ring is locked into position. Immediately the pistol is fired, the spring arm is released and swings to the palm of the hand. The ring is removed with ease by the magician in the action of placing pistol on the table.

The figures should be studied in rotation, when every working section is clearly shown.

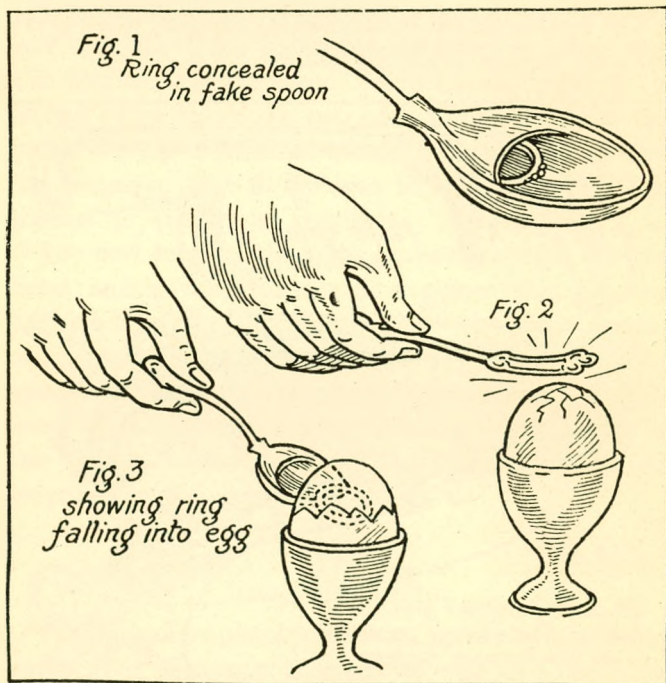


THE RING PISTOL.

RING-PRODUCING SPOON

Most useful if worked in conjunction with the ring pistol. The borrowed ring is secretly dropped into the spoon and falls back out of sight and gripped firmly by means of a concealed clip.

An egg is selected from a number on a plate and the



RING-PRODUCING SPOON.

egg marked. It is then placed into an egg cup and the upper part cracked with the spoon handle. The top shell is removed and the spoon removes a part of the liquid. The ring is released from its hiding-place in the spoon, dropped gently on to a glass dish, wiped dry and returned to the owner.



BUNNY PULLS OUR LEG!

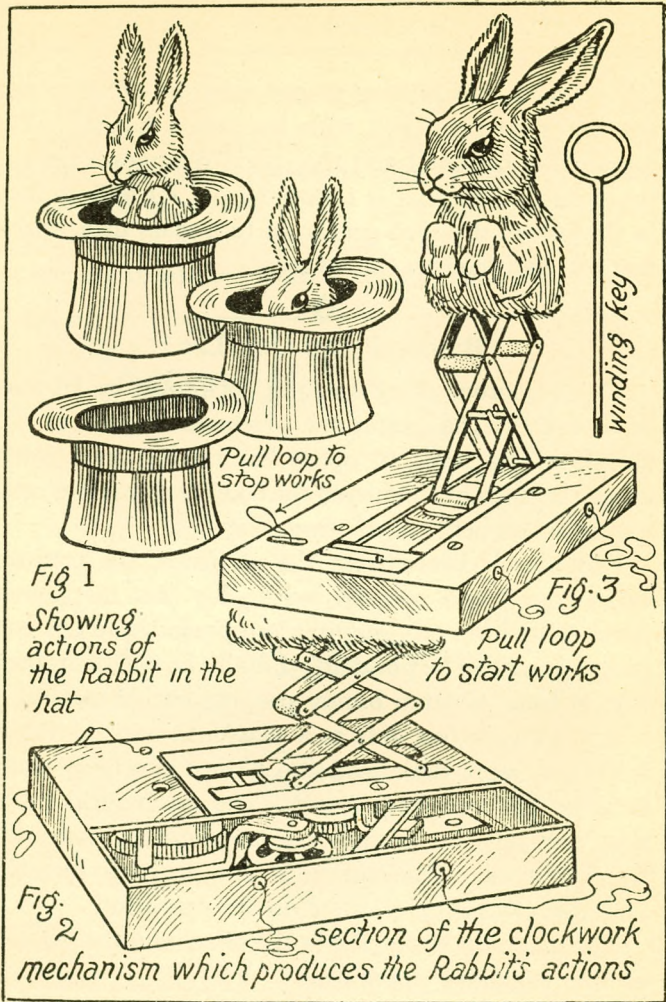
This humorous effect was first performed by Howard de Courcy. The performer produces a load of silk handkerchiefs from an opera hat resting on a table. After the silks are removed the conjurer proceeds with his entertainment, away from the hat.

Laughter is heard from the audience, the conjurer turns round and sees no reason for this merriment. After short intervals laughter is repeated, and the conjurer appears to be puzzled. Finally he walks up stage just in time to catch bunny peeping out of the hat.

A clockwork box acts as a platform, and the rabbit is nothing more than head and a third of a body which includes the two front paws. The mechanical rabbit rises and falls by means of a lazy scissors controlled by clockwork. The motion is slow in each direction and the clockwork is silent in its operation.

The diagrams show clearly the effect and the working of this exclusive apparatus.



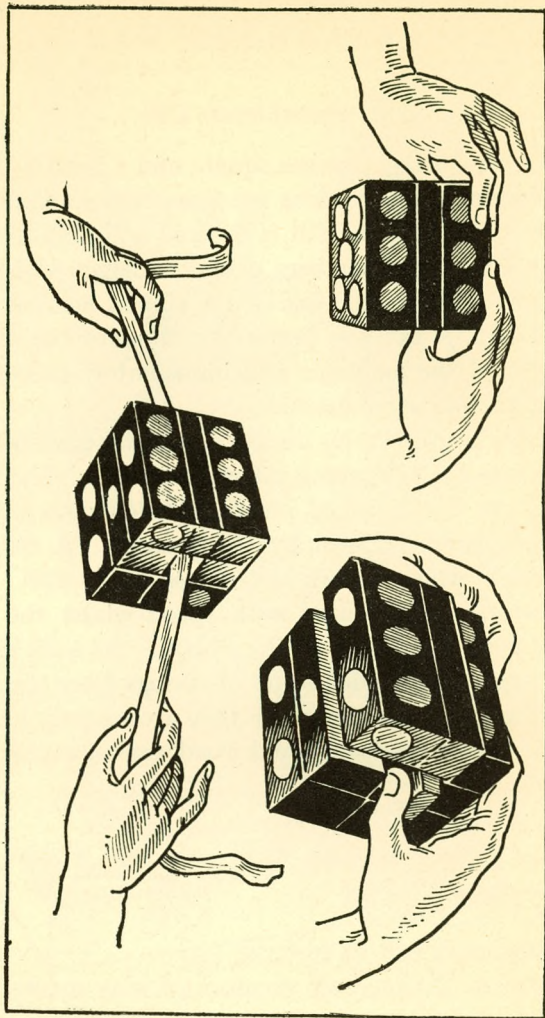


BUNNY PULLS OUR LEG!

THE ENCHANTED DIE

A die measuring 4 inches square and a length of silk ribbon about two yards long are passed for examination. The die is threaded and it is secured and able to slide to and fro. Two members of the audience assist the performer, one at each end of the ribbon holding with a firm grip. Yet the performer removes the die in full view of the audience and immediately passes the die for further examination.

The die is gripped by the performer by placing each thumb into the hole which takes the ribbon. The right side of the die is forced outwards allowing a slat to slip downwards gripped by the thumbs. A space is now made which allows the ribbon to escape. The movements are executed with speed whilst the performer runs the die down the ribbon. As soon as the die is removed a hidden series of springs force the trick pieces back into position when they are securely locked. The die is best made of sound wood, mahogany or oak.



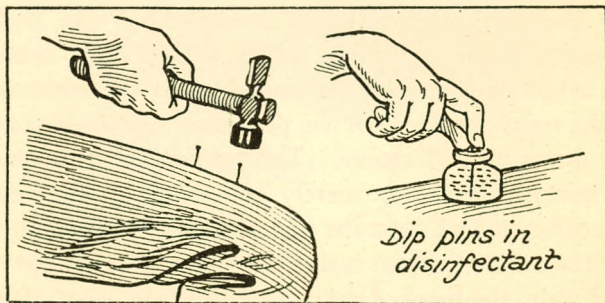
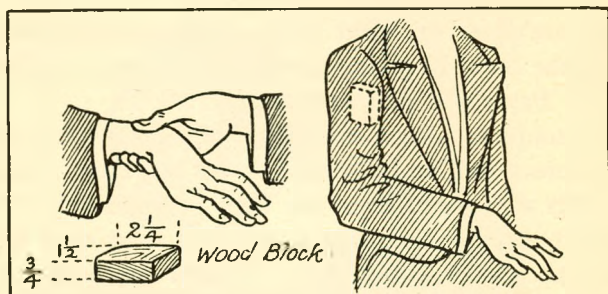
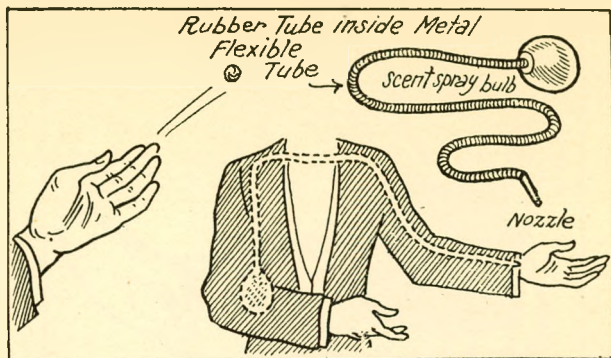
THE ENCHANTED DIE.

CHAPTER IX
PUBLICITY MAGIC

THREE GOOD PUBLICITY TRICKS

HERE are three excellent tricks which magicians who are in the habit of giving special private performances for the Press will find very useful.

The conjurer takes a small sheet of tissue-paper, rolls it up into a ball and places it on his left hand, which he holds well away from the body. He merely tells the ball of paper to hurry away, and it at once flies from the hand. No threads or wires are used, and there is no piece of apparatus concealed in the hand. The necessary apparatus is concealed on the body. A length of metal flexible tubing with a large rubber ball attached to one end is passed under the waistcoat on the right-hand side of the performer, across his back and down his left sleeve. The rubber ball can be in his trouser pocket or merely concealed by the coat. The other end of the tube has a nozzle attached to it, and the nozzle lies just inside the cuff of the left sleeve. Obviously, the hand of the conjurer merely has to stand with his left side to the audience, and press the ball



THREE GOOD PUBLICITY TRICKS.

sharply ; the sudden current of air causes the paper ball to fly from the hand.

By exercising a little care the conjurer can even do the trick when the ball is placed on the hand of a spectator. He has to be careful to see that the " draught " is directed straight to the ball.

The next effect is very mysterious. The performer holds his right hand out to a member of the audience and asks that person to feel his pulse. The performer then says that by exercising great will power he will cause his pulse to stop beating and—well, he does so ! The experiment can be repeated many times, and always with startling effect.

The secret is very simple. Concealed under his coat and held in position by his right arm is a small block of wood about two and a quarter inches thick. To cause the pulse to stop beating the performer merely presses slightly with his arm on this block of wood, and the trick is done.

The third trick is very effective. The performer takes a pin and sticks it upright into his trousers, just over one of the legs. Then, with a mallet or a book he gives the pin a sharp blow and drives it straight into his leg without causing himself any pain. Anyone may extract the pin to convince himself that it really does go into the leg. There is no trick about that part of the performance ; the pin does penetrate the leg.

TRICKS OF THE MASTERS

Choose a clean pin (or several if you choose to use them all) and sterilize it by dipping it into a disinfectant—Lysol answers the purpose very well—then wrap the pin in clean cotton wool. Stick the point lightly into the trousers, and then give it one sharp blow. There will be no pain as the pin passes into the flesh. Take care to see that the pin does not penetrate a vein; otherwise the wound—small though it is—will bleed for a minute or two.



THE BEST OF ALL BLINDFOLDS

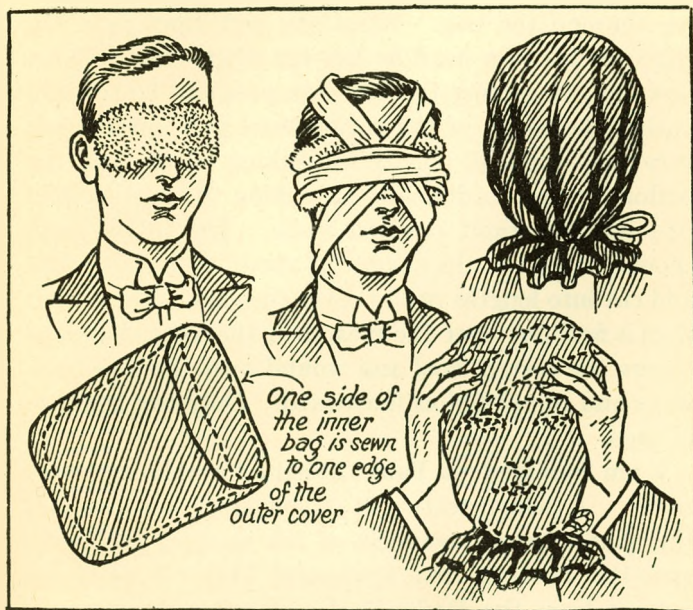
There are many tricks in which it is necessary that the performer, or his assistant, should appear to be fairly blindfolded. Various trick folds have been devised for this purpose, but I consider that the following is the most convincing to any audience and is, therefore, the best.

To begin with, a pad of cotton wool is placed over the eyes. The pad is not prepared in any way, and anyone in the audience can test it. The pad is held in place by a folded bandage tied round the performer's head (see illustration). Lastly, a black bag—which can also be tested by placing it over the head of a member of the audience, who will then be convinced that it is impossible to see through it—is placed over the performer's head; the strings of the bag are drawn round his neck and tied.

PUBLICITY MAGIC

After all these preparations have been made the performer is able to see quite easily.

The only faked article is the bag, which is really a



THE BEST OF ALL BLINDFOLDS.

double bag, one being inside the other. The tops of the two bags are sewn together on one side, but the other side is free. Faked stitching all round the bag gives the impression that the whole of the top is

stitched. When the performer puts the bag over the head of a member of the audience he takes care to put the double side of the bag over the man's eyes, and the man, on being questioned, will say that he cannot see through the bag. When the performer puts the bag over his own head he has the single side over his face and, in getting the bag into position, he secretly pushes the whole of the cotton wool pad upwards—a very easy thing to do. When taking off the bag the performer has no difficulty in pulling the cotton wool pad into the right position again. The cotton wool should be of the thick variety about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, and cut into lengths not to cover the ears. The cotton wool is first put over the eyes, then the cotton bandage covers the cotton wool and wound over the face both ways and completed as illustrated. Only one bandage is used.

I am indebted to Paul Graham for this exclusive secret. A demonstration of this mystery was given by this performer to members of the medical profession and the Press at the Magicians' Club. I print an extract from the *Daily Mail*.

An ex-public schoolboy, hiding his identity as "Paul Graham", mystified the Magicians' Club and members of the medical profession when he "saw without eyes" last night.

Cotton wool and bandages were fixed over his eyes and a hood was placed over his face with a cord to fasten it around his neck.

PUBLICITY MAGIC

Members of the audience were invited to put any name or figure on a blackboard and Graham rewrote what had been written. He even distinguished by colour and named articles handed to him.

"Conjurers say it is not conjuring and doctors appear convinced that it is not a trick," Graham told a *Daily Mail* reporter. "How I do it is my secret."

CHAPTER X
STAGE ILLUSIONS

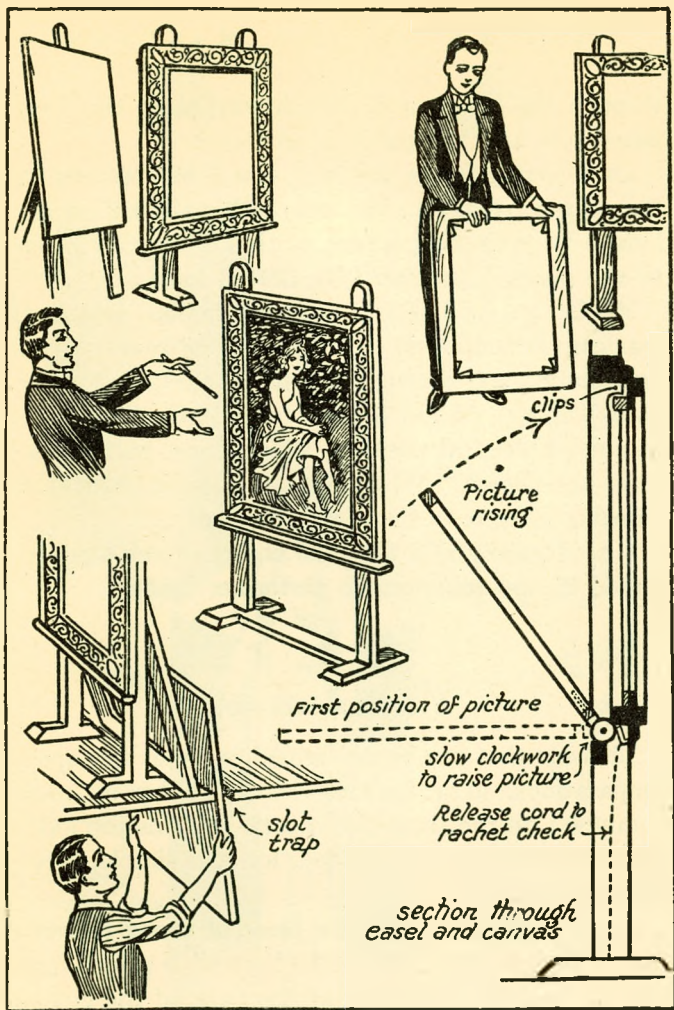
ABBOTT'S SPIRIT PAINTINGS ILLUSION

THE mystery has for its object the materialization of a picture upon a blank canvas.

The secret lies mainly in the frame and the efforts of an assistant under stage. The easel, which should be of the design illustrated by the artist, is stood immediately in front of a slit trap, below which an assistant waits with a canvas already prepared with a painting.

In the base of the frame are two clockwork devices with slow movement and of sufficient strength to lift a canvas from horizontal to vertical position. The sectional sketch clearly shows the arrangement.

Now for the presentation. Two blank canvases are introduced and after one has been examined, it is held by assistants immediately behind easel and in front of the narrow trap. Whilst the other is being scrutinized, the painting is pushed up and held behind the canvas supported by the attendants. So soon as the second canvas is handed to attendants, they drop it clean



ABBOTT'S SPIRIT PAINTINGS ILLUSION.

through the stage, and straightway place the unprepared one and the painting in frame.

On referring to the diagram, it will be observed that the rear canvas, i.e., the one with painting on it, is lodged on projecting spikes, so that it may be lowered to the position indicated by dotted lines.

Whilst an arc-lamp is adjusted behind frame, the rear canvas is allowed to fall to the horizontal, so that light may shine through the single sheet and show a blank surface. Light is then turned off whilst canvas assumes a vertical position, which done, both sides of easel are shown. When next the arc is struck, the painting is seen to have materialized.

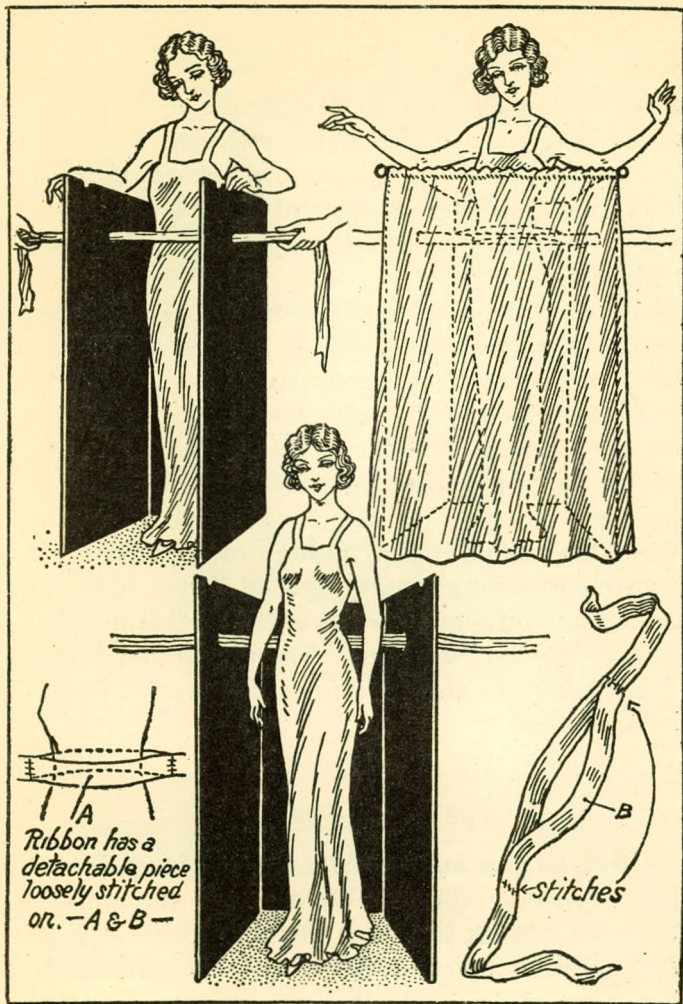
I need hardly add that the choice of the subject is forced in any manner the performer fancies.



A SIMPLE ILLUSION

Illusions that can be performed, without any special preparations, in a drawing-room, are by no means common ; to the short list of such illusions the following should certainly be added, for it is simple, pretty, and effective.

A girl comes in holding a piece of broad ribbon in front of her waist. A three-fold screen is placed round her, the middle fold being at the back of the girl and the other two at the sides. The ends of the ribbon



A SIMPLE ILLUSION.

are passed through holes in the two sides of the screen and are held by members of the audience.

A light curtain is hung in front of the screen for a few moments ; when it is removed the girl walks out, having apparently managed to walk through the piece of ribbon.

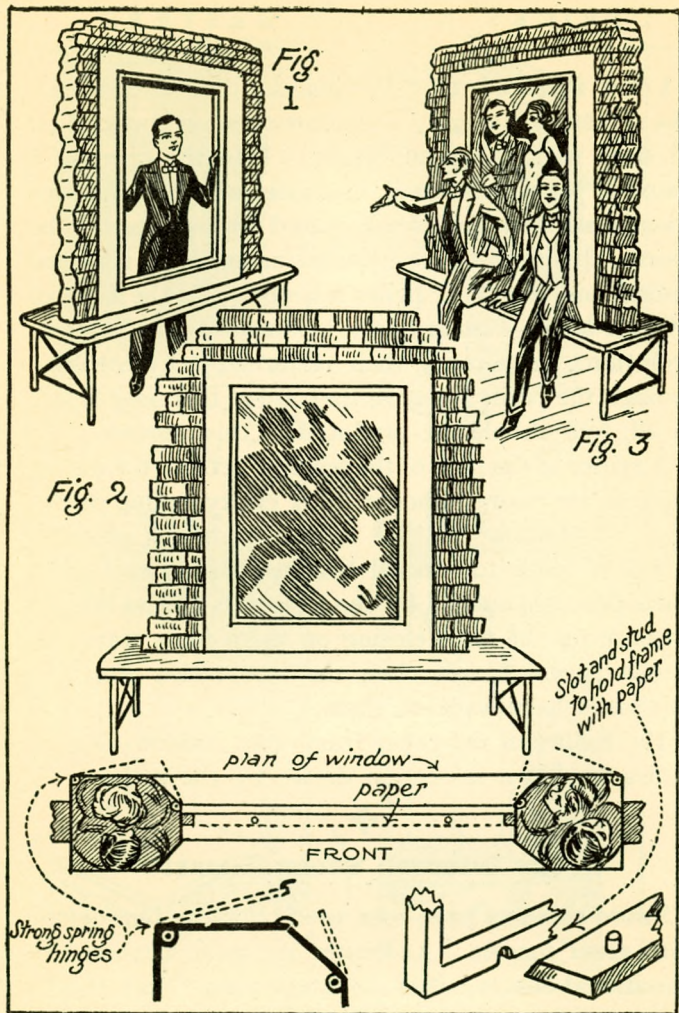
The illustrations explain the working. The ribbon is really at the back of the girl in the first place, but there is a shorter piece loosely stitched to it and it is this piece which the audience see in front of the girl when she enters. The girl's hands conceal the points at which the front piece of ribbon is tacked on to the main piece.

When the curtain is hung in front of the screen the girl merely removes the extra piece of ribbon, hides it, takes out any little tell-tale bits of thread that may be left, and—she can walk out. The ribbon which the two assistants are holding can be then passed round for examination.



THE GHOST HOUSE

Readers, on glancing at the illustrations accompanying this mystery, will probably confound this with a well-known English illusion. I desire to assure them that the principle upon which this is worked has nothing in common with "The Window of the Haunted House".



THE GHOST HOUSE.
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I am indebted to "Welshneck" for this secret. The structure is merely a window-opening bounded on all-sides with imitation bricks. Into the opening a frame of paper is inserted, and after wheeling the supporting platform completely round for onlookers to be assured that nothing is concealed, an arc-lamp is placed behind and the stage lights lowered. To the tune of "Ghost Music" sundry eerie-looking shadows perform evolutions, terminating their performance by breaking through the paper to prove they are of flesh and blood. In all, four people are produced in this manner.

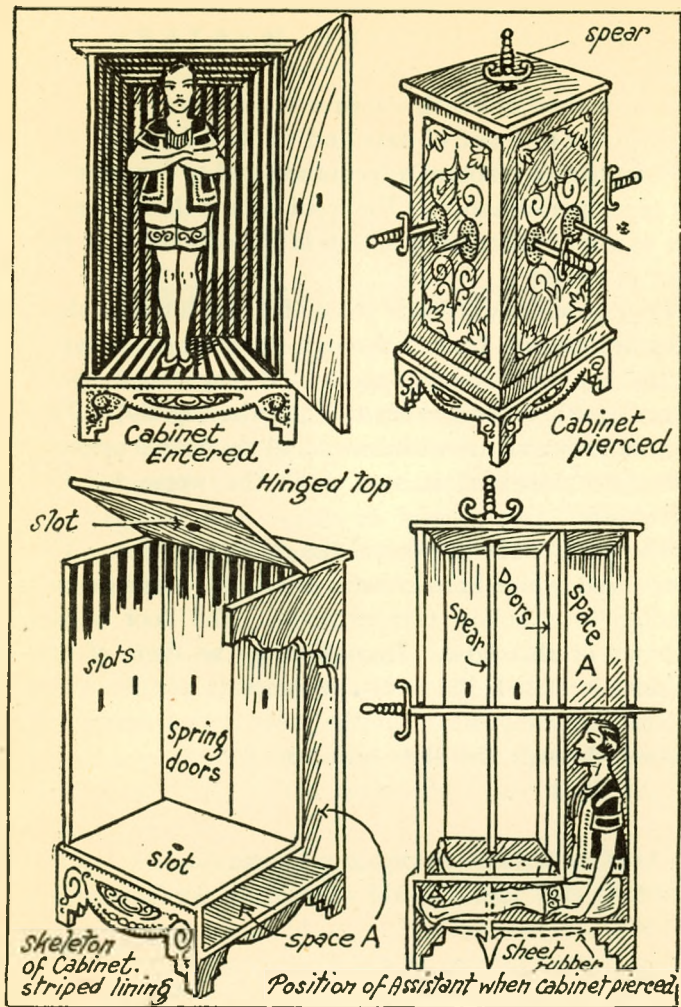
A glance of the plan of the window betrays the hiding place of the four "Ghosts". A crafty faking of the edges of window and the section of bricks provides sufficient space to conceal two persons on each side. Their prison is opened by the assistants themselves by pressure on the flaps closing on them from rear side. Strong spring hinges close the receptacles after the occupants have vacated them.

The fixture of the paper frame into window-opening is clearly shown in section drawn by the artist.



THE IMPROVED SWORD CABINET

Sword cabinets have been used by many illusionists, with great success. Audiences are more attracted to sensational effects; it is the danger angle that usually creates excitement.



THE IMPROVED SWORD CABINET.

The method in which a mirror is used to conceal the assistant is now out of date and too well known. My cabinet has an innocent appearance, and so constructed for quick performance. The front door is thrown open, the assistant takes her position in the cabinet, and the door is closed.

Four genuine swords are passed for examination, then they are quickly pushed through the slots as depicted in the top right-hand diagram. A long metal spear is next pushed downwards through the top slot. The spear and swords are withdrawn and the door is opened, when the assistant is seen none the worse for her adventure.

The back of the interior of the cabinet is false. The black and white lines conceal the back double doors leading to a hollow compartment. The floor of the cabinet is also false. Immediately the door of the cabinet is closed, the assistant conceals herself in the secret compartment until the swords and spear are passed through the slots and removed.

CHAPTER XI

LET THERE BE HARMONY

WHY is it that so many magicians are over-cautious in the manner in which they keep their secrets? I do not suggest, of course, that a conjurer who has spent much thought, time and money in producing a series of new tricks should be willing to satisfy the curiosity of any beginner who wants to take a peep behind the scenes. But are not some magicians a little too secretive in their behaviour to other magicians of equal rank?

It is common knowledge that even when a magician has invented a new trick—perhaps some trifle which he never intends to include in his act—he will resolutely refuse to perform it before his friends if there is another magician present. He wants his new trick all to himself.

One can understand a magician wishing to keep his money-making feature to himself, but the all-round refusal to exchange ideas with other magicians seems to me almost inexplicable. The secretiveness is really a bar to the progress of magic, for when new magical ideas are in the air two or three magicians working in

harmony together are more likely to produce something of permanent value than is one man working solely on his own lines. Two heads are better than one.

One feels sure that a more free exchange of ideas would be of great benefit to the art of magic, and to magicians themselves, for the better the trick the greater the public interest in its performance, and the more the public can be interested in a trick the better for magic and for magicians generally.

One knows, of course, that this great caution in keeping secrets is due to the fear of having ideas stolen—to put it bluntly. Is it fear well-founded? I do not think it is, because the magician who “borrows” from another seldom profits by his misdeed. The producer of a new act will get the utmost effects out of the act, but the copyist will fail miserably. I feel confident that a more free exchange of ideas among magicians would lead to the advancement of the art and, therefore, would be to the ultimate good of magicians.

One of the unwritten laws of the medical profession prohibits a doctor from keeping a secret which is likely to be of benefit to other doctors—and therefore the world at large—all to himself. Any secret of that kind must be shared with other members of the medical profession.

What an excellent thing it would be for magic if magicians would only consent to observe a rule of this kind. Magicians themselves would benefit by this free

exchange of ideas ; the art of magic would advance towards perfection ; a finer spirit of brotherhood and good fellowship among magicians would prevail.

In proof of the truth of these statements I would point to the various books dealing with magic in all its branches. At no time in the history of magic has there been a greater advance in the art than since the publication of magical books. Secrets have become the common property of magicians. Every magician knows the value of a book on magic and magical magazines, the secrets disclosed and suggestions implanted in the minds of the careful reader are without doubt profitable.

Compare the magic of to-day with the magic of the time before Professor Hoffmann's classic work, *Modern Magic*, appeared, and you will see at once that, so far from injuring magic, the publication of secrets, the free exchange of ideas, makes for the improvement of the art, and is, therefore, of benefit to all magicians.

The Magicians' Club, of which I am the founder, advocate the cultivation of a more generous spirit among its members in regard to their secrets, and I feel sure that if magicians would consent to pool their ideas they would gain by the operation.

Amateur magicians living in small towns and villages have very few opportunities of meeting other magicians except by means of the printed page. To them the publication of the latest and best information about

magic is a very important matter, but it is equally important to those magicians who live in London or who are frequently in London, and who, therefore, have opportunities of meeting brother magicians.

When a magician's memory plays tricks with him he can get over the difficulty in only two ways : he must either obtain the information he wants from a brother magician or he must refresh his memory from a book or magazine. It is well, therefore, that magical books should increase and multiply ; they preserve knowledge.

Many professional magicians owe much to amateurs. Those of us who are behind the scenes of the magical world know quite well that, with a few exceptions, professionals are apt to lose some of their enthusiasm for their art after they have practised it for a few years. They allow themselves to get into a rut, to be content with the success they have achieved, or to win others they have not created. They acquire the habit of looking at magic purely from the commercial point of view.

Compare this attitude with that of the enthusiastic amateur who is continually working with the object of improving his performance, and of advancing the cause of magic generally. He is actuated by one motive and one motive only—his love of the art—and this love fertilizes his mind and causes him to improve or invent new effects. The majority of professionals do not trouble to invent anything. They are good showmen

and have the ability to "sell" themselves to their audiences.

All professional magicians began their careers by being amateurs. It was their love of the art which caused them to look to magic for the means of living. But what a pity it is when some of them cross the borderline which separates amateurs from professionals and in a short period neglect to preserve intact their love of magic for itself.

There are, of course, many brilliant exceptions—professional magicians who still love magic as they loved it when they first became charmed by its spell. We still owe a great debt of gratitude to the ever-increasing army of amateur magicians who, with no thought of reward, eagerly, efficiently, and enthusiastically do their best for the advancement of the art they love.

