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HERRMANN'S  
WIZARDS'  
MANUAL

*ILLUSTRATED*

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*SECRETS OF MAGIC, BLACK ART, MIND READING,  
VENTRILOQUISM AND KINDRED ARTS.*

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*AS ACTUALLY PERFORMED BY THE GREATEST  
WIZARDS OF THE WORLD*



Herrmann, Alexander

# HERRMANN'S WIZARDS' MANUAL

*A Practical Treatise on Coin Tricks,  
Card Tricks, Sleight-of-Hand, Illusions,  
Black Art, Mind Reading, Spirit  
Mediumship, Ventriloquism, etc., etc.*

SECRETS AND METHODS OF  
PERFORMING MANY MAR-  
VELOUS MYSTERIES, SUCH  
AS HAVE ASTONISHED THE  
PUBLIC OF ALL NATIONS.

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[NEW AND REVISED EDITION]

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# HERRMANN'S WIZARDS' MANUAL

## FIRST WORDS ON MAGIC

Magic naturally separates into two divisions: One, as performed by pure sleight-of-hand with ordinary objects; and the other, which depends upon apparatus or mechanical appliances; and these are called respectively Drawing-room, and Grand or Stage Magic. The former is made up of feats depending upon manual dexterity, chemical combinations, and arithmetical problems. Grand magic, likewise, consists of manual manipulation, and, in addition, mechanical appliances, and optical illusions. Cards, of course, play an important part in both branches.

We recommend the following rules to the student:

*First.*—Never tell your audience beforehand what you are going to do. If you do so, you at once give their vigilance the direction which it is most necessary to avoid, and increase tenfold the chances of detection.

*Second.*—The same trick must not be performed twice during the same evening, or before the same audience. The reason for this is apparent from the first rule, above. There are generally two ways of bringing about the same or a similar result, and in the event of your feeling constrained to respond to an encore, you must perform it in a different manner.

*Third.*—Vary your tricks, for this reason: If you are continually doing those depending upon the dexterity of the fingers, your audience will become accustomed to their movements; therefore, perform in succession tricks of

sleight-of-hand, tricks with apparatus, and tricks in "white magic," so as to confuse the too inquisitive spectator, and yet retain his attention.

*Fourth.*—Endeavor to divert the attention of the audience as much as possible from your movements, and lead them to believe that you perform the trick by a different method to that actually employed.

*Fifth.*—Accustom yourself to use the eyes and the hands independently of each other; remember that the audience are observing your actions, and their attention is frequently taken from your hands, with which you wish to make a certain manipulation, to follow the directions of a glance thrown over your shoulder or elsewhere.

*Sixth.*—Never act the buffoon, nor pass ungentlemanly personalities; by such you only make yourself ridiculous, and gain the ill-will of some present. It will frequently happen that a magician's audience will contain some clever busybody who knows how such-and-such a trick is done, and informs his neighbors of the fact. Should such a person come under your notice during an entertainment, you can easily find an opportunity of bringing him to account, and making him the laughing-stock of the hall, without being actually rude.

*Seventh.*—On no account ascribe a very dexterous trick to supernatural power, as that which is clever and marvelous in its execution will be quite as amusing and entertaining to an intelligent people as the result of the laws of Nature, as the miraculous would be to the ignorant.

*Eighth.*—When performing before a company, have as many lights as you please in front of you, but be careful to have none behind, for this reason: In the event of your showing such a thing as a handkerchief, or other semi-transparent article, to be empty, when there is a bag of eggs inside, the light from behind would at once show up the extra thickness in the material, and give a clew to the trick.

*Ninth.*—Last, but not least, cultivate the art of “talking.” A clever magician is not of much account unless he is well up in his “part.” He may perform the manipulation in a masterly manner (this is technically called the “business”); but an actor must know his “part” as well as the “business”; the same applies to the magician. To do well, a magician must prepare what he is going to do, and also quite as carefully what he is going to say; learn the spoken part thoroughly, and rehearse as patiently as an actor about to take a part in an opera. Speech, like the eyes, can be made to take the attention away from the hands, which is very desirable at times, and at the same time serves to enhance the brilliancy of a trick which might fall flat upon an audience if merely performed in the manner of a machine. Therefore, we must impress most forcibly that speech is an absolute necessity to a conjuror; “dumb-show” will not take.

The following minor rules are important to every magician:

Keep your hands warm, for it is almost impossible to do sleight-of-hand tricks if the hands are cold. An acute sense of touch is necessary, and this is lost if the hands are benumbed.

Should some accident happen whilst performing a trick, and the desired result is impossible, on no account admit a failure, but either finish the trick in a less brilliant manner, or turn the mishap to account as though intentional, and make it develop into another trick: a poor one is better than to acknowledge a failure. To do this well, it is advisable to keep cool and collected; do not allow yourself to be hurried, and so be ready for any *contretemps*. Dexterity and quickness are essential, but there is such a thing as being too quick and spoiling all. You must bear in mind that after some changes have taken place, it is as well to lead the audience to believe that you are still manipulating.



You must accustom yourself to pick up objects from the table or *servante* without looking at them. Ascertain beforehand the position of anything that may be required, and take it up with one hand, whilst the other claims the attention of the company. Do not go behind the table more than absolutely necessary; remain by the side in preference if you are required to be in proximity to it. Cultivate a cheerful manner of address. Avoid making poor jokes and rapid movements in locomotion. A ready wit has many advantages when properly utilized, but this should not be exercised in personalities to an audience, or in such a manner as to make anyone feel uncomfortable.

Impudence and buffoonery are intolerable when practiced by a magician on the stage. Always maintain the character of a gentleman, and on no account get irritated or show annoyance at an ill-bred remark from one of the audience; treat it either as a joke or take no notice of it — your own tact will dictate the best manner of treatment, according to the circumstances of the case.

#### THE MAGIC WAND.

This is a light rod, twelve or fifteen inches in length, and about three-quarters of an inch in diameter. It may be of any material, and decorated in any manner which the fancy of the owner may dictate. To the uninitiated its use may appear a mere affectation, but such is by no means the case. Apart from the prestige derived from the traditional properties of the wand, and its use by the wizards of all ages, it affords a plausible pretext for many necessary movements, which would otherwise appear awkward and unnatural, and would thereby arouse the vigilance of the audience at possibly the most critical period of the trick. Thus, if the performer desires to hold anything concealed in his hand, by holding the wand in the same hand he is able to keep it closed without ex-



citing suspicion. If it is necessary, as frequently happens, to turn his back upon the audience for an instant, the momentary turn to the table, in order to take up or lay down the wand, affords the required opportunity. We most strongly advise the would-be magician to cultivate from the outset the habitual use of the wand. The dainty touch of the wand, for the supposed purpose of operating a magical transformation, assists materially in leading the audience to believe that such transformation did actually take place at that particular moment, instead of having been (as is really the case) secretly effected at an earlier period.

#### THE MAGICIAN'S TABLE.

The first necessity of the amateur is a proper table. The table necessary for an average drawing-room exhibition differs from an ordinary table in two points only: its height, which is about six inches greater than usual; and the addition of a hidden shelf or ledge at the back. It should have turned legs of some hard wood, stained and polished, and these, if it is desired to make the table portable, should be *screwed* into the four corners, so as to be readily taken off and put on again. In length it may be three to four feet, and in breadth eighteen inches to two feet. At the back should be fixed, about six inches below the level of the top of the table, a projecting shelf, six to eight inches in width, and extending nearly from end to end. This shelf, which is technically known as the *servante*, should be covered with thick woolen cloth, in order to deaden the sound of any object falling on it.

The manner of fixing the *servante* is optional. In some tables it is made to slide in and out like a drawer; in others to fold on hinges against the back of the table, or itself to form the back. This latter is the most convenient mode, as the opening made by the flap when let

down gives access to the interior of the table, which forms a convenient receptacle for necessary articles. Over the table should be thrown an ordinary cloth table-cover, of such a size as to hang down about ten or fifteen inches at the front and sides, but not more than an inch or so on the side away from the audience. To prevent its slipping, the cloth may be fastened on this side with a couple of drawing-pins. The precise height of the table should be determined by the stature of the performer. The *servante* should be just so high from the ground as to be level with the knuckles of the performer as his arm hangs by his side; and the top of the table, as already stated, about six inches higher than this. It will be found that this height will enable the performer secretly to take up or lay down any article thereon without stooping or bending the arm, either of which movements would suggest to the spectators that his hand was occupied in some manner behind the table. One of the first tasks of the novice should be to acquire the power of picking up or laying down any article on the *servante* without making any corresponding movement of the body, and especially without looking down at his hands, for if the audience once suspect that he has a secret receptacle behind the table, half the magic of his tricks is destroyed.

An oblong box, twelve or fourteen inches in length by three in depth, well padded with wadding, and placed on the *servante*, will be found very useful in getting rid of small articles, such as coin, oranges, etc., as such articles may be dropped into the box without causing any sound, and therefore without attracting attention.

In default of a table regularly made for the purpose, the amateur may adapt an ordinary table for use as a make-shift. A common kitchen-table having a drawer on one side, and raised on four bricks or blocks of wood to the requisite height, will answer the purpose very fairly. The table must be covered with a cloth; the

drawer, pulled out about six inches on the side remote from the audience, forming the *servante*.

#### THE MAGICIAN'S DRESS.

The preferred costume of the magician of the present day is ordinary evening dress. The effect of the feats performed is greatly heightened by the close fit and comparative scantiness of such a costume, which appears to allow no space for secret pockets or other place of concealment. In reality, however, the magician is provided with two special pockets, known as *profondes*, placed in the tails of his dress coat. Each is from four to six inches in depth and seven in width, and the opening, which is across the inside of the coat-tail, slanting slightly downward from the center to the side, is, like the *servante*, so placed as to be just level with the knuckles of the performer, as his hand hangs by his side. He can thus, by the mere action of dropping either hand to his side, let fall any article instantly into the *profonde* on that side, or take anything from thence in like manner. The action is so natural that it may be used under the very eyes of the audience, at very small risk of being observed; and if the performer at the same moment slightly turns his other side to the spectators he may be perfectly secure from detection. Some performers have also a couple of *pochettes* (small pockets) made in the trousers, one behind each thigh. These are generally used for purposes of production only, the *profondes* being still employed for getting rid of any article. Many professors, in addition to the pockets above mentioned, have also a spacious pocket, opening perpendicularly, inside the breast of the coat, under each arm for the purpose of what is called "loading," *i. e.*, bringing a rabbit or other article into a hat, etc. Other pockets may be added, as the fancy or invention of the performer may dictate.

An elastic band, about an inch in width, should be

stitched around the lower edge of the waistcoat on the inside. When the waistcoat is in wear the band makes it press tightly round the waist, and any object of moderate size — a card or pack of cards, a handkerchief, etc.,— may be slipped under it without the least risk of falling. Used in conjunction with the pockets before described, this elastic waistband affords a means of instantaneously effecting “changes” of articles too large to be palmed with safety, one hand dropping the genuine article into the *profonde* on that side, while the other draws the prepared substitute from under the waistband, a very slight turn of the body toward the table or otherwise sufficing to cover the movement.

#### THE VANISHING GLOVES.

This favorite trick of Herrmann the Great is a capital one with which to commence an entertainment; when coming, as it should do, unannounced, and before the performance proper has commenced, it has an air of improvisation which greatly enhances its effect, and at once awakens the attention of the audience.

The performer comes forward in full evening dress. While saying a few words by way of introduction to his entertainment, he begins to take off his gloves, commencing with that on his right hand. As soon as it is fairly off, he takes it in his right hand, waves the hand with a careless gesture, and the glove is gone. He begins to take off the other, walking as he does so behind his table, whereon his wand is laid. The left-hand glove being removed, is rolled up into a ball, and transferred from the right hand to the left, which is immediately closed. The right hand picks up the wand, and with it touches the left, which being slowly opened, the second glove is found to have also disappeared.

The disappearance of the first glove is effected by means of a piece of cord elastic, attached to the back of



the waistcoat, and thence passing down the sleeve. This should be of such a length as to allow the glove to be drawn down and put on the hand, and yet to pull it smartly up the sleeve and out of sight when released. It is desirable to have a hem round the wrist of the glove, and to pass the elastic through this like the cord of a bag, as it thereby draws the wrist portion of the glove together, and causes it to offer less hindrance to its passage up the sleeve. Upon taking off the glove, the performer retains it in his hand, and lets it go when he pleases. He must, however, take care to straighten his arm before letting it slip, as otherwise the elastic will remain comparatively slack, and the glove will, instead of disappearing with a flash, dangle ignominiously from the coat-cuff.

The left-hand glove is got rid of by palming. The performer, standing behind his table as already mentioned, rolling the glove between his hands, and quickly twisting the fingers inside, so as to bring it into more manageable form, pretends to place it in his left hand, but really palms it in his right. He now lowers the right hand to pick up his wand, and as the hand reaches the table, drops the glove on the *servante*. He now touches the left hand with the wand, in due course opening the hand and showing that the glove has departed.

Some performers cause both gloves to vanish by means of elastic, one up the right sleeve, the other up the left, but in doing so they offend against one of the cardinal precepts of the art, viz.: never to perform the same trick twice in succession by the same means. The spectators having seen the manner of the first disappearance, are all on the alert, and are not unlikely on the second occasion to guess the means employed. If, on the other hand, the performer adopts the plan indicated above, the two modes of producing the effect being different, each renders it more difficult to discover the secret of the other.

## COIN TRICKS

Before attempting tricks with coin, it will be necessary to practice certain sleights and passes which more especially belong to this particular branch of the magic art, though the sleight-of-hand used in coin tricks is more or less applicable to most other small objects.

**Palming.**—The first sleight which the novice must seek to acquire is that of “palming”—*i. e.*, secretly holding an object in the open hand by the contraction of the palm. To acquire this accomplishment, take a half-dollar (this being the most convenient in point of size), and lay it on the palm of the open hand. (See Fig. 1.) Now close the hand very slightly, and if you have placed the coin on the right spot (which a few trials will quickly indicate), the contraction of the palm around the edges will hold it securely (see Fig. 2), and you may move the hand and arm in any direction without fear of dropping it. You should next accustom yourself to use the hand and fingers easily and naturally, while still holding the coin as described. Practice will enable you to do this. You must bear in mind while practicing always to keep the inside of the palm either downwards or towards your own body, as any reverse movement would expose the concealed coin. When you are able to hold the coin comfortably in the right hand, practice in like manner with the left, after which you may substitute for the coin a watch, an egg, or a small lemon — all these being articles of frequent use in conjuring.



**The Pass.**—The “pass” has for its object the apparent transfer of an article from one hand to the other. In making passes the same movement should not be frequently repeated, as this may excite suspicion and possibly lead to detection.

It is hardly necessary to remark that the diagrams represent the hands of the performer *as seen by himself*.

Take the coin in the right hand, between the second and third fingers and the thumb (see Fig. 3), letting it,

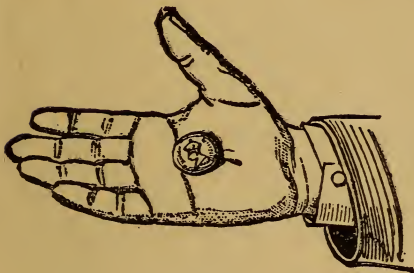


Fig. 1.

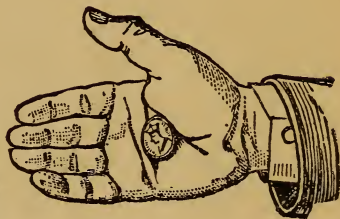


Fig. 2.

however, really be supported by the fingers, and only steadied by the thumb. Now move the thumb out of the way, and close the second and third fingers, with the coin balanced on them, into the palm. (See Fig. 4.) If the coin is placed right in the first instance, you will find that this motion will put it precisely in the position above described as the proper one for palming; and on again extending the fingers, the coin is left palmed, as in Fig. 2. When you can do this easily with the hand at rest, you must practice doing the same thing with the right hand in motion toward the left, which should meet it open, and should close the moment that the fingers of the right hand touch its palm, as though upon the coin which you have by this movement feigned to transfer to it. The left hand must thenceforward re-

main closed, as if holding the coin, and the right hand hang loosely open, as if empty.

In the case of an article of larger size than a coin — as, for instance, a watch or an egg — you need not take the article with the fingers, but may let it simply lie on the palm of the right hand, slightly closing that hand as you move it towards the left. The greater extent of surface in this case will give you plenty of hold, without the necessity of pressing the article into the palm. Re-



Fig. 3.



Fig. 4.

member that, in any case, the two hands must work in harmony, as in the genuine act of passing an article from the one hand to the other. The left hand must therefore rise to meet the right, but should not begin its journey until the right hand begins its own. Nothing looks more awkward or unnatural than to see the left hand extended with open palm, before the right hand has begun to move towards it.

After the pass is made, a judicious use of the wand will materially assist in concealing the fact that the object still remains in the right hand. For this purpose the performer should, before commencing the pass, carelessly place the wand under either arm, as though merely to leave his hands free. Immediately that the pass is made the right hand should, with a sort of back-handed move-

ment, which under the circumstances is perfectly natural, grasp the wand, draw it from under the arm, and thenceforth retain it till an opportunity occurs of disposing of the coin as may be necessary. The position of the fingers in the act of holding the wand is such as to effectually mask the concealed coin, while yet the hand appears perfectly easy and natural.

**To Secretly Change a Coin.**—You desire, we will suppose, to exchange—or, in conjurers' parlance, to “ring”—a coin, marked by a spectator. You have a coin, which we will call the “substitute,” ready palmed in your left hand, of course taking care to keep the palm turned away from the audience. Taking the marked coin in the right hand, you palm it in that hand by the Pass, but instead of closing the left hand, as the fingers of the right touch it, keep that hand loosely open, and show lying on its palm the substitute, which the spectators take to be the original just placed there by your right hand.

A word of caution may here be desirable. These passes must by no means be regarded as being themselves tricks, but only as processes to be used in the performance of tricks. If the operator, after pretending to pass the coin, say, from the right hand to the left, and showing that it had vanished from the left hand, were to allow his audience to discover that it had all along remained in his right hand, they might admire the dexterity with which he had in this instance deceived their eyes, but they would henceforth guess half the secret of any trick in which palming was employed. If it is necessary immediately to reproduce the coin, the performer should do so by appearing to find it in the hair or whiskers of a spectator, or in any other place that may suit his purpose, remembering always to indicate beforehand that it has passed to such a place, thereby diverting the general attention from himself. As the coin is already in his

hand, he has only to drop it to his finger-tips as the hand reaches the place he has named, in order, to all appearance, to take it from thence.

Having given this little piece of advice as to the hand in which the coin actually is, we must add a few words more as to the hand in which it is *not*. Whenever you have (apparently) placed any article either in the closed hand, or in some piece of apparatus from which it is afterwards to disappear, you should not, as a rule, show that the article has departed from the spot where you have apparently placed it, without interposing some magical process, however slight, which may colorably account for its disappearance. A mere nothing will suffice — a touch of the wand, the pronouncing of a magic formula, the pressure of a finger; but in some form or other the ceremony should never be omitted. Thus, to take a very simple example, we will suppose that by means of the Pass you have apparently placed in the left hand a coin, which really remains in the palm of the right. If you at once open the left hand, and show that the coin is not there, the spectators will naturally jump to the correct explanation, viz., that you did not, in reality, put the coin there at all. If, however, you delay opening the left hand for a minute or two, so as to let the audience get accustomed to the idea that the coin is therein, and then, before opening it, touch the hand mysteriously with your wand, or even simply, as you slowly open the left hand, rub the ball of the wrist with the fingers of the hand which holds the coin, you not only give that hand an occupation apparently inconsistent with the fact of anything remaining concealed in it, but you suggest to the audience that the gesture in question is the cause of the disappearance of the coin. It is surprising what an effect even such a trifle as this has in misleading the judgment of a spectator. He knows perfectly well, in the abstract, that touching the closed hand



with the wand, or rubbing it with a finger of the opposite hand, is not an adequate cause for the disappearance of the coin; but the fact being indisputable that the coin *has* disappeared, the mind unconsciously accepts the explanation which is thus indirectly offered. The advice here given becomes less important where, before the hand is opened, you are able to get rid of the object from that in which it originally appeared. Here the spectator is precluded from imagining that you retained it in the hand in which he first saw it, as that hand also is shown to be empty, and the absolute disappearance of the coin being a self-evident fact, you may leave the spectator to account for it in his own manner.

The passes and exchanges are of continual use in conjuring; indeed, we may say that three parts of its marvels depend on them. Such an exchange having been made, the substitute is left in sight of the audience, while the performer, having thus secretly gained possession of the original, disposes of it as may be necessary for the purpose of the trick.

**The Half-dollar Wand.**—This is a wand, apparently of ebony, but really of brass, japanned black. It is about twelve inches in length, and five-eighths of an inch in diameter. On one side of it, and so placed as to be just under the ball of the thumb when the wand is held in the hand, is a little stud, which moves backwards and forwards for a short distance (about an inch and a quarter) like the sliding ring of a pencil case. When this stud is pressed forward, a half-dollar appears on the opposite end of the wand (see Fig. 6), retiring within it when the stud is again drawn back. The half-dollar is a genuine one, but it is cut into three portions, as indicated in Fig. 7, which represents a transverse section of it at right angles to the actual cuts. Each of the three segments is attached to a piece of watch-spring, and from the direction of the cuts it is obvious that, when these

pieces of watch-spring are pressed together (as they naturally are when drawn back into the wand), *c* will be drawn behind, and *a* in front of *b*. (See Fig. 5.)

The wand can be used as follows: The performer palms in his left hand as many half-dollars as he intends to produce. Then, taking the wand in the right hand, and lightly touching with it the spot whence he desires to (apparently) produce a half-dollar, he pushes forward

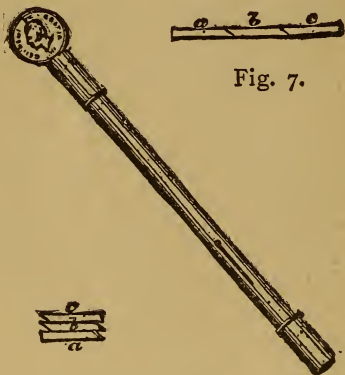


Fig. 5.

Fig. 6.

the stud, and the split coin appears on the opposite end of the wand. He now draws the upper part of the wand through the left hand, at the same moment pressing back the stud, and causing the split coin to retire within the wand, immediately handing for examination with the left hand one of the half-dollars already placed there, and which by this gesture he appears to have just taken from the top of the wand. This is again repeated, and another half-dollar exhibited, till the stock in the left hand is exhausted.

It is desirable, on each occasion of pressing forward or withdrawing the stud, to place the opposite end of the wand in such a situation as to be a little shielded



from the eyes of the spectators, so that they may not see the actual appearance or disappearance of the coin. A very slight "cover" will be sufficient. The end of the wand may be placed within a person's open mouth (and withdrawn with the half-dollar thereon), within a pocket, or the like. Where no such cover is available a quick semi-circular sweep should be made with the wand as the coin is protruded or withdrawn.

The wand may be effectively introduced in the trick of the Shower of Money, which next follows. After having caught in the ordinary manner such number of coins as he thinks fit, the performer perceives, or pretends to perceive, that the audience suspects that the coins are in some manner concealed in his right hand. To show that this is not the case he offers to catch a few coins on the top of his wand instead of in his hand, and finishes the trick by producing two or three on the wand accordingly. Wherever you can, as in this instance, produce the same result by two wholly different methods, the effect on the spectators is most bewildering. Their conjectures as to the explanation of the first method being inadmissible as to the second, and *vice versa*. The more they puzzle over the matter the further they are likely to be from a correct solution.

**The Shower of Money.**—The performer borrows a hat, which he holds in his left hand. Turning up his sleeves, he announces that he requires a certain number, say ten, of half-dollars. The spectators put their hands in their pockets with the idea of contributing to the supposed loan; but the professor, anticipating their intention, says, "No, thank you; I won't trouble you this time. There seems to be a good deal of money about to-night; I think I will help myself. See, here is a half-dollar hanging to the gaselier. Here is another climbing up the wall. Here is another just settling on this lady's hair. Excuse me, sir, but you have a half-dollar in your

whiskers. Permit me, madam; you have just placed your foot on another," and so on. At each supposed new discovery the performer takes with his right hand, from some place where there clearly was nothing an instant before, a half-dollar, which he drops into the hat held in his left hand, finally turning over the hat, and pouring the coins from it, to show that there has been "no deception."

The explanation is very simple, the trick being merely a practical application of the art of "palming," though its effect depends on the manner and address of the operator even more than on his skill in sleight-of-hand. The performer provides himself beforehand with ten half-dollars. Of these he palms two in his right hand and the remainder in his left. When he takes the hat he holds it in the left hand, with the fingers inside and the thumb outside, in which position it is comparatively easy to drop the coins one by one from the hand into the hat. When he pretends to see the first half-dollar floating in the air he lets one of the coins in his right hand drop to his finger tips, and, making a clutch at the air, produces it as if just caught. The first coin he really does drop into the hat, taking care that all shall see clearly that he does so. He then goes through a similar process with the second, but when the time comes to drop it into the hat he merely pretends to do so, palming the coin quickly in the right hand, and at the same moment letting fall into the hat one of the coins concealed in his left hand. The spectators, hearing the sound, naturally believe it to be occasioned by the fall of the coin they have just seen. The process is repeated until the coins in the left hand are exhausted. Once more the performer appears to clutch a coin from space, and, showing for the last time that which has all along been in his right hand, tosses it into the air and catches it visibly in the hat. Pouring out the coins on a tray, or into the lap of one of the company, he re-

quests that they may be counted, when they are found to correspond with the number which he has apparently collected from the surrounding atmosphere.

Sometimes a performer, by way of bringing the trick to a smart conclusion, after he has dropped in all the coins, will remark, "The hat begins to get heavy," or he will make some similar observation, at the same time dipping the right hand into the hat, as if to gauge the quantity obtained; and he will then give the money a shake, bringing up the hand with four or five of the coins slipped breadthwise against the lowest joints of the second and third fingers. Then he will pretend to catch in quick succession that number of coins, each time sliding one of the coins with the thumb to the finger tips, and tossing it into the hat.

**The Tray of Proteus.**—The tray will not only change, but add, subtract, or vanish coins, under the very eyes of the spectators. In form it is an oblong octagon, measuring eight inches by six, and standing about three-quarters of an inch high. (See Fig. 8.) It is divided across the center, and one half of the center portion is movable. The opposite or fixed side of the tray is divided horizontally (see Fig. 9, representing a longitudinal section) into two levels or platforms, *a* and *b*, the lower, *b*, having a raised edge. Where the tray is to be used for the purpose of "changing," the coins to be substituted are placed in a row on the upper platform, *a*. The genuine coins are placed by the performer, holding the tray as indicated in Fig. 8, on the movable flap, *c*. Slightly lowering the opposite end of the tray, he presses the button *d*, thus sloping the flap *c*, and the coins naturally slide into *b*. Still keeping the flap open, he now tilts up the opposite end of the tray. The genuine coins cannot return, by reason of the raised edge of *b*; but the substitute coins in their turn slide out upon *c*, which is then allowed to return to its original position. The necessary

movement is in skillful hands so rapid in execution that, where coins of the same kind are substituted — *e. g.*, half-dollars for half-dollars — the most acute spectator cannot detect that any change has taken place. A most startling effect is produced by substituting coins of a different kind, as pennies for half-dollars, the coins appearing to be transformed by a mere shake into a different metal. The change involving a double process — *viz.*,

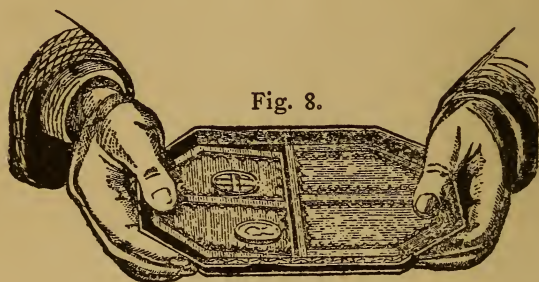


Fig. 8.

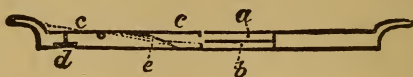


Fig. 9.

the disappearance of certain coins and the appearance of others — it is obvious that the tray will be equally available for either process singly. Thus coins placed upon the tray may be made to instantly vanish, or, by reversing the process, coins may be made to appear where there was nothing a moment previously. In like manner, a given number of coins may be increased to a larger, or decreased (in this case really *changed*) to a smaller number.

This tray has one end of *a* and *b* closed by a little slide, hidden beneath the edge of the tray, to allow of the money therein being extracted when necessary.

**To Make a Person Find Himself Richer than He Thought He was.**—This would be an agreeable and



welcome surprise to most of us; unfortunately, it is but transitory in this instance. You commence by asking the assistance of a gentleman to act as broker, as you wish to borrow twelve quarters and he is to collect them. Having done so, you tell him to count them, one at a time, on the table, to make sure he has the right number, and while he is doing so you ask another person also to assist you, and palm four quarters of your own. You now ask the person with the money to give you four quarters, which you request your second assistant to hold; and then, counting the other eight, you take them in your hand, offer them to the first person to hold, and placing them in his hand, you drop the palmed four with them, and tell him to close his hand tightly upon them, and extend his arm. Now take the four coins from the other party, and, holding them between the second finger and thumb of the right hand, appear to transfer them to the left, but make the pass, retaining them in the right hand, and close the left in the usual way, giving the impression to the audience that you really have transferred them to that hand. You must now drop the four coins so received into your pocket or elsewhere. Ask the person holding the coins whether he has let any drop, and how many he had. He replies that he has eight. You then tell him that you are going to make the four you hold pass from your hand into his, and he will then have an even dozen. Make the assumed magical passes with the wand, and give the command for the coins to pass from your left hand into his, and then, upon opening your hand, it is found to be empty, and upon his counting the coins out upon the table he finds he has twelve instead of eight.

To Fill with Coins a Tumbler which is upon the Stage, the Coins being Collected in the Audience.— You have two tumblers, one of which is upon the *servante* and filled with gold or silver coins, or a mixture of both;

imitation coins will do for this, and these can be procured at any of the conjuring depôts. The other tumbler is upon the table, as is also a large handkerchief. You pass the empty tumbler and handkerchief round for examination, and upon their being returned you retire to your table; then, appearing to throw the handkerchief over the empty tumbler from the front, you rapidly exchange it for the full one upon the *servante*, and taking it by the top through the handkerchief, place it upon a table or chair at the back of the stage. The most difficult part is the collection of coins, for which you must be an adept at sleight-of-hand. You must palm five or six coins, and then going down to the audience you must affect to find the coins first in one place, then in another, sometimes a single one and sometimes several, which you "pass" into the tumbler upon the stage, your assistant behind the scenes dropping into the glass one or more as you instruct him by saying the number you have found: he would, of course, vary the time of the several journeys, to give a more genuine impression. Each time you found a coin or coins you would have to show them, and in order to avoid being too closely watched, you would have to go in various parts of the audience, and keep moving from place to place. You should have coins palmed in either hand, so as to catch the coins in either direction without intimation. If you only had them in one, of course the audience would confine their attention to that one; but as you use both the attention is more than divided, as the spectators do not know which you are going to use as you dart out first the right and then the left. When you have collected a certain number, you return to the stage and upon removing the handkerchief the glass is found to be more or less full of coins, which you empty out upon a table, but do not pass them for examination. In the event of this trick being performed in a small hall or drawing-room, the assistant would also have to cover his



glass with a handkerchief, to deaden the sound of the dropping coins.

**New Coin Catching.**—The trick consists in catching a few stray half-dollars from the air upon the brim of some borrowed hat.

To work this experiment a faked coin must be used.

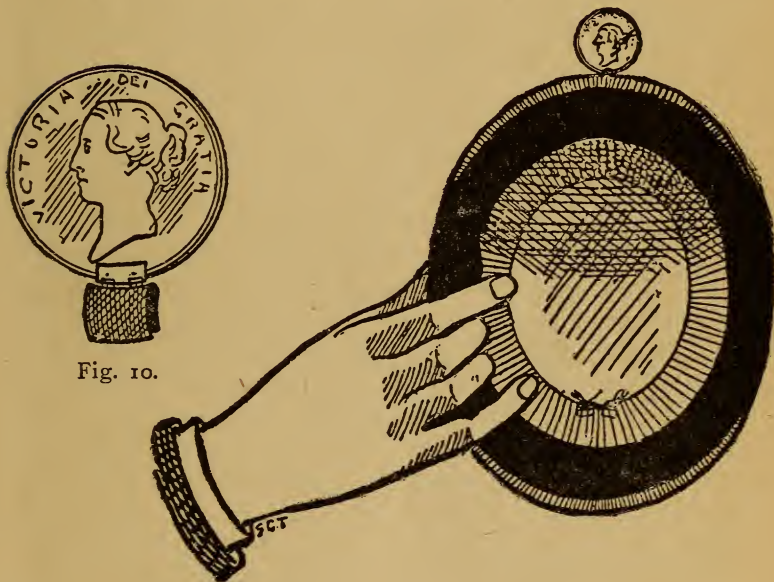


Fig. 10.

Fig. 11.

A half-dollar will have to be hinged to a small black steel clip (see Fig. 10), which is of a size to fit moderately tight over the brim of a hat. Now the secret should be apparent. A hat is borrowed, and the clip slipped over the brim in the act of returning to the stage.

Because of the hinge the coin will lay down behind the brim, and the clip will not be noticed on account of its being the same color as the hat, which must be held

in the right hand, while the left secretly palms two or three coins from some convenient pocket.

Now, if the hat is jerked sharply upward, the half-dollar will suddenly appear upon the edge of the brim, from where it is apparently removed by the left hand.

Instead of taking the faked coin away, one of the palmed half-dollars is produced and the hinged piece of money pushed back behind the brim.

This operation can be executed any number of times until the supply of palmed money is exhausted; the prepared coin can then be removed in such a manner that the finger and thumb hide the clip while it is being placed on to the table with the other half-dollars so mysteriously produced. The illustration (Fig. 11) will explain anything that is not quite clear.

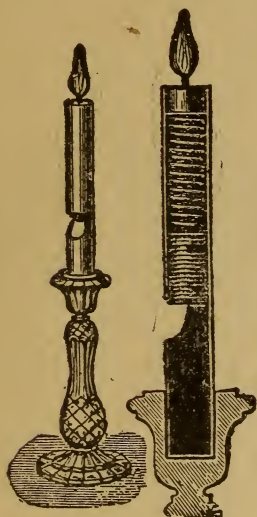


Fig. 12.

**To Produce Coins from a Lighted Candle.**—The “candle” in this case is a metal tube, japped in imitation of wax, with a space an inch or so

deep at top for the insertion of a small piece of real candle. In the lower part of the tube is an opening. (See Fig. 12), admitting of a number of quarters being packed, one upon another, within the body of the candle, where they are kept in position, just level with the upper part of the opening, by the downward pressure of a spiral spring. The edges of the horizontal part of the opening are turned in on either side just sufficiently to prevent the coins being forced beyond that point, though they can be drawn out horizontally with the tip of the finger with the greatest ease. The construction of the center portion of the candle

is, in fact, exactly like that of the brass purses sold for containing a number of coins.

The candle is brought forward, lighted, and placed on the table. (It is hardly necessary to remark that the opening is kept studiously to the back, and not shown in profile, as in our illustration.) The performer, requiring a quarter for the purpose of some trick, first endeavors, after the usual manner of conjurers, to borrow it, but, bethinking himself, says, "But I need not trouble you — I'll get it from the candle."

So saying, he places his hand behind the candle, and gently strokes it from bottom to top (fingers on one side and thumb on the other), terminating at the flame, at which he makes a sort of pinch. He does this once or twice without result, but at, say, the third "stroke," inserts the tip of the third finger into the opening, and draws out one coin, which he carries quickly upward, and produces it as if from the flame. The pile is pressed down by the spring, and the next coin brought to the opening, to be produced in due course.

Twelve or more coins may be thus produced in succession.

#### **The Animated Coin, which Answers Questions.—**

The performer borrows a coin, and after making a few mesmeric passes over it, drops it into a glass upon the table where it immediately begins to jump about as if alive. The performer then announces that the coin thus mesmerized has the power of fortune-telling, naming chosen cards, predicting the number that will be thrown by a pair of dice, etc. The coin answers "Yes" by jumping three times, "No" by jumping once.

One plan is for the performer to have a coin of his own, to which is attached a long black silk thread, the other end of which is in the hand of an assistant behind the scenes, or elsewhere out of sight of the audience. This coin is placed on the table in readiness, but con-

cealed from the spectators by some larger object in front of it. When the performer advances to the table with the borrowed coin, he secretly picks up the prepared one, and drops the latter into the glass as being that which he borrowed. A short, quick jerk of the thread by the assistant will make the coin spring up and fall back again, producing the required chink. It is only necessary to be careful not to jerk the thread so violently as to make the coin fly out of the glass. It is desirable, where practicable, to make the thread pass either through a hole in the top of the table, or a ring fixed to its surface and placed immediately behind the glass. This will keep that portion of the thread nearest to the glass perpendicular behind it, in which position it will be completely hidden by the glass, and so be invisible.

Some performers prefer to use the actual coin borrowed. The arrangements in this case are the same as above described, save that the silk thread, instead of having a substitute coin attached to it, has merely a pellet of wax at its end. The performer having handed round the glass for inspection, and standing in front of the table with his left side turned towards the audience, picks up a pellet of wax with his right hand at the same moment that, holding the borrowed coin in his left hand, he begs the spectators to take especial notice that he really uses the borrowed coin, and no other. Having said this, he transfers the coin, by a perfectly natural movement, to his right hand, and pressing against the waxen pellet, drops it into the glass.

The ordinary fortune telling questions, as to "Which young lady will be married first?" "Which spends the most time at her looking-glass?" "Which has most sweethearts?" and so on, are either answered in accordance with previous arrangement, or according to the fancy of the moment. Of course, where a question of this kind is asked, the performer takes care to follow up



the question by designating a number of persons in succession, so that a mere "Yes" or "No" may be a sufficient answer.

**To Make a Coin Pass up Your Sleeve.**—This is a sleight-of-hand trick, and a little practice will enable you to do it well. Take a coin between the forefinger and thumb; then, by a rapid twist of the fingers, twirl it by a similar movement as though about to spin a teetotum; at the same time close your hand, and the coin will vanish up your coat sleeve, and you can show your hand to be empty.

**To Make a Coin Pass up the Right-arm Coat-sleeve, Round the Back, Down the Left Arm, and Into the Hand.**—This is a capital illusion, but is really the outcome of the above. You have a half-dollar palmed in the left hand, and then borrow two others, one of which take in each hand, between the forefinger and thumb. With the right hand you send the coin up the sleeve, and instantly close both hands, so that the coins in the left hand (the one palmed and the other held in the fingers) are brought together in the left hand. Shake your shoulders, as though helping the one from the right hand to pass round. This, apparently, having been effected, open the left hand, and show the two coins, one of which is supposed to have passed round the body.

**A Lost Coin to Drop from the Ceiling into a Tumbler.**—To commence with, turn up the cuffs of your coat as though you meant business, and then place a half-dollar upon your elbow—the arm being bent for the purpose, by raising the hand towards the shoulder. Suddenly straighten the arm, and catch the coin in your hand. You say, "That is catch one, and easily done with practice," but you will show them another; and this time place the coin between the elbow and the wrist, and by suddenly bringing the arm down the coin will fall, unseen by anyone, into the turned-up cuff. You pretend



that you have not got it, remarking that it went too high for you to catch; however, you will cause it to fall from the ceiling into a tumbler, for which purpose you take a tumbler, and place it upon the table. Presuming the coin to be in the right cuff, you take the wand in the left hand, and raising it towards the ceiling, directing the eyes towards a point above, you make certain signs, and then, raising the right hand, without drawing attention to it, above the glass, the coin will fall into the tumbler with an unmistakable chink. You instantly lower the arm, and inquire if no one saw the descent of the coin.

**The Floating Coin.**—As an after-dinner trick this little experiment will be hard to beat. The conjurer borrows a coin and places it easily and steadily on the surface of a finger bowl full of water, and on removing his hand the coin floats on the top of the liquid. Anyone else attempting the same trick will only be rewarded by seeing the coin immediately sink to the bottom of the bowl. In reality this experiment is not performed with the actual borrowed coin, but with one which has been substituted for it. This duplicate coin can be made in two different ways: the first by casting a fac-simile in solid aluminum, the second by procuring two half shells of a coin and soldering them together. Both these fakes will float, although the first one is to be recommended because it gives a true ring when sounded on the table, having an almost undetectable difference from the ring of a genuine piece of money, and, moreover, it is not generally known that aluminum will float. The working should now be plain. A coin is asked for, of the same value as the one that you have palmed. Taking one of the offered pieces, it must be exchanged for the fake, which is floated, and then changed back again before allowing someone else to try the same trick.

**To Rub One Coin into Three.**—This is a simple

little parlor trick, but will sometimes occasion great wonderment. Procure three quarters of the same issue, and privately stick two of them with wax to the under side of a table, at about half an inch from the edge, and eight or ten inches apart. Announce to the company that you are about to teach them how to make money. Turn up your sleeves, and take the third quarter in your right hand, drawing particular attention to its date and general appearance, and indirectly to the fact that you have no other coin concealed in your hands. Turning back the table-cover, rub the coin with the ball of the thumb backwards and forwards on the edge of the table. In this position your fingers will naturally be below the edge. After rubbing for a few seconds, say, "It is nearly done, for the coin is getting hot"; and, after rubbing a moment or two longer with increased rapidity, draw the hand away sharply, carrying away with it one of the concealed quarters, which you exhibit as produced by the friction. Pocketing the waxed coin, and again showing that you have but one coin in your hands, repeat the operation with the remaining quarter.

**The Davenport Cabinet.**—This little cabinet is useful for vanishing coins, watches and the like. It is four inches high and two and a half square, and consists of two parts, an outer case, or body, covered at the top, but otherwise open throughout, and a drawer, occupying the upper portion of its interior space. (See Fig. 13.) When the drawer is removed, the case, which has no bottom, may be examined throughout, and will be found to be perfectly plain and unsophisticated; save that a keen examiner might observe a little brass pin, a quarter of an inch long, projecting from the back of the cabinet on the inside, just on a level with the bottom of the drawer when replaced in its proper position. The drawer may also be examined, and will be found to be perfectly plain, with the bottom (which is so thin as to preclude any

suspicion of a concealed space), covered within and without with black cloth. On turning the drawer round, and examining the back, a minute hole may be discovered, corresponding in situation with the brass pin already mentioned. If a pin be thrust into this hole, the purpose of the two is immediately manifest; for the pressure of the pin releases a tiny catch, and allows the bottom of the drawer, which is in reality only supported by this catch at the back and a cloth hinge in the front, to drop into the position indicated in Fig. 14. This is precisely

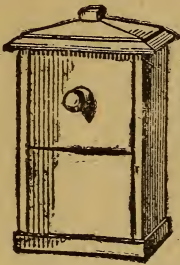


Fig. 13.

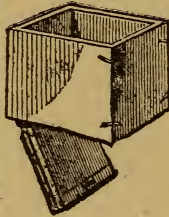


Fig. 14.

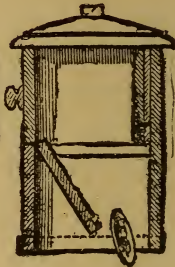


Fig. 15.

what takes place when the drawer, being restored to its proper position in the cabinet, is duly closed. The pressure of the brass pin at the back releases the catch, and the bottom of the drawer falls as just described, and allows any article which may have been placed therein to drop into the hand of the person holding the cabinet. (See Fig. 15.) The act of pulling out the drawer again presses the bottom up to its proper place, where it is secured by the catch until once more released by the pressure of the pin. The strong point of this ingenious little apparatus is that it is absolutely self-acting, and its secret can only be detected by examining the cabinet from below at the moment when the drawer is pushed home; and this it is easy to prevent by the simple expedient of handing each portion *separately* for inspection.

The manner in which it is used is as follows: After having passed the case and the drawer for inspection, take the case upon your left hand, and ask someone to place a marked coin in the drawer, and that in its turn into the case; when it has been thrust back you press the pin, the bottom falls out and the coin comes into your hand waiting for the purpose. You now place the cabinet upon the table, and having come into possession of the marked coin, you can place it in an orange or elsewhere, and make the coin pass from the cabinet to the orange, which, when cut open, shows the coin in the center, while upon anyone of the audience opening the drawer, there is nothing to show that it has been opened, nevertheless, the coin has gone. This is an ingenious contrivance, as both parts can be examined.

**The Nest of Boxes.**—This consists of a number, generally six, but sometimes more, of circular wooden boxes, one within the other, the largest or outer box having much the appearance, but being nearly double the size, of an ordinary tooth-powder box, and the smallest being just large enough to contain a quarter. The series is so accurately made, that by arranging the boxes in due order one within the other, and the lids in like manner, you may, by simply putting on all the lids together, close all the boxes at once, though they can only be opened one by one.

These are placed — the boxes together and the lids together — anywhere so as to be just out of sight of the audience. If on your table, they may be hidden by any more bulky article. Having obtained possession of a coin which is ostensibly deposited in some other piece of apparatus, *e. g.*, the Davenport Cabinet, you seize your opportunity to drop it into the innermost box, and to put on the united lids. You then bring forward the nest of boxes (which the spectators naturally take to be one box only), and announce that the quarter will at your com-



mand pass from the place in which it has been deposited into the box which you hold in your hand, and which you forthwith deliver to one of the audience for safe keeping. Touching both articles with the mystic wand, you invite inspection of the first to show that the money has departed, and then of the box, wherein it is to be found. The holder opens the box, and finds another, and then another, and in the innermost of all, the marked coin. Seeing how long it has taken to open the several boxes, the spectators naturally infer that it must take as long to close them, and (apart from the other mysteries of the trick), are utterly at a loss to imagine how, with the mere moment of time at your command, you could have managed to insert the coin, and close so many boxes.

If you desire to use the nest for a coin larger than a quarter, you can make it available for that purpose by removing beforehand the smallest box. Nests of square boxes, with hinged lids and self-closing locks, are made, both in wood and in tin, on the same principle. These are designed for larger articles, and vary in size and price.

**The Ball of Berlin Wool.**—An easy and effective mode of terminating a money trick is to pass the marked coin into the center of a large ball of Berlin wool or worsted, the whole of which has to be unwound before the coin can be reached. The *modus operandi*, though perplexing to the uninitiated, is absurdly simple when the secret is revealed. The only apparatus necessary over and above the wool (of which you must have enough for a good-sized ball), is a flat tin tube, three to four inches in length, and just large enough to allow the coin you intend to use for the trick to slip through it easily. You prepare for the trick by winding the wool on one end of the tube, in such manner that when the whole is wound in a ball, an inch or so of the tube may project from it. This you place in your pocket, or anywhere out of sight

of the audience. You commence the trick by requesting someone to mark a coin, which you forthwith exchange for a substitute of your own, and leave the latter in possession or in view of the spectators, while you retire to fetch your ball of wool, or simply take it from your pocket. Before producing it, you drop the genuine coin down the tube into the center of the ball, and withdraw the tube, giving the ball a squeeze to remove all trace of an opening. You then bring it forward, and place it in a glass goblet or tumbler, which you hand to a spectator to hold. Taking the substitute coin, you announce that you will make it pass invisibly into the very center of the ball of wool, which you accordingly pretend to do, getting rid of it by means of the Pass. You then request a second spectator to take the loose end of the wool, and to unwind the ball, upon which, when he has done, the coin falls out into the goblet.

The only drawback to the trick is the tediousness of the process of unwinding. To obviate this, some performers use a wheel made for the purpose, which materially shortens the operation.

**The Rattle Box. To Make a Coin Vanish from the Box, though Still Heard to Rattle within It.**—This is a useful and ingenious little piece of apparatus. It is an oblong mahogany box, with a sliding lid. Its dimensions are about three inches by two, and one inch in depth externally; internally, it is only half that depth,

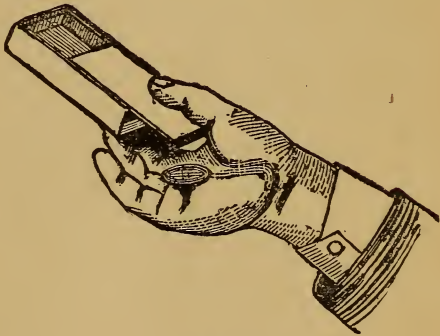


Fig. 16.

and the end piece of the lid is of such a depth as to be flush with the bottom. Thus, if a coin be placed in the box, and the box held in such a position as to slant downwards to the opening, the coin will of its own weight fall into the hand that holds the box (see Fig. 16), thus giving the performer possession of it without the knowledge of the audience.

Between the true and the false bottom of the box is placed a slip of zinc, which, when the box is shaken laterally, moves from side to side, exactly simulating the sound of a coin shaken in the box. In its normal condition, however, this slip of zinc is held fast (and therefore kept silent) by the action of a spring also placed between the two bottoms, but is released for the time being by a pressure on a particular part of the outer bottom (the part in contact with the fingers in Fig. 16). A casual inspection of the box suggests nothing, save, perhaps, that its internal space is somewhat shallow in proportion to its external measurement.

The mode of using it is as follows: The performer invites any person to mark a coin, and to place it in the box, which he holds for that purpose as represented in the figure; and the coin is thus no sooner placed in the box than it falls into his hand. Transferring the box to the other hand, and pressing the spring, he shakes it to show by the sound that the coin is still there; then, leaving the box on the table, he prepares for the next phase of the trick by secretly placing the coin, which the audience believes to be still in the box, in any other apparatus in which he desires it to be found, or makes such other disposition of it as may be necessary. Having done this, and having indicated the direction in which he is about to command the coin to pass, he once more shakes the box to show that it is still *in statu quo*. Then, with the mystic word "Pass!" he opens the box, which is found empty, and shows that his commands have been obeyed.

**The Demon Handkerchief** (*Le Mouchoir du Diable*).—This causes the disappearance of any article placed under it, and is available to vanish not only coin, but a card, an egg, a watch, or any other article of moderate size. It consists of *two* handkerchiefs, of the same pattern, stitched together all round the edges, and with a slit of about four inches in length cut in the middle of one of them. The whole space between the two handkerchiefs thus forms a kind of pocket, of which the slit above mentioned is the only opening. In shaking or otherwise manipulating the handkerchief, the performer takes care always to keep the side with the slit away from the spectators, to whom the handkerchief appears to be merely the ordinary article of everyday use. When he desires by its means to cause the disappearance of anything, he carelessly throws the handkerchief over the article, at the same time secretly passing the latter through the slit in the under side, and hands it thus covered to someone to hold. Then, taking the handkerchief by one corner, he requests him to let go, when the object is retained in the space between the two handkerchiefs, appearing to have vanished into empty air.

**Odd or Even, or the Mysterious Addition.**—This is a trick of almost childish simplicity, depending upon an elementary arithmetical principle. We have, however, known it to occasion great perplexity, even to more than ordinarily acute persons.

You take a handful of coins or counters, and invite another person to do the same, and to ascertain privately whether the number he has taken is odd or even. You request the company to observe that you have not asked him a single question, but that you are able, notwithstanding, to divine and counteract his most secret intentions, and that you will in proof of this, yourself take a number of coins, and add them to those he has taken, when, if his number was odd, the total shall be even; if



his number was even, the total shall be odd. Requesting him to drop the coins he holds into a hat, held on high by one of the company, you drop in a certain number on your own account. He is now asked whether his number was odd or even; and, the coins being counted, the total number proves to be, as you stated, exactly the reverse. The experiment is tried again and again, with different numbers, but the result is the same.

The secret lies in the simple arithmetical fact, that if you add an odd number to an even number the result will be odd; if you add an odd number to an odd number the result will be even. You have only to take care, therefore, that the number you yourself add, whether large or small, shall always be odd.

**A Coin Being Spun upon the Table, to Tell Blindfold Whether It Falls Head or Tail Upwards.**—You borrow a half-dollar, and spin it, or invite some other person to spin it, on the table (which must be without a cloth). You allow it to spin itself out, and immediately announce, without seeing it, whether it has fallen head or tail upwards. This may be repeated any number of times with the same result, though you may be blindfolded, and placed at the further end of the apartment.

The secret lies in the use of a coin of your own, on one face of which (say on the "tail" side) you have cut at the extreme edge a little notch, thereby causing a minute point or tooth of metal to project from that side of the coin. If a coin so prepared be spun on the table, and should chance to go down with the notched side upwards, it will run down like an ordinary coin, with a long continuous "whirr," the sound growing fainter and fainter till it finally ceases; but if it should run down with the notched side downwards, the friction of the point against the table will reduce this final whirr to half its ordinary length, and the coin will finally go down

with a sort of "flop." The difference of sound is not sufficiently marked to attract the notice of the spectators, but is perfectly distinguishable by an attentive ear. If, therefore, you have notched the coin on the "tail" side, and it runs down slowly, you will cry "tail"; if quickly, "head."

If you professedly use a borrowed coin, you must adroitly change it for your own, under pretense of showing how to spin it, or the like.

You should not allow your audience to imagine that you are guided by the sound of the coin, as, if once they have the clew, they will easily learn to distinguish the two sounds. They are not, however, likely to discover the secret of the notch, and if anyone professes to have found out the trick, you may, by again substituting an unprepared coin, safely challenge him to perform it.

**The Magic Quarter.**—Procure a small round box, about one inch deep, to which fit accurately a quarter or cent: line the box with any dark paper (crimson, for instance), and paste some of it on one side of the coin, so that when it lies in the lower part of the box it shall appear like the real box. This quarter or cent is concealed in the hand, and before performing the trick, it will heighten the effect if a number of single quarters or cents are hidden about the room, in places known to yourself. Having borrowed a coin, you dexterously place this on one side, and substitute the prepared one; and putting it gravely into the box, ask all to be sure they have seen it enter: when the lid is on, shake up and down — the noise betrays the metal; now command it to disappear, and shake laterally from side to side; as the quarter is made to fit accurately, no noise is apparent — the coin seems to be gone; in proof of which you open the box, and display the interior; the paper on the coin conceals it, whilst you direct the audience to look into a book, or a pair of slippers, for the missing quarter; the

prepared coin can be slipped out, and the box handed round for examination, in which, of course, nothing will be found. This trick may be repeated two or three times with the greatest success, and is so simple that nobody guesses the manner of performance.

**The Disappearing Dime.**—Provide yourself with a piece of India rubber cord about twelve inches long, and a dime with a hole on the edge; attach the dime to the cord with a piece of white sewing silk, and after having done this, sew the cord to your coat sleeve lining, but be very careful and ascertain that the end upon which the dime is attached does not extend lower than within two inches of the extreme end of the sleeve when the coat is on. It is better to have the dime in the left arm sleeve. Having done this, bring down the dime with the right hand, and place it between the thumb and index finger of the left hand, and, showing it to the company, tell them that you will give the coin to anyone present who will not let it slip away. You must then select one of the audience to whom you proffer the dime, and just as he is about to receive it you must let it slip from between your fingers, and the contraction of the elastic cord will make the coin disappear up your sleeve, much to the astonishment of the person who thinks he is about to receive it. This feat can be varied by pretending to wrap the coin in a piece of paper, or a handkerchief. Great care should be taken not to let any part of the cord be seen, as this would, of course, discover the trick.

## CARD TRICKS

Among the various branches of the conjurer's art none will better repay the labor of the student, whether artist or amateur, than the magic of cards. It has the especial advantage of being, in a great measure, independent of time and place. The materials for half its mysteries are procurable at five minutes notice in every home circle.

The adept in sleight-of-hand should accustom himself to the use of every description of cards, but whenever possible in actual performance ordinary cards of the "steam-boat" pattern should be used. In any case, it is well to use only the piquet pack of thirty-two cards (the twos, threes, fours, fives, and sixes being removed), the complete pack being inconveniently bulky for sleight-of-hand purposes.

**To Make the Pass** (*Sauter la Coupe*).—The effect of this sleight, which is the very backbone of card conjuring, is to reverse the respective positions of the top and bottom halves of the pack, *i. e.*, to make those cards which at first formed the lower half of the pack come uppermost, when those cards which at first formed the upper half will, of course, be undermost.

Hold the pack in the left hand lengthwise, with the face downward, as if about to deal at any game. In this position the thumb will naturally be on the left side of the pack and the four fingers on the other. Insert the top joint of the little finger immediately above those cards which are to be brought to the top of the pack (and which are now undermost), and let the remaining three fingers close naturally on the remaining cards, which are now



uppermost. (See Fig. 17.) In this position you will find that the uppermost part of the pack is held between

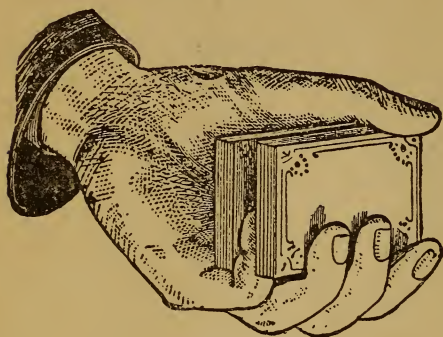


Fig. 17.

the little finger, which is underneath, and the remaining fingers, which are upon it. Now advance the right hand and cover the pack with it. Grasp the lower portion of the pack lengthwise between the

second finger at the upper and the thumb at the lower end, the left thumb lying, slightly bent, across the pack. Press the inner edge of the lower packet into the fork

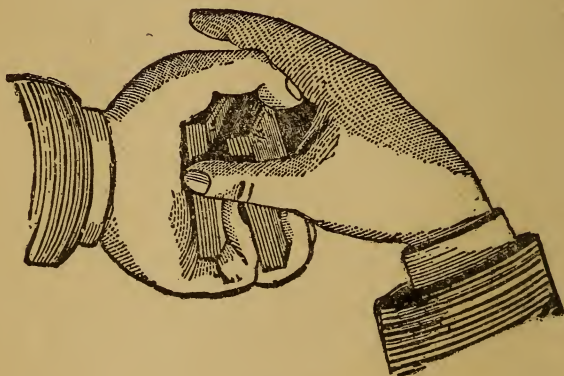


Fig. 18.

of the left thumb, so that the two packets will be as shown in Fig. 18. Next draw away the upper packet by slightly extending the fingers of the left hand, at the same time lifting up the *outer* edge of the lower

packet, till the edges of the two packets just clear each other (see Fig. 19), when by the mere act of closing the left hand they will be brought together as at first, save that they will have changed places. Do this at first very slowly, aiming only at neatness and noiselessness of execution. At the outset the task will be found somewhat difficult, but gradually the hands will be found

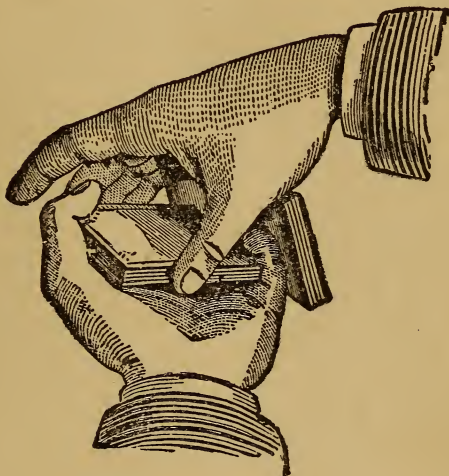


Fig. 19.

to acquire a sort of sympathetic action, the different movements which we have described will melt, as it were, into one, and the two packets will seem to actually pass through each other. A slight momentary depression and elevation of the hands (apparently a mere careless gesture) in the act of making the pass will completely cover the transposition of the cards, which in the hands of an adept is invisible, even to the most watchful spectator.

The above is the most perfect method of making the Pass, and if the student be proficient in this he need trouble himself very little about other methods.

**To Force a Card.**—By this phrase is signified the compelling a person to draw such a card as you desire, though he is apparently allowed absolute freedom of choice. Your first step is to get a sight of the bottom card, or, if you want to force a predetermined card, to get that card to the bottom. Having done this, take the pack in the left hand and insert the little finger half way down in readiness to make the pass. Make the pass, but before uniting the two halves of the pack in their new position again slip the little finger of the left hand between them. (The two halves will now be united at the end which is toward the spectators, but divided by the little finger at the end nearest to yourself, and the original bottom card, which is the one you desire to force, is now the bottom of the top heap, resting on the little finger.) Using both hands, with the thumbs above and the fingers below the pack, spread out the cards fan-wise from left to right, at the same time offering them to the person who is to draw, and requesting him to select a card. Keep the little finger of the left hand still on the face of the card to be chosen, or you may now use, if more convenient, the same finger of the right hand, both being underneath the cards. As the person advances his hand to draw, move the cards onward with the thumb, so that the particular card shall reach his fingers just at the moment when he closes them in order to draw, and if you have followed these directions properly it is ten to one that he will draw the card you wish. It may possibly be imagined that forcing is a very difficult matter, and requires an extraordinary degree of dexterity, but this is by no means the case. The principal thing which a beginner must guard against is a tendency to offer the particular card a little *too soon*. When the cards are first presented to the drawer the pack should be barely spread at all, and the card in question should be ten or fifteen cards off. The momentary hesitation of the drawer in

making his choice will give time, by moving the cards quicker or slower, as may be necessary, to bring that card opposite his fingers at the right moment. Should the performer, however, miscalculate his time, and the card pass the drawer's fingers before the choice is made, he need not be embarrassed. Still keeping the little finger on the card, he should sharply close the cards, and, making some remark as to the drawer being "difficult to please" or the like, again spread them as before, and offer them for the choice.

A moderate degree of practice will make the student so proficient that even a person acquainted with the secret of forcing will have to be very wide-awake in order not to take the desired card. There are some illusions which depend upon the drawer taking a card similar in suit and number to one already prepared elsewhere for the purpose of the trick. In this case it is, of course, absolutely necessary that the card drawn should be the right one, and as even the most accomplished performer cannot always be certain of forcing a single card, another expedient must be used in order to insure success. This is made absolutely certain by the use of what is called a "forcing pack"—*i. e.*, a pack in which all the cards are alike. Thus if the knave of hearts is the card to be drawn, the whole pack will consist of knaves of hearts, and the drawer may therefore do his utmost to exercise a free choice, but the card which he draws will certainly be the knave of hearts, and no other.

**To "Slip" a Card.**—Hold the pack in the left hand, having first slightly moistened the fingers, which should rest upon the back of the cards. Open the pack book-wise, at an angle of about 45 degrees, holding the upper packet lengthwise between the thumb and second finger of the right hand. Draw this upper packet smartly upward to a distance of two or three inches from the lower packet. (See Fig. 20.) The top card of the upper



packet, being held back by the pressure of the fingers upon it, will not move upward with the rest of the packet, but immediately the remaining cards are clear will fold itself down on the top of the lower packet. If the top card of the lower packet be examined before and after the slip, the card will appear to have changed, the fact being that the original top card becomes the second after the slip, the slipped card covering it.

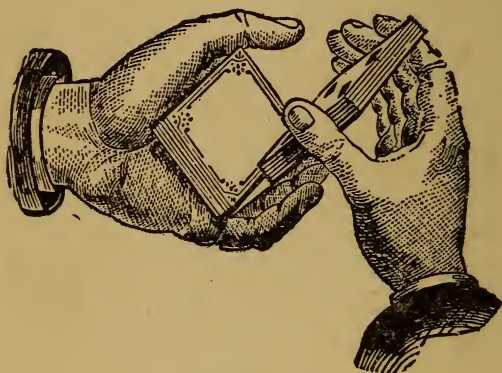


Fig. 20.

**To "Change" a Card (*Filer la Carte*).**—Some of the most brilliant effects in card conjuring are produced by the aid of this sleight, by means of which a card, fairly exhibited, is forthwith apparently transformed to a different one.

Hold the pack in the left hand, as though about to deal the cards. Hold the card to be changed in the right hand, between the first and second fingers. (See Fig. 21.) The card into which it is to be changed should have been previously placed (secretly, of course) on the top of the pack. Push this card a little forward with the left thumb, so as to make it project about three-quarters of an inch beyond the remaining cards. Bring the hands

close together for an instant, and in that instant place the card held in the right hand *under* the pack (the second, third, and fourth fingers of the left hand opening to receive it, and the remaining finger making way for it as soon as it reaches the pack). Simultaneously with this movement, the thumb and first finger of the right hand must close upon the card projecting from the top of the pack, and as the hands separate carry with them that card in place of the one which the right hand originally held. A half turn of the body to the left or right,

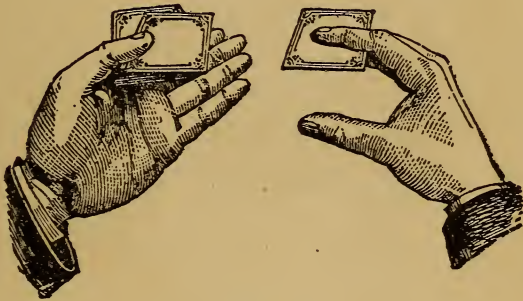


Fig. 21.

a quick downward sweep of the right hand, or any other rapid gesture, will assist in covering the momentary bringing together of the hands.

**To Spring the Cards from One Hand to the Other.**—This is a mere flourish, and belongs rather to the art of the juggler than to that of the magician, but it is so frequently exhibited by conjurers that a work on magic would hardly be complete without some notice of it. The cards are held in the right hand, between the tips of the second and third fingers at the top, and the thumb at the bottom. If the thumb and fingers are now brought slowly nearer together, so as to bend the cards slightly, they will one by one, in quick succession (beginning with the bottom card) spring away from the pack;

and if the pressure be continued, the whole of the cards will spring away one after the other in this manner. If the left hand be held at ten or twelve inches from the right, with the fingers slightly bent, the released cards will be shot into the left hand, which, as the last cards reach it, should be rapidly brought palm to palm with the right, and square up the pack to repeat the process. By giving the body a quick half turn to the right as the cards are sprung from one hand to the other you may make the hands (and with them the moving cards) de-

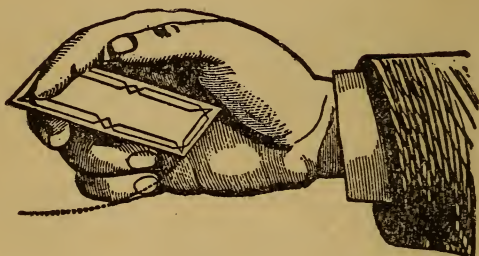


Fig. 22.

scribe an arc of about two feet, and so deceive the eye of the spectator into the belief that the hands are that distance apart, though in reality, as they both move together in the same direction, they retain throughout their original relative distance of ten or twelve inches.

**To Throw a Card.**—This sleight also belongs rather to the ornamental than to the practical part of conjuring, but it is by no means to be despised. It is a decided addition to a card trick for the performer to be able to say, "You observe, ladies and gentlemen, that the cards I use are all of a perfectly ordinary character," and by way of offering them for examination, to send half a dozen in succession flying into the remote corners of the hall or theater.

The card should be held lightly between the first and

second fingers, in the position shown in Fig. 22. The hand should be curved inward toward the wrist, and then straightened with a sudden jerk, the arm being at the same time shot sharply forward. The effect of this movement is that the card as it leaves the hand revolves in the plane of its surface in the direction indicated by the dotted line, and during the rest of its course maintains such revolution. This spinning motion gives the flight of the card strength and directness which it would seem impossible to impart to so small and light an object.

A skilled performer will propel cards in this way to a distance of sixty or eighty feet, each card traveling with the precision and well-nigh the speed of an arrow shot from a bow. The movement, though perfectly simple in theory, is by no means easy to acquire in practice. Indeed, we know no sleight which, as a rule, gives more trouble at the outset, but after a certain amount of labor with little or no result, the student suddenly acquires the desired knack, and thenceforth finds no difficulty whatever in the matter.

**New Thought Card Sleight.**—This is an entirely new method of discovering the name of a card that a spectator has secretly thought of.

The performer takes a pack of cards that has just been shuffled by a spectator, and, holding the cards (of the order of which he has absolutely no knowledge) in the right hand, with the backs of the cards toward himself, passes them one at a time into the left hand, at the same time requesting a spectator to think of any card that he desires. After the person has signified that he has made a selection, the performer closes up the pack and gives it a thorough shuffle. He now finishes the trick in any manner that he chooses, producing, for instance, the thought card at any number called for, or causing any card that someone else selects at random from the pack to change into a thought card.



The secret of this entirely new dodge depends practically upon a novel application of the mind reading act, *a la* Bishop and Cumberland. As the performer deliberately passes the cards from the right hand to the left, he counts them, at the same time carefully watching the eyes of the spectator, to whom he is rather close. It is a curious fact that as soon as the latter has made a silent choice his eyes will give a recognition of that fact by the glance losing its intensity. The conjurer can thus almost invariably tell which card has been selected, and, having kept tally on the number of cards passed, knows its exact position in the pack. It is a comparatively easy matter for him to make the pass at this place, thereby bringing the desired card to the top of the pack, which is next subjected to a vigorous but false shuffle. The finish of the trick, which is optional with the performer, ought to be made as brilliant a one as possible.

**To Distinguish the Suit of Any Given Card by Weight.**—This feat depends upon a little preliminary preparation of the cards. Selecting a pack with glazed backs, you “mark” them by the simple expedient of drawing a wet finger with some little pressure across one end of each, as follows: For the hearts, right along the edge; for the spades, from the left-hand corner half way across, and for the clubs, from the middle to the right-hand corner. The diamonds have no mark. The strip of moistened surface should not be more than an eighth of an inch in width. The cards being allowed to dry, it will be found that, when looked at obliquely, the glazed surface shows a dull streak wherever the finger has passed, although not sufficiently marked to attract the attention of the casual observer.

The performer hands the cards to be shuffled, and requests that they be given back to him one by one, when he will tell, by its weight, of what suit each card is. He receives the card face downward on the extended right

hand, and, moving it gently up and down, as though to estimate its weight, is able without difficulty to observe how it is marked, and to describe it accordingly. If it bears no mark he declares with confidence that it is a diamond.

Should anyone seem to have a suspicion that the cards are marked, a diamond may be put into his hand for examination. These, having no mark, tell no tales.

**To Make All the Cards, Except a Chosen One, Fall to the Floor.**—Having brought the chosen card to the bottom of the pack, and face upwards, request one of the audience to hold the cards for you for a moment. You tell him to put the fingers underneath about one inch, and the thumb on top, to prevent them falling, and ask him to hold them tolerably firmly; at the same time give them a smart rap with your finger on top, and all the cards will fall to the floor, save the one chosen, which is facing him, and retained in the hand.

The same result may be obtained by holding the cards with the fingers on the top and thumb under, the chosen card being on the top of the pack. This time you must strike the cards upwards. The cards will be scattered, but the chosen one will remain in the hand.

**To Catch Two Cards Thought of in the Air with the Hand.**—This is a rather clever illusion, and very easy. After having placed the two chosen cards, one at the top and the other at the bottom of the pack, you hold the pack in your right hand, between the fingers and thumb, which have been previously moistened. You press the cards, make a movement upwards with the arm, and loosen the pressure with the fingers; this will at once release all the cards between the two chosen, and they are sent into the air; close the fingers and thumb, which now hold the two cards thought of, and make a dash with the hand as if to catch something amongst the released cards. In the confusion of cards, no one will notice that

those chosen have never left the hand. The movement must, of course, be rapid.

**To Tell the Cards Thought of by Four Persons.**—The pack having been shuffled, offer it to a person to select four cards from it; this being done, offer it to a second, third, and fourth person to select four each. Now request each person to select in his mind one card from the four he holds, and taking the several fours in your hands, face downwards, one heap upon the other, deal four out upon the table, face upwards, and upon these the next four. Continue in like manner until the sixteen cards are on the table again in four heaps. You ask the first person in which heap his card is, which having been pointed out, his card is the first or uppermost of the heap; the second person's is the second card of the heap he points to, the third person's is the third of the group, and the fourth person's is found at the bottom of the heap. You could, of course, mention them as the several persons specify the heaps, but it is much better in all tricks to avoid giving any clew as to how you derive your information; therefore if you can do it, notice the cards, and pick up the heaps again, and dealing them out in rotation name the cards as they are exposed. It is quite possible that two, or even the four, by accident fall in the same heap; this makes no difference — the first person's must be the first card, and the second person's the next, and so on. This trick can be done also with three, five, six, or seven persons; the secret is merely to let each person have the same number of cards as there are people to choose — *i. e.*, if there are three persons, each must have three cards, if five, then five cards — and proceed as indicated.

**Sixteen Cards being Placed upon a Table, to Guess the One Thought of.**—Place the cards in two rows of eight each, as A and B, and request a person to think of one. For illustration, we will suppose he chooses number 7 in row A.

A	B	C	D	E	F	H	J
1	9	1	2	1	3	3	7*
2	10	3	4	5	7*	&c.	&c.
3	11	5	6	2	4		
4	12	7*	8	&c.	&c.		
5	13	9	10				
6	14	11	12				
7*	15	13	14				
8	16	15	16				

You can, therefore, in your mind, discard all the row B, but for effect keep them in use. It is as well in laying the cards to let 2 slightly overlap 1, and 3 2, &c., so as to gather them easily, by running one over the other, which retains the order. In this way pick up row A, and then row B, A being uppermost, face downwards. Now make two more rows, C, D, the first card under C, and the second under D, and so on; No. 7 will consequently come fourth in row C. Ask again in which row the card is. In C; well, you know it must be one of the first four, for all the rest have been discarded. Pick up the cards as before, C uppermost, and make two more rows, E, F; this time No. 7 must come under F, and is of course either the first or second card. Pick up the cards, F row uppermost, and deal again H, J, and the card must be the first in the row selected. In our case No. 7 is first in row J. Do not point out the card upon the table, but pick up the pack and then point it out, or utilize it for some other trick. Remember to always deal the cards face upwards on the table, and after dealing C, D, you know the card is one of four, and it is better, therefore, not to always work towards the top of the rows to discover the card, but to keep the chosen cards in various positions. Until acquainted with the trick, follow the above directions, and your own ingenuity will teach you the variation.

**To Tell which Pair of Cards was Selected.—Deal**



out twenty cards in pairs, face upwards, upon the table, and request as many of the audience as please to select one or more of the pairs and remember their cards. Take up the cards in any order, being careful not to separate the pairs in doing so, and replace them, face upwards, upon the table in four rows of five cards each, and by placing them in proper order you can tell to a certainty which were the pairs selected by the various persons.

To enable you to do this, you have merely to make a mental table of four words — mutus, nomen, dedit, cocis — which you will observe contain twenty letters — one for each card — but only ten distinct letters, *i. e.*, two M's, two U's, &c., or one for each pair of cards. This is the key. The following represents the mental Table: —

M	U	T	U	S
N	O	M	E	N
D	E	D	I	T
C	O	C	I	S

The first card you place on the M in mutus, and the second of the same pair on the M in nomen; the third card on U, and the fourth card on the second U in first line; the next, or fifth, card on T in mutus, and its companion on T in dedit; the seventh card finds its place on S of the first word, and its mate on the S in cocis. Having completed the first line, proceed with nomen in like manner, and likewise with dedit and cocis, until the imaginary Table is covered. Consequently, if the person says his cards are in the first and third rows, you know at once they must cover the T's, if in the first and last lines, then the S's are covered, and so on. A little practice is necessary to strengthen the memory, so as to place the pairs in their right places without hesitation.

Twenty-five Cards being Placed upon the Table, to Mention which has been Thought of.—A per-

former with an ordinary memory by this method may discover the cards thought of by several different persons, but for our purpose we will imagine only one person to have selected. Give the pack to be shuffled and cut so that no suspicion of arrangement may exist, and then deal out the cards in rows of five each, until twenty-five are upon the table, as follows:—

A	B	C	D	E
F	G	H	I	J
K	L	M	N	O
P	Q	R	S	T
U	V	W	X	Y

Now request one of the company to select a card, naming the row it is in, and to remember it. For illustration, we will imagine it is in the fourth row, and occupies the position of S. Glance upon the left-hand card of that row, which would be P (suppose, ace of hearts). Pick up the cards, commencing with Y, which place upon T, these two upon O, then upon J, E, X, S, &c., until all the cards are packed, A being bottom, face upwards. Turn the cards, and now deal them out again in the same way as before— which will be as under—

A	F	K	P	U
B	G	L	Q	V
C	H	M	R	W
D	I	N	S	X
E	J	O	T	Y

—and ask which row it is in now. “Fourth.” Remembering your left-hand card in previous arrangement—*i. e.*, ace of hearts, or P—look upon the top row for that card, and follow that line down to the fourth row,

which is S and the card selected. This can be performed with any square number, *i. e.*, 16, 25, 36, or 49 cards.

**The Four Kings Being Separated, to Bring Them Together by a Single Cut.**—You select the four kings from a pack, and also two knaves. The kings you arrange in your hand in the shape of a fan, and place behind the second one, say the king of spades, the two knaves, therefore they are hidden from view. You show the cards by holding them towards the audience, so that they may be satisfied that the cards really are kings, and place them on top of the pack. You may remark, “Ladies and gentlemen, I propose to separate these kings; the first [which you hold towards them] I will place at the bottom of the pack, the second [which is a knave] I will place a little higher up, the third [also knave] higher up still, and the fourth [which you again exhibit, for it is really a king] I will leave on top.” The kings are now three on top, and one at the bottom of the pack; consequently, a single cut will bring them together. One of the company can cut the cards, and the kings will be found to be in company.

**A Card having been Drawn from and Returned to the Pack, to Find it under a Handkerchief.**—Allow the pack to be shuffled, and, upon its being returned, invite a person to draw a card, which upon being returned to the pack, make the pass and bring it to the top, where you can leave it for the present, and borrow a handkerchief, which you place over the cards, and inquire the name of the chosen card, which being given, put your hand under the handkerchief and take off the top card, which must be the one named.

A more effective way of performing the same trick is, after the card has been chosen and returned, and you have brought it to the top by the pass, to palm it, and return the pack to be shuffled. The cards are then to be scattered under the handkerchief, so as to avoid any

suspicion of arrangement. Upon the card being named, you place the hand with the palmed card in it amongst them, and draw the chosen card from the medley.

**To Tell Whether any Card in the Pack is Red or Black without Looking at it.**—Before commencing this trick you secretly divide all the red from the black cards, and, holding them in one pack, you slightly bend them across the middle lengthways; then take all the black cards, and bend them also across the middle broadways, so that the red and black cards are both bent, but in different directions. Mix them thoroughly, and you can go through the pack and tell whether each card is red or black, by remembering which way they are bent. Or you can ask anyone to give you a card from the pack, and you can say with confidence, without looking at it, whether it is red or black. We have seen this same trick done in a drawing-room, by means of a reflector or mirror; this, however, is not a good system, for in cases of this kind, where cards are named without being directly looked at, the audience at once look round for a mirror, and should one happen to be in front of the performer, the trick is no more interesting, as they put it down that you obtain your information through the mirror. Consequently, by having the cards bent, you can name them, if required, before holding them up for inspection and confirmation.

**To Name all the Cards in Succession.**—Take up the pack of cards from the table, shuffle them, and ascertain what the bottom card is; place the pack behind your back, and reverse that card to the top, back to back with the remainder; show that card to the company, name it, and at the same time glance at the card now at the bottom of the pack, and which is facing you, together with the rest of the pack, except the one named, and which is facing the audience. Pass the pack again behind your back (or any other object so as to hide your maneuver), and move



the card just looked at to the front, which, in its turn, is exposed to the audience, and name it, glancing, as before, at the card facing yourself, which is next to be named. A judicious shuffle will relieve the monotony of this operation. By this means you can name all the cards in succession.

**To Make Two Cards Change Places whilst Held in Separate Hands.**—Take two aces, the one of hearts, the other of clubs. From other cards cut out one of the figures of hearts and another the club, which must be done as neatly as possible, and merely the paper surface of the card used, which can be done by splitting the cut figures; then rub on the backs of the heart and club some white pomatum, and place the club over the ace of hearts, and the heart over the ace of clubs, taking care that the under mark is completely covered. These preparations must be made before you begin. Now, with the two prepared aces in the pack, divide it so that one prepared ace may be at the bottom of each half. Show the cards to the audience, and explain that you have the ace of hearts in the right hand and the ace of clubs in the left. When everyone is satisfied on this point, you can either keep the cards in your hands or lay the packs on the table, with the faces downwards, at a distance of two feet from each other, in order that it is quite clear the hands or packs do not approach each other. In the latter case, upon placing the cards upon the table, you would quietly put the third finger of each hand under the respective packs, and slip off the affixed mark, leaving the original mark. This done, you may remark, “Ladies and gentlemen, you are aware that the ace of hearts is in the right-hand pack, and the ace of clubs in the other; it is my intention to make them change places. Change!” Turn up the right-hand pack — there is now the ace of clubs at the bottom, and the ace of hearts is, of course, with the other.

**To Make Two Cards Change Places at the Word of Command.**—Under various titles, this trick is constantly performed in public, and, strange as it may appear at first sight to even attempt to make two cards change places by word of command, yet it is easily done. You must in the first place have a pack in which there are duplicates of one card — say, two queens of hearts — and you must arrange these cards — a queen at the bottom, any other card next, which we will suppose is the four of clubs, and above that the second queen of hearts; or if you prefer to do so, the first queen may be placed at the top. You come forward shuffling the cards vigorously, taking care not to disturb the order of the three cards; and now you must leave the bottom queen of hearts on the top of the pack if you have had the three at the bottom for the convenience of shuffling; consequently, the cards are now placed: four of clubs at the bottom, one queen of hearts next above it, and the other on top of the pack. You now hold the pack towards the company, requesting them to notice particularly the bottom card, at which you also look, and mention that it is the four of clubs, which you wish someone to retain upon the table, here, with his hands. You forthwith lower the cards, and sliding back the four of clubs with the left-hand third finger, you draw out the card above it, which appears to the audience to be the bottom card, or the four of clubs, but is really the queen of hearts, and you place that card upon the table, of course face downwards, requesting some person to put his hand upon it.

You now make the pass, and bring the second queen of hearts to the bottom — *i. e.*, below the four of clubs — and again shuffling the cards, not disturbing the two, you once more show the bottom card to the company, and request them to notice it; you do likewise, observing that “it is the queen of hearts.” You then go through the same performance as before; but this time you slip aside

the queen, and draw out the next card, which is the four of clubs, but which the company believe to be the queen of hearts, and place that also on the table, face downwards, and request someone else to keep it under his hand. Having called attention to the fact that the first card put on the table was the four of clubs, and the second one the queen of hearts, you now command the cards to change places, and when the gentlemen turn up their respective cards it will be found that the one who was supposed to hold the four of clubs has the 'queen of hearts, and *vice versa*.

**The Triple Deal.**—Take any twenty-one cards, and ask some person to choose one from them. Lay them out in three heaps, and ask the person who took the card in which heap it is. You may turn your back while he searches. Gather them up and put that heap between the other two. Do this twice more, and the chosen card will always be the eleventh from the top.

**The Card Found at the Second Guess.**—Offer the cards to anyone, and let him draw one. You then hold the cards behind your back, and tell him to place his card on the top. Pretend to make a great shuffling, but only turn that card with its back to the others, still keeping it at the top. Then hold up the cards with their faces towards the spectator, and ask him if the bottom card is his. While doing so, you inspect his card at your leisure. He of course denies it, and you begin shuffling again furiously. "Let me do that," he will probably say; so, as you are perfectly acquainted with his card, you let him shuffle as much as he likes, and then, when you get the cards back again, shuffle until his card is at the bottom. Then pass them behind your back, make a ruffling noise with them, and show him his own card at the bottom.

**The Card Found Under the Hat.**—Have a needle stuck just inside your sleeve. Hand the cards as in the

preceding trick, and tell the taker to put the card on the top. Take out the needle, and prick a hole nearly through the top *left*-hand corner. Replace the needle, shuffle the cards, or let anyone shuffle them. Place the pack on the table, cover them with a hat, and the marked card will be known by a little raised knob on the *right*-hand top corner. Draw out card by card, saying whether it is that card or not, until you come to the marked one, which you throw on the table carelessly, and when you are about taking out another card, stop suddenly, and pretend to find, by some magic process, that it is the chosen card.

**The Revolution.**—Another neat way of finishing a trick is as follows: Get the card to the top of the pack; and taking care that all the cards are even, drop the pack on the floor, taking care just as you let go, to slip the top card a little off the rest of the pack. In falling, the resistance of the air will turn the card over, and it will rest with its face upwards on the top of the pack.

**The Nailed Card.**—Take a flat-headed nail, and file it down until its point is as sharp as a needle, and the head quite flat. The nail should be about half an inch long, or even shorter if anything. Pass the nail through the center of any card, say the ace of spades, and conceal it in your left hand.

Take another pack of cards, get the ace of spades to the bottom, and exchange the pierced card for the other. Put the pierced card at the bottom of the pack, and throw the cards violently against a door, when the nail will be driven in by the pressure of the other cards against its head, and the chosen card will be seen nailed to the door. The nail should be put through the face of the card, so that when the others fall on the floor, it remains facing the spectators.

**To Make a Card Jump Out of the Pack and Run on the Table.**—Take a pack of cards, and let anyone draw any card he pleases; put it into the pack, so that



you may know where to find it at pleasure. Put a small piece of wax under your thumb-nail, to which fasten a hair, and the other end of the hair to the card; spread the cards open on the table, and desire the one chosen to jump out, which you may readily cause it to do by means of the hair.

**The Trick of Thirty-one.**—This is played with the first six cards of each suit—the *aces* in one row, the *deuces* in another, the *threes* in another; then the *fours*, *fives* and *sixes*—all laid in rows. The object now will be to turn down cards alternately, and endeavor to make thirty-one points by so turning, or as near to it as possible, without overrunning it; and the man who turns down a card, the spots of which make him thirty-one, or so near it that the other cannot turn down one without overrunning it, wins. This trick is very deceiving, as all other tricks are, and requires much practice to be well understood.

The chief point of this celebrated trick is to count so as to end with the following numbers, viz., 3, 10, 17 or 24. For example we will suppose it your privilege to commence the count: you would commence with 3, and your adversary would add 6, which would make 9; it would then be your policy to add 1, and make 10; then, no matter what number he adds, he cannot prevent you counting 17, which number gives you the command of the trick. We will suppose he add 6, and make 16; then, you add 1, and make 17, then he to add 6, and make 23, you add 1, and make 24, then he cannot possibly add any number to count 31, as the highest number he can add is 6; which would only count 30, so that you can easily add the remaining 1, or ace, and make 31. There are, however, many variations to the trick.

**The Changing Ladle.**—This is a piece of apparatus designed for secretly obtaining possession of a chosen card or piece of writing. The bowl, so to speak, of the

ladle is in the form of a segment of a cylinder (see Fig. 23), the size of its opening being about four inches by two and a half, and its depth three inches. It is made of tin, with a thin, cylindrical handle. The edges of the bowl are turned inwards all round to the extent of about a sixteenth of an inch, thereby serving to disguise a movable slab of tin, *a*, which moves backwards and forwards like the leaf of a book within the ladle, working

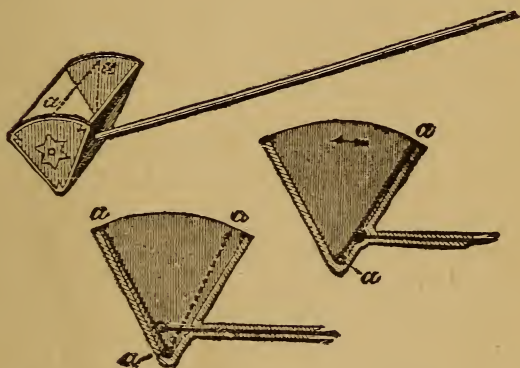


Fig. 23.

Fig. 25.

Fig. 24.

upon a hinge at its lower edge. This is made to work backwards and forwards by a wire rod passing through the whole length of the handle and terminating in a little knob or cap at its outer end. The normal position of *a* is to lie against the inner or handle side of the bowl (see Fig. 24), being retained in that position by the operation of a spiral spring in the handle, which draws the wire back. If, however, pressure be applied to the knob or cap at the end of the handle, the wire is forced downwards, thereby bringing the movable leaf *a* against the outer side of the bowl, as shown in Fig. 25.

There are various modes in which the changing ladle may be made useful. For example, it may be used to burn and restore a card. For this purpose, the ladle is

prepared by placing in it beforehand any indifferent card of similar pattern to the pack in use, and is in this condition placed on the performer's table, in such manner that the spectators may not observe that there is already a card in it. The performer then comes forward and hands to one of the company a pack of cards, with a request that he will select any one he pleases. While he is making his selection, the performer or his assistant places on the table and sets fire to some spirits of wine on a bowl or plate. A card having been chosen, the performer requests the drawer to return it to him, and, in order to preclude the apparent possibility of any exchange or sleight-of-hand, volunteers to receive it at arm's length in the ladle, which he brings forward for that purpose, holding it by the extreme end of the handle, and pressing with his palm the knob at the top, thereby bringing the movable leaf into the position shown in Fig. 25, with the card already in it pressed flat against the outer side of the bowl, and thus completely hidden. The chosen card being placed in the ladle, the performer, in returning to his table, relaxes the pressure of his palm, thereby bringing the movable leaf back into the position of Fig. 24, releasing the dummy card, and concealing that chosen against the inner side of the bowl. He then drops apparently the chosen, but really the substitute, card into the flames, taking care as he does so not to turn the face of the card toward the audience. The ladle, with the genuine card in it, is carried off by the assistant as having served its purpose, and the chosen card is subsequently restored after any fashion which the fancy of the operator may dictate.

The ladle may also be used to apparently burn and restore a paper on which one of the company has written any words or figures. In this case a blank half-sheet of note-paper, folded in four, is beforehand placed in the ladle, and a piece of paper folded in the same way is

handed to one of the audience, with a request that he will write what he pleases upon it, again fold it, and place it in the ladle. It is then either apparently burned (as in the case of the card) or placed in some other apparatus, the operator making a great point of the fact that he does not touch the paper. As the genuine paper remains in the ladle, it is, of course, very easy for the performer to ascertain what is written upon it, and having displayed his knowledge, to ultimately reproduce the paper under any circumstances which he thinks fit. Sometimes the trick is varied by requesting a spectator to write a question upon the paper, which is subsequently reproduced with an appropriate answer written beneath the question.



## MISCELLANEOUS TRICKS

**To Tell the Numbers on a Pair of Dice.**—This is done by a simple arithmetical process.

Ask someone to throw the dice without your seeing them, then tell him to choose one of the numbers and multiply by two, add five and multiply this number by five and add the number on the remaining dice.

On his telling you the result you subtract mentally twenty-five from the number he has obtained and the remainder will be two figures representing the two numbers on the dice.

Suppose the numbers thrown to be six, three. Six multiplied by two would be twelve—with five added make seventeen, multiplied by five is eighty-five, with three added make eighty-eight; from this take twenty-five and it gives as a result sixty-three—six, three, being the numbers thrown. This can be worked with the same result if the person throwing the dice multiplies the three instead of the six, the result in that case being thirty-six instead of sixty-three.

**To Change the Numbers on Dice.**—Take an ordinary pair of dice and hold them in such a manner between the thumb and finger that the numbers visible to the audience are three, one, the three being the upper number. Ask one of the audience to tell the numbers, stating plainly which is the top one. This being done you state that by rubbing your fingers over them you cause them to change places by simply passing your finger over them.

In bringing your hands together you turn the dice quarter way round. This will bring the next side of

the dice toward the audience and the numbers will read one, three, instead of three, one, as before. This can be varied by again rubbing them with your finger. You can show the third side which will read six, four; and repeating the motion you show the fourth side which will be four, six. These numbers may be varied, but care must always be taken to have similar numbers on two adjoining sides.

**Houdin's Nut Trick.**—The professor hands the audience a dessert plate and a cambric handkerchief for examination; these being returned, he places the plate upon a table near to him; the handkerchief is then spread out quite flat over the plate. At command, sugared almonds, nuts, and comfits pour into the dessert plate the instant the kerchief is lifted up. The way in which it is done is this: Make a calico bag large enough to hold the nuts and sweetmeats you intend to distribute, to the pattern of the letter A; a small selvage is turned up at the bottom of the bag; procure two pieces of watch spring, and bend them quite flat, each spring to be exactly half the diameter of the bag. These are put into the selvage, and sewn up firm. When the bag is opened, it will close itself in consequence of the springs. A long pin is passed through the top of the bag and bent round hook-shape. If the bag be now filled with nuts, etc., it may be suspended by the hook, without any danger of the nuts or anything else falling out; because, although the mouth of the bag is downwards, the springs keep it shut. When this trick is to be shown, the prepared bag is hung on the side of the table that is away from the audience. The plate is also placed on that side; and when the handkerchief is laid over the plate a portion is left to fall over the side of the table. Now the kerchief is picked up with the *right* hand in the center (just as a lady does when she wishes to exhibit the lace edge), and with it the bag of nuts; the folds of the cambric hide the bag. The left

hand is now used to draw over the handkerchief and to press the bag; this causes the springs to open, and out fall the "good things" upon the plate.

**The Magic Bran Glass.**—A glass of bran instantly changed into a glassful of sweets, or various other articles. The performer brings forward a glass of bran, and to prove it to be such scatters some on to the floor. A cover, that has been examined, is then placed over the goblet; and on its being removed the bran is nowhere to be seen, the glass being full of sweets, nuts, etc., which are readily demolished by the youngsters, utterly regardless of the air of mystery which hangs about their magic appearance.

A hollow tin shape is made to fit inside the glass, which is generally a goblet, large or small, according to whether for drawing-room or stage use. The tin shape is open at the bottom only, and outside bran is glued on, so that when placed in the goblet it appears like a glass full of bran. The hollow of the tin shape is first filled with sweets, some borrowed article, etc., and then placed in the glass. A cover (generally made of brass) with the sides tapering outwards is made to go over the goblet, and when pressed down hard the rim of the bran shape becomes jammed, so that on the cover being raised the shape rises also, unseen, and the sweets or other articles are left in the glass. Some loose bran is always heaped on to the top of the tin shape when commencing, and blown on to the floor to disarm suspicion.

**The Oriental Ball Trick.**—Procure three balls of wood, the size of billiard balls, each having a small hole drilled completely through it, the hole the size of an ordinary black-lead pencil.

Procure, also, two pieces of white tape, each ten feet long. Double each tape exactly in half, so that they become only five feet long. Insert the folded end into one of the balls; pull it through about an inch; then open

**chief.**—Procure four or five large plumes. Take off your coat, and lay the plumes along your arms, the stem being toward your hand. Now put on your coat again, and the feathers will lie quite smoothly and unsuspected. Wave a handkerchief about to show that it is empty. Throw it over your left hand, and with the right draw <sup>P</sup>ut one of the plumes from up the coat-sleeve, at the <sup>i</sup>same time giving it a flourish in the air, which will loosen all the fibers of the feather, and make it appear much too large to have been concealed about the person. Wave the handkerchief again, and repeat the operation until all the plumes are gone. You can carry enough plumes under the sleeve to cover a table, and if you prepare a board full of holes, or an ornamental vase, you can place the plumes upright as you take them out.

Additional plumes, fastened together by a thread, can be carried inside the trousers and waistcoat, with the stems just within the breast of the latter.

**The Bran Plate.**—This apparatus is designed for the production of a dove or other fairly large object.

The apparatus consists of two earthenware plates, of about soup-plate size. The one, when brought forward, is filled with heaped-up bran; the other, inverted, is placed on it by way of cover. When it is again removed a moment later, the bran has vanished, and in its place appears the dove or other object which it is desired to produce.

The secret lies in the fact that the supposed heap of bran is in fact a tin cover, with bran glued thereon, and with a shallow depression in the center to hold loose bran, of which the performer takes a handful, and lets it fall through his fingers to prove its genuineness. This cover is so modeled that its convex side shall exactly adapt itself to the interior of either of the earthenware plates, while its concave side is japanned so as to match in pattern with them.



The working of the trick will now be clear. The object to be produced is placed in one of the earthenware plates, the cover placed over it, and the hollow in the center filled with loose bran. When it is desired to produce the concealed article, the second earthenware plate is turned down over the tin cover. The plates are waved about for a moment or two, and in replacing them on the table, turned over, so that the one containing the cover is now undermost. The one now uppermost is lifted off, and left carelessly in the way of examination. The bran has vanished, and there, in the second plate, is the article to be revealed.

**The Vanishing Tumbler of Water.**—Provide yourself with a prepared handkerchief. You have two fancy cotton handkerchiefs of the same pattern, which are

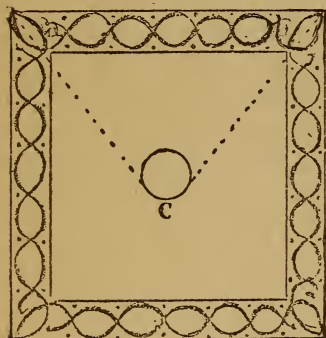


Fig. 26.

stitched together round the edges, thus appearing to be one handkerchief, and are also stitched from two of the corners to a point about two inches beyond the center, thus forming a triangular bag (Fig. 26, *a*, *b*, *c*). These two corners should have marks peculiar to themselves, so that you may readily find them without looking. Inside the triangular bag you place a brass ring, the diameter of which is just a shade larger than that of an ordinary tumbler. This ring is not fastened in any way, but by holding the corners *a* and *b*, it falls to the center of the handkerchief (*c*); but if the handkerchief is held in any other way the ring changes its position.

You require a pretty wide glass, which must have per-

fectly straight sides, and must be fitted with an outside shell, also of glass, sufficiently large to allow your hand to pass through it, it being merely a glass tube without either top or bottom, but in other respects resembling the companion glass to such a degree that when it is over the glass, no difference can be detected. Placing this shell over the glass you advance with them in your hand, observing that you have a common glass, which you will partly fill with water, and suit the action to the word, filling it about two-thirds or a little more. Then placing it upon the table near the back, you take the handkerchief, and having sent the ring to one of the corners, draw the handkerchief through the hand, to casually show that it contains nothing; but do not say a word on the subject until you have the corners *a*, *b*, in your hands, when you shake it out and show both sides — this will cause the ring to go to the center of the handkerchief, when you throw it over the glass upon the table, bringing the ring above the glass. Now, standing behind the table, with one hand grasp the shell through the handkerchief, and, putting the other hand underneath, raise the shell from the glass, whilst the other hand lowers the glass, with the water, to the *servante*. You now advance to the audience, still holding the shell through the handkerchief, and can show beyond doubt that the glass is there by “flipping” it with the fingers, or even allowing the audience to feel for themselves. You inform them that you are about to make the glass disappear, and retire a little further back upon the stage.

Supposing you are holding the shell in the right hand, you place the left under the handkerchief as though to hold it, which you do for a moment in order to allow the right hand to change its position, and take hold of the wire ring and the shell from the top, and as you do so you squeeze with the left hand a wet sponge which you took from the *servante*; as the water falls it will

give the impression that it has come from the glass under the handkerchief. Having altered the position of the right hand, so as to hold the ring, you thrust the left hand through the shell and let it pass up your arm between the shirt and the coat sleeve. Now withdrawing



Fig. 27.

the left hand from under, the appearance is still that the glass is there, on account of the form of the ring (Fig. 27). You take hold of one of the corners of the handkerchief, and announce that you are now going to make the glass of water disappear. Then, counting, "One, two, three — pass!" you make a vigorous shake with the handkerchief, releasing your hold with the right hand, and the glass has disappeared. You show both

sides of the handkerchief as before, but there is no trace of it to be found. You will probably have to retire a moment to get the shell from your left arm, but there is no fear of its falling provided you keep the wrist bent.

**To Knock a Tumbler Through a Table.**—Take an ordinary tumbler and a newspaper. Sit on a chair *behind the table*, keeping the audience in front of it. Place the tumbler on the table and cover it with the newspaper, pressing the paper closely round, so that it gradually becomes *fashioned to the form of the glass*. Then draw the paper to the edge of the table, and drop the tumbler into your lap — quickly returning the paper to the center of the table; the stiffness of the paper will still preserve the form of the tumbler; hold *the form*

with one hand, and strike a heavy blow upon it with the other; at the same moment drop the tumbler from the lap to the floor; and you will appear to have positively knocked the tumbler through the solid table. Care should be taken after the tumbler is in the lap, to place the legs in such a fashion that the glass may slide gradually toward the ankles, so that the fall may not be sufficiently great to break the glass. Care should be also taken to smooth out the paper after the blow has been struck, to prevent suspicion of the fact that the *form* of the glass was simply preserved by the stiffness of the paper. Never repeat this illusion.

**To Place Water in a Drinking-glass Upside Down.**—Procure a plate, a tumbler, and a small piece of tissue or silver paper. Set the plate on a table, and pour water in it up to the first rim. Now, very slightly crumple up the paper, and place it in the glass; then set it on fire. When it is burnt out, or rather just as the last flame disappears, turn the glass quickly upside down into the water. Astonishing! the water rushes with great violence into the glass! Now you are satisfied that water can be placed in a drinking-glass upside down. Hold the glass firm, and the plate also. You can now reverse the position of the plate and glass. Instead of burning paper, a little brandy or spirits of wine can be ignited in the glass; the result of its combustion being invisible, the experiment is cleaner.

**The Protean Liquid.**—A red liquor, which when poured into different glasses will become yellow, blue, black, and violet, may be thus made: Infuse a few shavings of logwood in common water, and when the liquor is red, pour it into a bottle; then take three drinking-glasses, rinse one of them with strong vinegar, throw into the second a small quantity of pounded alum, which will not be observed if the glass has been newly washed, and leave the third without any preparation. If the red



liquor in the bottle be poured into the first glass, it will assume a straw-color; if into the second, it will pass gradually from bluish-gray to black, provided it be stirred with a bit of iron, which has been privately immersed in good vinegar; in the third glass the red liquor will assume a violet tint.

**To Bring Colored Ribbons from Your Mouth.—**Heap a quantity of finely carded wool upon a plate, which place before you. At the bottom of this lint, and concealed from the company, you should have several narrow strips of colored ribbons wound tightly into one roll, so as to occupy but little space. Now begin to appear to eat the lint by putting a handful in your mouth. The first handful can easily be removed and returned to the plate, unobserved, while the second is being "crammed in." In doing this care should be taken not to use all the lint, but to leave sufficient to conceal the roll. At the last handful, take up the roll and push it into your mouth, without any lint; then appear to have had enough, and look in a very distressed state as if you were full to suffocation; then put your hands up to your mouth, get hold of the end of the ribbon, and draw hand over hand, yards of ribbon, as if from your stomach. The slower this is done, the better the effect. When one ribbon is off the roll, your tongue will assist you in pushing another end ready for the hand. You will find you need not wet or damage the ribbons in the least.

**An Egg Put into a Phial.—**To accomplish this seemingly incredible act, requires the following preparation: You must take an egg and soak it in strong vinegar; and in process of time its shell will become quite soft, so that it may be extended lengthways without breaking; then insert it into the neck of a small bottle, and by pouring cold water upon it, it will reassume its former figure and hardness. This is really a complete curiosity,

and baffles those who are not in the secret to find out how it is accomplished. If the vinegar used to saturate the egg is not sufficiently strong to produce the required softness of shell, add one teaspoonful of strong acetic acid to every two tablespoonfuls of vinegar. This will render the egg perfectly flexible, and of easy insertion into the bottle, which must then be filled with cold water.

**To Keep the Hand Dry in Water.**—With some lycopodium, powder the surface of a large or small vessel of water; you may then challenge anyone to drop a piece of money into the water, and that you will get it with the hand without wetting your skin. The lycopodium adheres to the hand, and prevents its contact with the water. A little shake of the hand, after the feat is over, will dislodge the powder.

**Sympathetic Inks.**—By means of these, we may carry on a correspondence which is beyond the discovery of all not in the secret. With one class of these inks, the writing becomes visible only when moistened with a particular solution. Thus, if we write to you with a solution of sulphate of iron, the letters are invisible. On the receipt of our letter, you rub over the sheet a sponge wet with a solution of nut-galls, and the letters burst forth into sensible being at once, and are permanent.

2. If we write with a solution of sugar of lead, and you moisten with a sponge or pencil dipped in water impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen, the letters will appear with metallic brilliancy.

3. If we write with a weak solution of sulphate of copper, and you apply ammonia, the letters assume a beautiful blue. When the ammonia evaporates, as it does on exposure to the sun or fire, the writing disappears, but may be revived again as before.

4. If you write with oil of vitriol very much diluted, so as to prevent its destroying the paper, the manuscript

will be invisible except when held to the fire, when the letters will appear black.

5. Write with cobalt dissolved in diluted muriatic acid; the letters will be invisible when cold, but when warmed they will appear a bluish green.

We are almost sure that our secrets thus written will not be brought to the knowledge of a stranger, because he does not know the solution which was used in writing and therefore knows not what to apply to bring out the letters.

**To Make a Ring Pass through a Table.**—For this trick you borrow a ring from the audience, and have a handkerchief with a substitute ring attached to the middle of it by a thread about five inches long. Handkerchiefs with things concealed in them in this manner should be folded in such a fashion that, when they are upon the table, the performer can take hold of them by a corner, and at once shake them out, the suspended article being on his side. You also require a tumbler and a bowl. You ask a person to hold the tumbler; then, taking up and shaking the handkerchief, take the borrowed ring in the right hand, and putting the hand beneath the handkerchief, palm the ring, and take hold of the substitute, and passing it up to the handkerchief, you take hold of it through the handkerchief with the left hand. Now put the hand above the glass, allowing the sides of the handkerchief to hang over the glass, which the person holds in his left hand, and request him to take hold of the ring and handkerchief with the right. After he has asserted that he holds the ring, you request him to let it fall into the glass; and this it is heard to do. You now ask him to put the glass, ring, and handkerchief, upon the table as they now are. Now, taking the bowl in the right hand (which hand contains the ring), you show that the bowl is quite empty, and placing it beneath the table, and under the glass, you slip the bor-

rowed ring into it. You now announce that your intention is to pass the ring from the glass into the bowl, through the table, but first of all you will satisfy them that the ring is still in the glass, which you take up and shake; the suspended ring will then make itself heard. Now take the handkerchief by the middle, between the thumb and finger, command the ring to leave the glass at the word "Three," and count "one, two, three!" and at the same time raise the handkerchief straight above the glass, thus withdrawing the substitute ring, and the tumbler is found to be empty; and upon the person taking the bowl from beneath the table, the ring is found to be there, thus having obeyed your command.

**To Pass a Ring through a Pocket-handkerchief.—**

This is performed by the aid of a piece of wire, sharpened to a point at each end, and bent into the form of a ring. The performer, having this palmed in his right hand, borrows a wedding-ring and a handkerchief (silk for preference). Holding the borrowed ring between the fingers of his right hand, he throws the handkerchief over it, and immediately seizes with the left hand, through the handkerchief, apparently the borrowed ring, but really the sham ring, which he adroitly substitutes. He now requests one of the spectators to take hold of the ring in like manner, taking care to make him hold it in such a way that he may not be able to feel the opening between the points, which would betray the secret. The ring being thus held, and the handkerchief hanging down around it, a second spectator is requested, for greater security, to tie a piece of tape or string tightly round the handkerchief an inch or two below the ring. The performer then takes the handkerchief into his own hand, and, throwing the loose part of the handkerchief over his right hand, so as to conceal his mode of operation, slightly straightens the sham ring, and works one of the points through the handkerchief, so getting it out, and rubbing



the handkerchief with his finger and thumb in order to obliterate the hole made by the wire in its passage. He now palms the sham ring, and produces the real one, which has all along remained in his right hand, requesting the person who tied the knot to ascertain for himself that it has not been tampered with.

**To Pass a Borrowed Ring into an Egg.**—This is an effective conclusion to a ring trick. The necessary apparatus consists of two wooden egg-cups, inside one of which, at the bottom, is cut a mortice or slot just large enough to receive one-half the circumference of a lady's ring, and to hold it in an upright position. The second egg-cup has no specialty, being, in fact, merely a dummy, designed to be handed to the audience for inspection. An ordinary button-hook, or a piece of wire bent into the shape of a button-hook, completes the preparations.

We will assume that the performer has secretly obtained possession of a borrowed ring, which the audience believe to remain in some place or apparatus in which they have seen it deposited. The operator, retiring for an instant, returns with a plate of eggs in one hand, and the dummy egg-cup in the other. The special egg-cup, with the ring already in the mortice, is meanwhile placed either under his waistband, or in one or other of his *pochettes*, so as to be instantly get-at-able when required. Placing the eggs on the table, he hands round the egg-cup for inspection, that all may observe that it is wholly without preparation, and in turning to place the egg-cup on the table, he substitutes for it the one which contains the ring, but which the audience naturally believe to be that which they have just examined.

Bringing forward the plate of eggs, the performer requests the company to choose whichever they please. While they are making their selection, he carefully turns back his sleeves, showing indirectly that his hands are empty. Taking the chosen egg with the tips of his fin-

gers, and showing it on all sides, to prove that there is no preparation about it, he says, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have seen me place the ring which this lady has kindly lent me in 'so-and-so'" (according to the place where it is supposed to be). "You have selected, of your own free choice, this particular egg among half-a-dozen others. I am about to command the ring to leave the place where it now is, and to pass into the very center of this egg. If you think the egg is prepared in any way, it is open to you even now to choose another. You are all satisfied that the egg has not been tampered with? Well, then, just observe still that I have nothing in my hands. I have merely to say, 'One, two, three! Pass!' The ring is now in the egg." At the word, "Pass," the performer taps one end of the egg with his wand, just hard enough to crack it slightly. "Dear me," he says; "I did not intend to hit quite so hard; but it is of no consequence." Stepping to the table, he places the egg, *with the cracked end downwards*, in the prepared egg-cup, using just sufficient pressure to force the egg well down upon the ring, the projecting portion of which is thereby forced into the egg. The egg being already cracked, a very slight pressure is sufficient. Bringing forward the egg in the cup, the hook already mentioned, and a table-napkin, he taps the top of the egg smartly with his wand, so as to crack it, and, offering the hook to the owner of the ring, requests her to see whether her property is not in the egg. The ring is immediately fished out, and being wiped upon the napkin, is recognized as that which was borrowed. The apparatus in which it was originally placed is, on being examined, found empty.

**To Produce a Cannon Ball from a Hat.**—You borrow a hat, and on taking it into your hands you ask a number of questions about it, or say it would be a pity for you to spoil so nice a hat, or make some such remark. This, however, is only a ruse for the purpose of divert-

ing attention. Then, passing round to the back of your table—(where, by the way, you have arranged on pegs a large wooden “cannon ball,” or a cabbage, or a bundle of dolls, trinkets, etc., loosely tied together, so that they may be easily disengaged)—you wipe, in passing, one or other of these articles off the pegs—where they must be very slightly suspended—into the hat so rapidly as not to be observed.

Returning to the gentleman from whom you received the hat, you say to him: “You are aware, sir, that your hat was not empty when you gave it to me,” at the same time emptying the contents in front of the audience. Supposing you have, in the first instance, introduced the dolls and trinkets, you may repeat the trick by wiping the “cannon ball,” or one of the other articles into the hat, and again advancing towards the gentleman from whom you received it, say: “Here is your hat; thank you, sir.” Then, just as you are about to give it to him, say: “Bless me! what have we here?” and turning the hat upside down, the large cannon ball will fall out.

**To Hatch Chickens in a Hat.**—Obtain, in the first place, a blown egg and three or four small chickens, also some broken egg-shells in irregular halves. The chickens should be put together in a small bag made of black alpaca, and the egg-shells also: it is surprising into what a small space the chickens can be packed without being hurt. You put the bag with the chickens into the tail pocket, and then borrow a hat, which you place upon the table, mouth upwards. You have now to produce a similar number of eggs to the number of chickens you have in the bag, and this you can do in two ways. The first is to palm one, and then appear to produce one from one of the audience, another from the seat of a chair, a third from your wand, and a fourth from the foot of your pants, apparently transferring them to the hat as

you find them. The other way is to use the egg handkerchief, with one blown egg suspended by a thread from the top, and to appear to drop the eggs into the hat from it in the manner suggested.

In either of these cases you have the opportunity of putting the chickens into the hat. Having progressed so far that the chickens are in the hat, and eggs supposed to be there, you announce that you are going to hatch chickens from the eggs, and the hat shall be the incubator. You want heat, and call for a candle; then cover the mouth of the hat with a borrowed handkerchief, and hold the hat above the candle flame at such a distance that it will not be damaged. Having held it for a few moments in this position, you think the chickens must be hatched, remove the handkerchief, and returning to the table put the hat down. You now put in your hand and draw out by the legs first one chick, then another, also a third and a fourth, and pass to the assistant to take care of. You show that the chickens are alive, and then taking up the hat, you are about to return it to the owner, when you suddenly check yourself, observing, "I beg your pardon; but having taken out the chickens, I quite forgot about the eggs from which they were hatched — allow me to remove them." You accordingly throw them to the back of the stage, or put them upon a plate. The addition of the empty egg-shells gives quite a natural finish to a good trick, and has considerable effect with the audience.

**To Restore a Crushed Hat.**—This is a capital termination to a hat trick. You must, however, have a confederate in the audience who has another hat under his seat as well as his own, and when you ask for the loan of a hat for one of the tricks, this confederate gives you the old one. Having performed the trick for which it was ostensibly borrowed, you give it to your assistant to return to the lender, and as he is moving along the



stage he trips over something and falls, crushing the hat under him. You have a few words with your assistant, and then express your regret to the lender, but still hope he will be able to wear it, but he refuses to take it; you therefore say you will wrap it up for him in as small a parcel as possible, and proceed to tear it up into pieces. Now take your pistol, put the pieces into the funnel, and then fire it at the lender, which being done you tell him to look under his chair, where he will find his hat restored. He puts his hand under the chair and affects surprise to find his hat so well restored.

**To Tie a Person in a Sack, from which He Gets Out without Cutting it or Breaking the Seal which Secures the String.**—This trick is a very good one for the stage. A sound sack is handed round for examination, and upon its being returned your assistant gets into it; the mouth is gathered together, securely tied with strong cord, and sealed. It is then carried behind a screen, with the person in it. In a few moments afterwards the assistant comes from behind the screen, carrying the bag with him, when it is found that the seal has not been broken, nor have the knots been tampered with. The question is, "How did he get out?" The secret is that there are two sacks. One is brought forward and examined by the audience, who pronounce it to be quite sound; the second is secreted up the back of the assistant's coat. The first sack being returned, he is requested to get into it, the mouth being held open for that purpose by some of the audience, who have been requested to come upon the stage to see that everything is done properly. As the assistant gets into the sack he takes the one from beneath his coat, and gathering up the mouth as if to tie it, passes it up through the mouth of the sack he is in, as you are drawing it together to be tied; you take hold of this, and gather the mouth of the outer sack about it, leaving the mouth of the inner sack protruding as if it

were that of the outer sack, holding the hands about the folds of the outer sack so as to hide it from view, only a few of the folds being placed with those of the inner sack, so that the hands may be eventually removed.

Having gathered the two mouths in such a manner as to suit your purpose, you hand a strong piece of cord to one of those about you, and request him to tie the sack securely while you hold it; then get another person to make a turn, and then another, so as to convince everyone that there is no confederacy about the tying; then finally have the mouth sealed with wax, and an impression made with a signet ring. Another assistant or yourself now takes hold of the head part of the sack and you request one or two of the party to assist you to carry the sack and contents behind the screen where it is deposited. The assistant inside, as soon as all is clear, gently pulls the sides of the outer sack from the cord, then thrusts forth the second sack and makes his own exit. The first sack he throws behind the scenes, and then comes forward carrying the second one, the mouth of which is still securely tied and sealed.

**To Produce Bowls of Water and Goldfish from beneath a Cloth, and to Make them Disappear Again.**—The performer comes forward with a large cloth, which he shows to be quite free from any preparation, and then waving it from side to side a few times, he rests it upon his arm and draws from beneath it a large bowl of water with goldfish in it. This is put upon the table. He goes through the performance a second and a third time, each time bringing to light another bowl, similar to the first. Having produced three, he announces that it is quite as easy to make them disappear; to prove it he covers one with a cloth, carries it forward to the audience, asks them to



Fig. 28.

catch, and throws it at them, and they are surprised to find that the bowl has disappeared.

The bowls, water, and fish, are all genuine; there is, however, an article which the audience do not see, and this is a thin indiarubber cover, which stretches tightly across the bowl and remains there until removed, keeping the water inside and allowing the bowls to be placed in any position. The bowls (Fig. 28) should be about eight inches in diameter and about one and one-half inches deep. They are nearly filled with water, the goldfish put in, and then the indiarubber cover stretched over. Supposing you intend to produce three, you would put one bowl so prepared into the breast-pocket of your coat on the right, the second on the left, and the third inside the vest, or in the coat-tail pocket. If the latter pockets are not large enough, you can have a bag made to answer the purpose, which is suspended beneath the tails.

Thus prepared you take up a large cloth, and advance to the audience, showing both sides empty; then slowly waving it by two corners, you throw it over the right shoulder and arm, and extend the right arm in front of you, bending the elbow. Now while the right arm is thus extended, with the left you draw from the right breast-pocket the first bowl, and support it horizontally upon the palm of the hand. The right arm now gradually drops down in front allowing the cloth to rest upon the bowl, so that the audience can see there is something beneath it. The right hand, being free, is now brought above the bowl and the cloth, and takes firm hold, through the cloth, of the indiarubber cover at the edge of the glass, and draws it off as it removes the cloth, revealing the first bowl of goldfish upon the left hand. This is put upon the table or upon a chair. Repeating the movement with the cloth, you this time throw it over the left shoulder and arm, and show the

bowl of fish upon the right hand. The third is produced in like manner, according to the position in which you have secreted it.

To make them one or all disappear — one, however, is quite sufficient — you require a handkerchief, prepared in the same manner as that used in the “Vanishing Tumbler of Water” trick — that is, with a circular wire, of the same diameter as the top of one of the bowls, between two handkerchiefs. Taking the double handkerchief, and showing it to be empty, you draw it over one of the bowls upon the table, so that the ring may be over the bowl. Take hold of the ring through the handkerchief, and as you raise that from the table, with the other hand you lower the bowl upon the *servante*. Advancing to the audience with the supposed bowl beneath the handkerchief, you make a feint of throwing it at them; release the ring, take hold of a corner of the handkerchief, and behold! the bowl has vanished and the handkerchief is shown empty.

**The Tube and Ball.**—This is a very ingenious trick, and well worth the attention of the most fastidious performer. It can be used in several ways.

The apparatus consists of a one and one-half inch brass tube about seven inches long, with a cap of the same metal fitting closely over one end; also two billiard balls about the size of the diameter of the tube. The spectators, however, are not supposed to know of the existence of more than one ball. The tube and cap, together with the ball, are given for examination, attention being drawn to the fact that the ball will readily pass through the tube. After examination the tube is stood on one end on the table and covered with the cap. The operator then takes the ball and causes it to vanish by means of sleight-of-hand, when, on the tube being raised, it has to all appearances been passed underneath.

The secret lies in the fact that there is a very small



dent in the side of the tube at the center; also that one of the balls—that given for examination—is slightly smaller than the other. The small ball runs freely through the tube, but the large one will not pass the center on account of the indentation.

On receiving back the tube the performer secretly drops the large ball into it, which, owing to the force of the fall, is pinched in the center and will not fall out. In this condition the tube can be turned about in all directions and will still appear empty. When placing it on the table the performer is careful to bring it down rather smartly on the end at which the ball was introduced, when, owing to the concussion, the ball is released and falls on the table.

**The Smashed Watch Restored.**—Suggesting to the owner of a borrowed watch that it wants regulating, you offer to undertake that duty for him, and, placing his watch in a mortar, bring down the pestle with a heavy thump upon it. A smash, as of broken glass, is heard, and, after sufficient pounding, you empty the fragments of the watch into your hand, to the horror of the owner. You offer to return the fragments, but he naturally objects to receive them, and insists that you restore the watch in the same condition as when it was handed to you. After a little discussion, you agree to do so, promising that you can only effect the object through the agency of fire. Fetching a loaf of bread, you place it on the table in view of the company. Then wrapping the fragments of the watch in paper, you place them in a pistol, and, aiming at the loaf, request the owner of the watch to give the signal to fire. The word is given, “One, two, three—Bang!” Stepping up to the loaf, you bring it forward for the spectators, and tearing it asunder, exhibit in its very center the borrowed watch, completely restored, and bright as when it first left the maker’s hands.

The seeming mystery is easily explained. The mortar has a movable bottom, which allows the watch at the performer's pleasure to fall through into his hand. There is a hollow space in the thick end of the pestle, closed by a round piece of wood lightly screwed in, which, fitting tightly in the bottom part of the mortar, easily unscrews itself, as the performer apparently grinds away at the ill-fated chronometer. In the cavity are placed beforehand the fragments of a watch, which, thus released, fall into the mortar, and are poured out by the performer into his hand, in order to show that there has been "no deception." When the performer goes to fetch the loaf, he has already obtained possession of the watch, which, after giving it a rub upon his coat-sleeve or a bit of leather to increase its brightness, he pushes into a slit already made in the side of the loaf. When the loaf is torn asunder (which the performer takes care to do from the side opposite to that in which the opening has been made), the watch is naturally found imbedded therein.

If a regular conjuring-table is used, the loaf may be placed in readiness on the *servante*. The performer in this case, having got possession of the watch, and holding it secretly palmed, borrows a hat. Walking carelessly behind his table, he asks, as if in doubt, "Who lent me this hat?" holding it up with one hand, that the spectators may see that it is empty. While all eyes are thus drawn to the hat, he with the other hand forces the watch into the loaf, and then, in bringing the hat down on the table, introduces the loaf into it, after the manner of the well-known "cannon-ball" trick, described elsewhere. The hat is then placed on the table as if empty, and the pistol fired at the hat. This little addition heightens the effect of the trick.

**The Butterfly Trick.**—The performer brings forward an ordinary fan, and a couple of bits of tissue-paper, each torn into a fanciful likeness of a butterfly.

Taking these upon his hand, he gently fans them, the motion of the air speedily causing them to rise above his head. Still gently fanning them, he causes them to hover, now high, now low, now fluttering along the wall, now descending into a gentleman's hat, whence they presently emerge to again flutter hither and thither at his pleasure.

The point that most strikes an attentive observer is the fact that, whether they fly high or low, the butterflies always keep *together*. Sometimes they may be a couple of feet apart, sometimes only a few inches, but they never exceed the above limit; and the spectator naturally concludes that an extraordinary degree of dexterity must be necessary to enable the performer to keep them from diverging more widely. Here, however, in truth lies the secret of the trick, which is, that the so-called butterflies are connected by a piece of very fine silk a couple of feet in length, which, when the butterflies are in motion, is absolutely invisible to the spectators. The remainder of the trick is a matter of practice, though it is less difficult than would be imagined by anyone who has never attempted it.

Some performers have the silk thread attached to one of the buttons of the coat. This arrangement will be found greatly to facilitate the working of the trick.

The paper for the butterflies is better torn than cut, and should be as nearly as possible of the shape of a St. George's cross, and about two inches square.

**The Mystic Afghan Bands.**—This trick is supposed to have been invented by the old East India fakirs, who presented it in such a seemingly innocent manner that its secret was not discovered until lately. It is certainly one of the cleverest tricks, with such simple accessories.

Three paper bands are shown to the audience, each, apparently, without the slightest preparation; the performer takes the first band, and with a pair of scissors

makes an incision in the center of the paper and cuts right round the band, when it naturally falls into two separate rings. Taking the second band, the performer repeats the dividing operation, with the surprising result that instead of obtaining two separate hoops, this band is turned into two hoops interlinked together in a manner that prevents them from being separated without breaking one of the bands.

The third and last hoop is now taken and divided round the center in a similar manner to the previous ones, only this time instead of changing into two separate or interlinked hoops, it falls into one long band just double the size of what it was before being cut. By cutting it again in the same way it will change to a hoop four times the size it was when first exhibited.

The secret of this seeming marvel is, in reality, extremely simple, and costs nothing, while its effect is good enough to warrant its production upon the stage. It is worked as follows: To form the bands get three pieces of paper about twenty-four inches long by an inch wide. The first hoop is made by simply joining the two ends of the paper together, with the natural result that has been described. The second one, however, is constructed in a slightly different manner; before fastening the ends together, the paper must be given a couple of twists and then joined. For the third, only one twist is necessary, and when the last hoop has been fastened together you are ready to present the trick.

Further instructions are superfluous, as when the bands have been made the working is simplicity itself, and it is impossible to go wrong.

For obvious reasons the bands cannot be passed round before the experiment, unless you are going to stick the ends together in front of the audience, but after the trick the hoops can be handed round without any fear of the secret being discovered.



**The Inexhaustible Bottle.**—The inexhaustible bottle, though in appearance an ordinary glass bottle, is in reality of tin, japanned black. Internally it is divided into three, four, or five separate compartments, ranged round a central space, and each tapering to a narrow-mouthed tube, which terminates about an inch within the neck of the bottle. A small pinhole is drilled through the outer surface of the bottle into each compartment, the holes being so placed that when the bottle is grasped by the hand in the ordinary way each hole may be covered by one or other of the fingers or thumb. The central space is left empty, but the surrounding compartments are filled, by means of a funnel with a very tapering nozzle, with the wines or liquids expected to be most in demand, or to which it is intended to limit the spectators' choice. A tray full of glasses, made specially of very thick glass, so as to contain in reality much less than they appear to do, completes the apparatus.



Fig. 29.

The performer comes forward with the magic bottle, followed by an attendant bearing the tray of glasses. He commences by openly pouring water into the bottle, and out again, so as indirectly to raise the inference that the bottle must be perfectly empty. The water, in truth, really passes into the center space only, and thence runs out again as soon as the bottle is tilted. The fingers, meanwhile, are tightly pressed on the different holes, and thus excluding the air, effectually prevent any premature flow of wine from the various compartments. The performer, still holding the bottle mouth downwards, says, "You observe, ladies and gentlemen, that the bottle is now perfectly empty, and yet, by my magic art, I shall

compel it to refill itself for your benefit." He then, addressing various individuals, asks each whether he prefers port, sherry, gin, etc., and when the answer is given, has only to raise the finger stopping the air-hole of that particular compartment to cause the liquid named to flow from the bottle, stopping as soon as the finger is again pressed on the hole. It is a good plan, in order to prevent confusion, to place the liquors in the bottle in alphabetical order, commencing from the hole stopped by the thumb. Some performers increase the variety of the liquors produced by placing beforehand in certain of the glasses a few drops of various flavoring essences. By this means a compartment filled with plain spirits of wine may be made to do duty for brandy, whiskey, etc., at pleasure, according to the glass into which the liquid is poured.

The trick is sometimes elaborated by the performer, by way of conclusion, apparently breaking the bottle, and producing therefrom a borrowed handkerchief or other article which has been made to disappear in some previous trick. This is effected by means of an additional specialty in the construction of the bottle. The compartments containing the liquids in this case terminate a couple of inches above the bottom of the bottle, and the part below this, which has a wavy edge, like fractured glass, is made to slip on and off. (See Fig. 29.) The performer, having produced the wines, pretends to crack the bottle all round by rapping it with his wand, and, having apparently cracked it, pulls the bottom off, and exhibits the handkerchief, which was beforehand placed in readiness therein. The two parts of the bottle joining with great nicety, there is little fear that the pretended crack will prematurely attract attention.

**The Chinese Rings.**—These are rings of brass or steel, in diameter from five to nine inches, and in thickness varying from a quarter to three-eighths of an inch.

The effect of the trick to the spectator is as follows: The rings are given for examination, and found to be

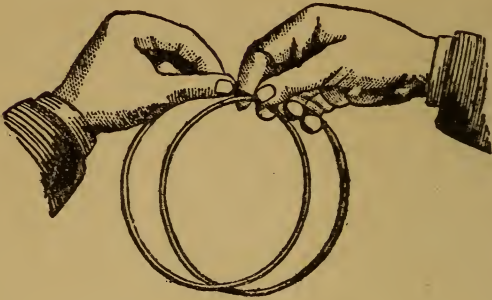


Fig. 30.

solid and separate; but at the will of the operator they are linked together in chains of two, three, or more,

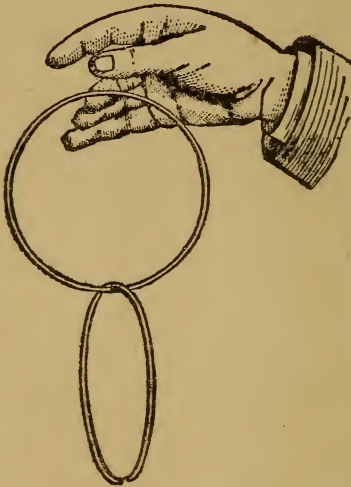


Fig. 31.

becoming connected and disconnected in a moment, and being continually offered for examination. Finally, after

the rings have become involved in an apparently inextricable mass, a slight shake suffices to disentangle them, and to cause them to fall singly upon the stage.

The set of eight rings sold at the conjuring depots consists of one "key" ring, two single rings, a set of two linked together, and a set of three linked together. The "key" ring, in which lies the secret of the trick,

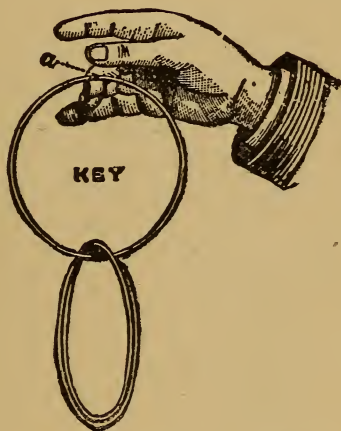


Fig. 32.

is simply a ring with a cut or opening in it. The manipulation of the rings admits of almost infinite variation, and the practice of performers differs greatly as to the mode of working them. We give one method in detail.

The performer comes forward holding the eight rings in his left hand, arranged as follows: First (*i. e.*, innermost), comes the set of three; then the "key" ring (the opening uppermost in the hand), then the set of two; and, lastly, the two single rings. Taking one of the single rings, he hands it to a spectator for examination; passing it, when returned, to another person, and care-



lessly handing the second single ring to be examined in like manner. This should be done without any appearance of haste, and with an air of being perfectly indifferent as to how many of the rings are examined. The two "singles" having been duly inspected, the performer requests one of the spectators to take them both in his right hand, at the same time taking in his own right

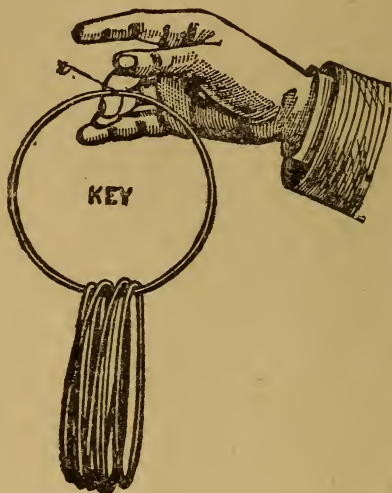


Fig. 33.

hand the next two rings, which, it will be remembered, are the set of two, though the audience naturally believes them to be, like the first, separate. "Now, sir," the professor continues, "will you be good enough to link one of the rings which you hold into the other?" The person addressed looks more or less foolish, and finally "gives it up." "You can't," says the performer in pretended surprise. "My dear sir, nothing is easier. You have only to do as I do. See!" Laying down the rest of the rings, he holds the two as in Fig. 30, and makes a gentle rubbing motion with the thumb upon the rings,

and then lets fall one of them, which naturally drops to the position shown in Fig. 31. He now hands these two rings for examination. The spectators seek for some joint or opening but none is found; and meanwhile the performer transfers the next ring (the "key") to his right hand, keeping the opening under the thumb. He now takes back with the left hand the two single rings,

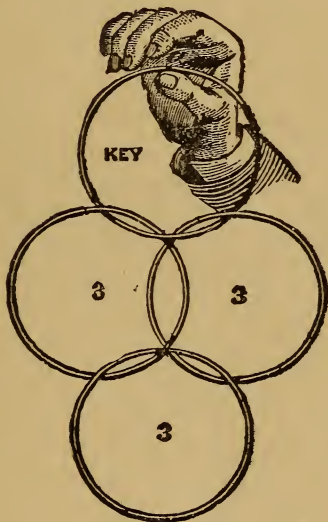


Fig. 34.

immediately transferring one of them to the right hand, and with the ball of the thumb presses it through the opening in the key ring, into which it falls, with exactly the same effect as the apparent joining of the two linked rings a moment before. Again he separates and again joins the two rings. The second single ring is now made to pass through in like manner, making the combination shown in Fig. 32. The performer remarks, "We now have three joined together. Here are three more, as you see (shaking those in the left hand), all solid and

separate, and yet at my will they will join the others." Making a rubbing motion with the thumb as before, he drops two of the three, one by one, from the hand, when

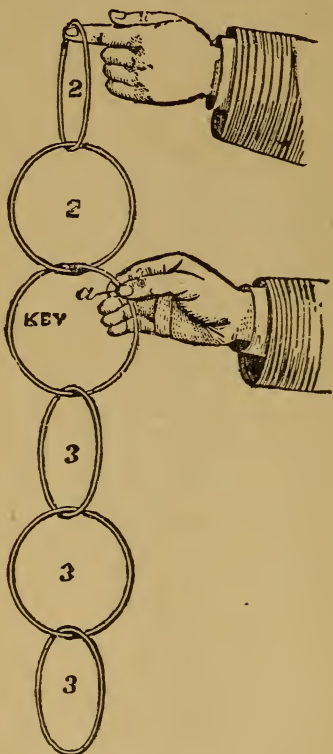


Fig. 35.

they will appear as a chain of three. These he hands for examination, taking back the set of two, and linking them one after the other into the key ring, to which now four rings are attached. Again taking back the set of three, he links these also one by one into the key ring, which thus has seven rings inserted in it. (See Fig. 33.)

Using both hands, but always keeping the opening of the key ring under one or the other thumb, he now takes off these seven rings, commencing with the two single ones, and again offering them for examination; then taking off the set of two. Last of all, he unlinks the set

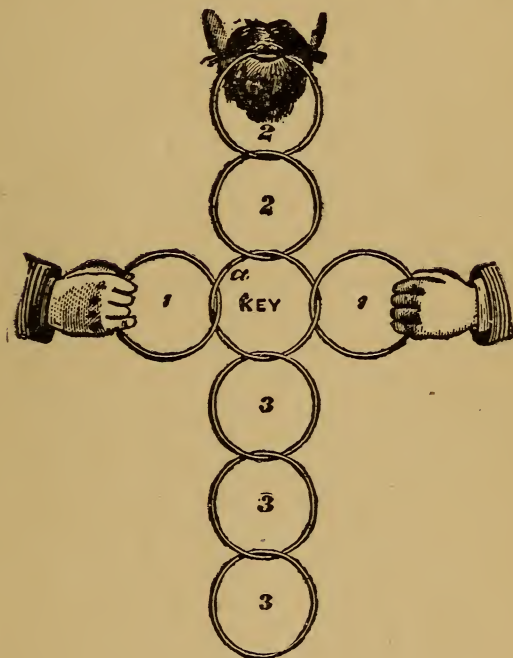


Fig. 36.

of three, and then, holding them at length in his left hand, joins the upper one to the key ring, thus making a chain of four, of which the key ring is the uppermost. He next takes the lowermost ring of the four, and links that into the key ring, bringing the four rings into a diamond shape, as shown in Fig. 34. Again unliking the lower ring, he takes up the set of two, and connects them with the key ring, holding them up above it, thus



making a chain of six, the key ring being third from the top. (See Fig. 35.) Taking the upper ring between his teeth, he links the two single rings into the key ring on either side, making the figure of a cross, as shown in Fig. 36. As the hands are now occupied in holding the single rings forming the arms of the cross, he can no longer keep the opening of the key ring concealed by the thumb, but it is extremely unlikely that among so many rings, so slight a mark in one of them will attract notice. Regaining possession of the key ring, he links all one by one into it, so as again to bring them into the condition illustrated in Fig. 33. Then, holding the key ring with both hands; and with the opening downwards, about a couple of feet from the floor he shakes the rings violently, at the same time gently straining open the key ring, when the seven rings will all in succession drop through the slit and scatter themselves about the floor, the general impression being that they all fall separate, though the grouped sets, of course, remain still united.

**The Thinkophone.**—The performer invites three gentlemen, whom we will distinguish as A, B, and C, to assist him on the platform. When they are duly seated, a piece of blank paper is handed to A, and an open envelope to B. A is invited to think of some person, living or dead at his discretion. When he declares that he has done so, the performer places the ladle end of the changing ladle, (described elsewhere,) which he calls his "thinkophone," on A's head, and applying his own ear to the opposite end, declares that he is able by that means to divine (in fact he already knows) what name the gentleman has thought of. In order, however, to prove that there is no collusion (or for any other colorable reason), he asks A to write in pencil the name he has thought of, and to fold the paper in four. The performer receives it in the ladle, and therewith hands it (without changing) to C, who is invited to look at the name, refold and replace it. It is

then handed, still in the ladle, to B, with a request that he will place it in the envelope which he holds. At this point, however, it is "changed" for another folded paper, of similar appearance, with which the ladle was "loaded" beforehand. While the substitute (which B is *not* invited to look at) is being placed in the envelope, the performer gets the genuine paper from the ladle into his hand. He puts the ladle aside, and begins reflectively to walk up and down the stage, now and then putting a question to A, such as, "Is the person whose name you have written living, or dead?"—"A gentleman or a lady?"—"A relative, or a stranger in blood?" and so on. Meanwhile, he opens and reads the paper in his palm, and after a little more by-play, declares that the name is So-and-so. He asks C whether that was the name he saw on the paper, and on receiving a reply in the affirmative, tells B to take the paper out of the envelope, and hand it back to A. B breaks open the envelope accordingly, but the performer stops him the moment he has done so, and asks him to hold up the folded paper in view of the audience, while he explains "how it's done." This is stated to be by "second sight," the performer explaining the meaning of the term as follows: "When this gentleman (A) writes the name, *he sees it*. That's first sight! Then I tell you what it is. And now *I seize it*, and that's second sight!"

At the words "I seize it," he suits the action to the word, and forthwith hands the paper to A, but in so doing changes it for the original paper, which remained in his possession.

**Reading Blindfolded.**—The supposed clairvoyant, usually a lady, is seated with a small table before her. The performer distributes a number of blank cards among the spectators, who are invited to write thereon words or sentences in pencil. The cards, when written on, are collected in an envelope, and handed to the performer, who meanwhile has blindfolded the clairvoyant, but in such a

manner that though she cannot see through the bandages, she can get a sly downward peep at the table in front of her. Taking one of the cards from the envelope, he holds it in front of her forehead, close against the bandage. After a moment's hesitation she reads the name inscribed thereon, say, "Oliver Cromwell." Another card is taken in a like manner, the one first used being thrown carelessly on the table; and so on through the whole series of cards.

The secret lies in the fact that that name "Oliver Cromwell," stated to be on the first card, was not there at all; but is, in fact, a bogus name agreed on beforehand. The real inscription on the card was, we will say, "Julius Cæsar;" but the assertion of the clairvoyant is not tested, and nobody can be sure that his neighbor may not have written "Oliver Cromwell," so the answer passes muster. When the card has been professedly "read," the performer throws it with apparent carelessness on the table, but within the radius of the downward glance of the clairvoyant. She notes the name on it, and gives *that* name as being the one on the *second* card, and so on throughout. To complete the trick, and avoid accident, the performer should be provided with a card of his own, bearing the name "Oliver Cromwell." This card is taken, as if from the envelope, and held by way of finish; the clairvoyant reading, as if inscribed on it, the name appearing on the card last laid on the table. The tale is then complete.

**The Spirit Handkerchief.**—The performer borrows a white silk handkerchief from some obliging male spectator, and after making a large knot in one of its corners drops the handkerchief on the floor. After requesting the pianist to furnish him with some music of the gentle, trickling kind, he commands the handkerchief to assume an erect position, which it immediately does. Passing his hands continually above and around all sides of the handkerchief, the performer causes it to go through a series of very mystifying movements, the handkerchief rising, lying

down, dancing and gliding back and forth at his word of command. For a finish the borrowed handkerchief jumps into the hand of the performer, who immediately returns it to its owner, who, after carefully examining it, fails to find anything indicative of preparation about it.

The conjurer's friend, the black silk thread, is at the bottom of this very charming and pleasing feat. The thread is stretched horizontally across the stage, its ends being held by assistants standing in the wings. Before the trick and during the borrowing of the handkerchief the thread is allowed to lie loosely on the floor, from where it is raised to a level with the performer's hand, immediately after he has returned to the stage and stepped over it. Secretly seizing the thread, he manages to make a knot in the handkerchief around it, and then drops it to the floor, as described.

The rest of the explanation is simple enough: the concealed assistants work the thread and thus cause the handkerchief to rise, lie down, dance and glide back and forth according to the will of the performer, who, standing sidewise to the audience, allows the thread to pass between his legs, thus being at liberty to walk backward and forward without interfering with the working of the thread.

The detaching of the thread previous to the return of the handkerchief still remains to be explained. This is accomplished by the performer seizing the knot of the handkerchief after the latter, by the clever manipulation on the part of the concealed assistants, has jumped into his hand; one assistant releases his end of the thread, while the other rapidly gathers his in, pulling the thread out through the knot, and leaving the handkerchief ready to be returned and duly inspected.

**The Bewitched Skull.**—A couple of open-backed chairs are placed sideways to the audience, back to back, about two feet apart. Upon these, resting on the backs,



is a sheet of plate-glass, two feet six inches in length, and almost fifteen inches in breadth. The chairs and glass are usually placed in position before the curtain rises, but in order to show that there is no deception the performer takes up the piece of glass and brings it forward for examination, as also a *papier mache* skull, life-size, and closely resembling the real article. It has the lower jaw

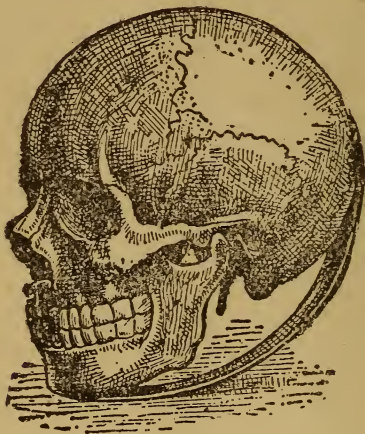


Fig. 37.

complete, and a broad curved band of hoop-iron, painted to match the rest, extends from below the jaw to the lower part of the occiput. This band forms a rest for the skull, so that when placed on a smooth surface, it stands fairly upright, though so nearly *in equilibrio* as to rock freely from back to front (see Fig. 37).

Having replaced the sheet of glass in position across the backs of the chairs, the performer places the skull upon it, facing the audience (see Fig. 38). Withdrawing to a little distance, he proceeds to put questions to it, which the skull answers by nods, one for "No," and three for "Yes." Numbers are indicated by nodding the requisite number of times.

The answers are as a rule of a simple character, such as revealing the numbers of a pair of dice ("loaded," and changed as may be necessary) thrown into a hat, naming the suit and value of a drawn card, etc. "Fortune telling questions" may also be asked, and will be, if not always correctly, at any rate intelligently answered.

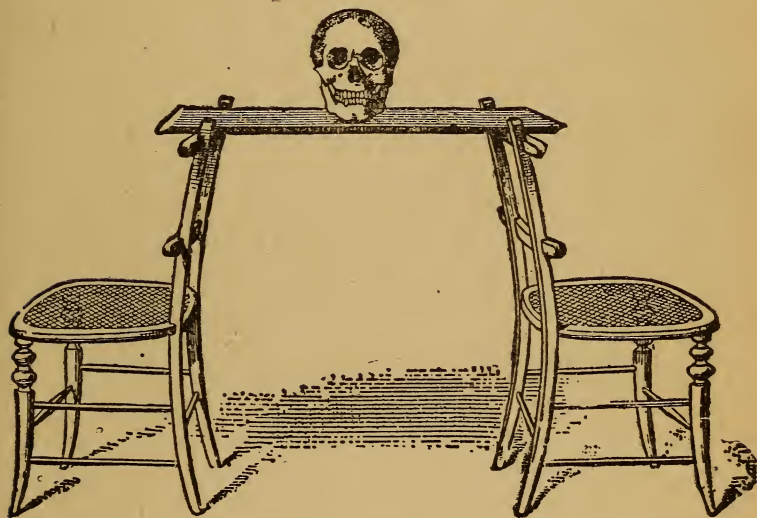


Fig. 38.

When the little comedy is over, the performer again brings forward the skull and sheet of glass and offers them for examination. If any skeptical gentleman ventures to suspect that the two chairs have any connection with the platform, or play any occult part, electrical, mechanical or otherwise, he is invited to come forward and inspect them, but the closest scrutiny will not reveal anything of a suspicious character.

The secret, like that of many of the best of magical illusions, lies in a simple black silk thread, which, against a moderately dark background, is quite invisible. The

silk is threaded at the outset through the open backs of the two chairs, each end passing behind the scenes, where they are united in the hand of the assistant. When the performer replaces the sheet of plate-glass upon the chairs after examination, he lifts the thread so that it may lie along the surface of the glass, passing from end to end, or nearly, close to its under edge. The middle of the thread as it thus lies on the glass bears a little pellet of wax, and this, in placing the skull on the glass, the performer presses against its hinder part. The thread has hitherto been left free by the assistant, but if now slightly tightened by a pull on the double line, the skull is tilted slightly backward. On the pull being again relaxed, it drops back into its normal position, giving the effect of a nod. This is the whole of the mystery. By pulling each end of the thread alternately, to a scarcely perceptible extent, the skull may be made to turn to right or left. When the trick is over, and the performer again offers the skull for examination, the assistant releases one end of the thread, and draws it away by the other. As the thread constitutes the whole working machinery, the skull, glass and chairs may be examined with the utmost freedom, without any risk.

**The Disappearing Lady.**—A handsome lady, in full evening dress, stands upon a glass shelf which is raised some 30 inches above the stage, being placed in front of a large mirror also raised above the stage floor. A screen is then so placed about her as to plainly show both sides of the mirror. The magician then states at the word of command he will cause the lady to vanish. The screen is removed, and the lady has disappeared. The manner of doing the trick is simple. The mirror is made in two parts, the shelf or platform whereon the lady stands hiding the upper part of the lower section of mirror. The upper section of mirror is placed to the rear of the lower mirror, its lower end slipping down back of it. When it is pushed up the upper part is hidden in the wide panel of frame.

In the lower part of the large glass a large opening is made, through which the lady is drawn by a confederate. After she has escaped, the mirror is shoved into its proper position. A portion of the mirror is seen by the audience during the entire exhibition, thus adding greatly to the mystery of the illusion.

**The Mystery of the Floating Head.**—One of the most startling of conjurors' tricks, and one which has piqued public curiosity to the utmost, is that sensationally announced as the "Human Head Floating in the Air." Multitudes have witnessed and wondered at this performance; which seems to have defied any explanation by the uninitiated.

That the head is a gutta-percha or plaster affair, is a pet theory with those who have not seen it, but after witnessing, this idea is reluctantly discarded. In reality it is a human head, and the seeming absence of any body attached thereto will be accounted for as soon as we disclose the mystery and secret of the performance.



Fig. 39.



Fig. 40.

The sides and back of the stage are hung with curtains. Near the back of the stage two mirrors are placed at right angles, the point, equi-distant from each side of the stage, facing the audience. The mirrors being at angles with the sides, of course reflect the curtains at the sides, and these curtains being the same in style and material, their reflection has the same appearance as the curtain at the back of the stage. The audience seeing this reflection naturally imagine they are having an unobstructed view of the back of the stage.



Behind this wall of glass the conjuror's confederate takes his position, of course, only that part of his person which is above the glass being visible. So the "floating head" is really a man peeping over a glass fence. The cushion which is commonly used to apparently support the head, is suspended outside of the glass, by fine wire.

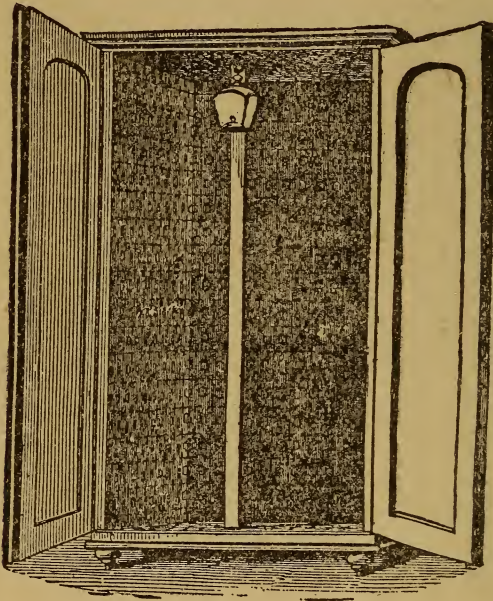


Fig. 41.

The exhibitor is always careful to keep out of the angles of the glass, otherwise he would be reflected, and the existence of the glasses disclosed to the audience. When standing at the stage "wings," or when directly in front of the central "point" of the mirrors, he is secure from reflection.

Our illustrations make this explanation clear. Fig. 39 shows the head as it appears to the audience; Fig. 40

shows the position, behind the glass, of the individual personating the "head." In the latter picture the spectator is supposed to be looking through the mirrors.

**The Cabinet of Proteus.**—This is a wooden closet, seven to eight feet in height by four or five feet square, supported on short legs, so as to exclude the idea of any communication with the floor. It has folding doors, and an upright pillar extends from top to bottom of the interior, at about the center of the cabinet. At the top of this pillar, in front, is fixed a lamp, so that the whole of the interior is brightly illuminated.

The cabinet may be used in various ways. One of the most striking is as follows: The folding doors are opened, disclosing the interior perfectly empty. (See Fig. 41.) The exhibitor directs his assistant to walk into the cabinet. He does so, and the doors are closed. Meanwhile, a couple of gentlemen, selected by the audience, are invited to stand behind or beside the cabinet, and see that no one obtains ingress or egress by any secret opening. Notwithstanding these precautions, when the doors are again opened, the assistant is found to have vanished, and another person, different in dress, in stature, and in complexion, is found in his place. This person steps forth, makes his bow and retires. Again the cabinet, now empty, is closed, and after an interval of a few moments, again opened. This time a human skeleton is found to occupy the vacant space. This having been removed, and the door having been once more closed and opened, another person, say, a lady, appears. This person having retired, the doors are again closed; and when they are again opened, the person who first entered is once more found

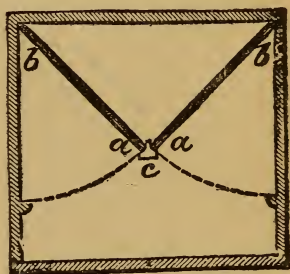


Fig. 42.

within. A committee from the audience are now invited to examine the cabinet within and without, but all their scrutiny cannot detect any hidden space, even sufficient to conceal a mouse.

An examination of Fig. 42, representing a ground plan of the cabinet, will make plain the seeming mystery. A movable flap, *a b*, working on hinges at *b*, extends from top to bottom of each side, resting when thrown open against the post *c* in the middle, and thus enclosing a triangular space at the back of the cabinet. The outer surfaces of these flaps (*i. e.*, the surfaces exposed when they are folded back against the sides of the cabinet) are, like the rest of the interior, covered with wall paper, of a crimson or other dark color. The opposite sides of the flaps are mirrors, and when the flaps are folded back against the posts, reflect the surfaces against which they previously rested, and which are covered with paper of the same pattern as the rest. The effect to the eye of the spectator is that of a perfectly empty chamber, though, as we have seen, there is in reality an enclosed triangular space behind the post. This is capable of containing two or three persons, and here it is that the persons and things intended to appear in succession are concealed. The assistant, entering in sight of the audience, changes places, as soon as the door is closed, with one of the other persons. This person having retired, and the door again being closed, those who are still within place the skeleton in position in front of the post, and again retire to their hiding-place. When all the rest have appeared, the person who first entered presses the flaps against the sides of the cabinet, against which they are retained by a spring lock on each side, and the public may then safely be admitted, as their closest inspection cannot possibly discover the secret.

**The Mystic Flight.**—The performer, attired in an evening dress suit, introduces to the audience his liveried

assistant, whom he dresses in a long flowing robe which entirely conceals him from view. A glass-topped table standing in the center of the stage is mounted by the performer and screens are pulled all around him. To show that he is still there both hands are thrust out over the top of the screen and they are held in this position throughout the entire experiment. The robed assistant now fires a revolver at the screens, the hands are immediately withdrawn, the curtains pulled away, and there, standing on the table, is the very assistant who had just fired the revolver. But what has become of the performer? This perfectly natural question is answered by the man in the cloak who is still standing with the smoking pistol in his hand; throwing off the long cloak in which the assistant had been dressed, there stands revealed to the astonished audience the performer himself, attired in the same clothes as when he was perched upon the table.

So much for the effect, which is indeed truly marvelous. We will now explain the *modus operandi* whereby the illusion can be performed.

Glancing at Fig. 43, the reader will get an idea as to how the evanishment of the performer is effected; but let us commence at the beginning and explain the details thoroughly.

The table is devoid of preparation and is placed in the center of the stage, nearer the back than the footlights, for reasons that are obvious. To prove that the floor contains no traps, electric lights or candles can be placed underneath the table if desired, but as the curtains only descend to within two feet from the ground this precaution is not a necessity, as the audience can see below and right through to the back of the stage. Although the floor contains no trap, the stage back is utilized in its stead, the cavity being artfully masked by an oil-painting which is hanging on the wall, presumably for ornamen-



tation. Behind the screen this cannot be seen, so an assistant stationed behind the scenes lowers the canvas, and pushes through the empty frame a wooden plank which rests its other end upon the table where the performer is standing. Because of this, the back screen is

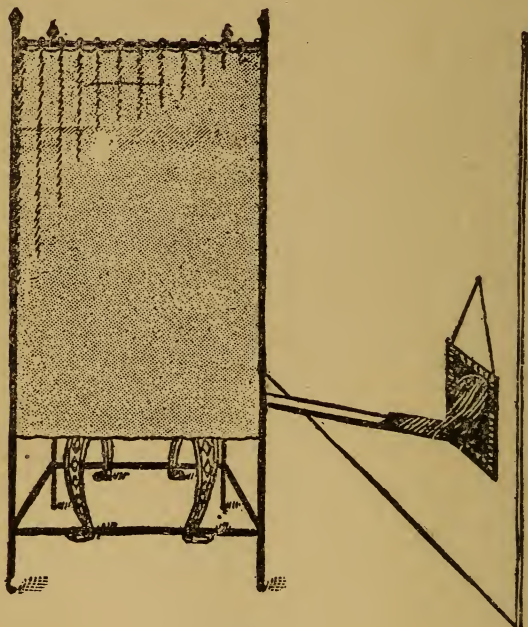


Fig. 43.

only half the depth of the front and two side ones. Along this plank, then, the professor crawls, and in the act of disappearing he is seen in Fig. 43. After having made his way through the aperture, he quickly dons a costume exactly similar to the one in which he had previously dressed his assistant; this should be made out of coarse sacking material, as it is possible to see quite plainly through the mesh; an ordinary sack with two sleeves will answer the purpose admirably if no more elaborate cos-

tume is obtainable. When dressed in this manner, the performer stations himself in the wings, with a revolver in his hand.

All this while the idea that he is not behind the screen has never crossed the mind of an average audience because they see his hands protruding over the top; in reality they only see two dummy hands, which were previously concealed in a pocket on the inside of the front screen, or they can be hidden upon the person. They are fashioned out of white dress gloves, duplicates of those which the performer is wearing, so that if they are hooked on to the top of the screen, nobody can tell the difference.

In order to allow the performer plenty of time to get out of the screen and into the wings, the assistant makes a little speech similar to the following:

“Now, Prof. Jones, where are you?”

Prof. J. “Here.”

Asst. “Show the audience your hands.”

Prof. J. sticks his gloved hands out and moves them about, immediately withdrawing them.

Asst. “No, keep them outside so that the audience can see you are still there.”

Prof. J. now substitutes the dummy hands and fixes them into the desired position; leaving them there he now gets away as quickly as possible, the assistant meanwhile occupying the audience's attention by saying: “Ladies and gentlemen, you have all seen Professor Jones go behind the screen, and you can see above and below, and also all around the curtains; you can also see the professor's hands, which please watch and see that he does not remove them. I shall fire at the screen and immediately it will be withdrawn.”

Now the assistant goes to the wings to fetch a pistol; no sooner has the latter passed behind the wings than the performer, similarly attired, steps out backwards,

aping the crouching attitude, and altogether conducting himself in exactly the same manner as his assistant had previously been doing.

The assistant, directly he passes behind the wings, throws off his long coat and runs to the back of the stage, proceeding along the plank on to the table. Immediately the plank is drawn behind the scenes and the canvas picture replaced, thereby leaving nothing suspicious, and no unnecessary apparatus on the stage.

When enough time has been allowed for the necessary workings to have been accomplished, the man in the cloak, whom the spectators still believe to be the assistant, fires the revolver; immediately the hands are pulled inside the screen (and either concealed upon the person or deposited in the screen pocket), then the assistant himself pulls the curtains aside and stands exposed.

The spectators are, of course, fairly bewildered, but the climax is reached when the performer throws the cloak from off himself, and bows in acknowledgment to the applause which at all times is forthcoming to the man who smartly works a good illusion.

## BLACK ART

The curtain rises, and we behold upon the stage a darkened cave.

Suddenly, from out the gloomy blackness, the wizard appears with a mysterious suddenness that fairly startles. He steps out from the cave to prove that he is in the flesh, and then he retreats within its portals. Raising his empty hand aloft, he calls aloud to the spirits to supply him with a magic wand; and immediately his upraised hand is seen clutching the mysterious emblem of his authority.

Nothing else is visible upon the stage, but with a wave of the wand a tub appears; this tub is rolled down to the audience, who acknowledge it to be real, solid and empty, and it is then rolled back.

Slowly a full-sized skeleton rises out of this tub and floats about in the air, and then, at the command of the wizard, one of its arms or legs separates from the body and travels in a different direction; the head leaves the trunk and travels upward, and then descends again and joins the body. After a variety of like movements these bones suddenly and entirely vanish, and are seen no more.

The magician waves his wand again, and orders two small tables to appear; his command is immediately obeyed, and they are seen standing one upon either side of him. Now, at his request, the spirits provide him with two vases, one of which appears on each table. These vases are handed round for examination and then replaced; and then the wizard requests the loan of three or four watches and chains. Taking them in a bunch,



he drops them into one of the vases, and at the same instant turns it upside down, showing that they have vanished. Quickly walking over to the other table, they are all extracted from the vase that has been standing there untouched.

At a word from the performer, the two vases or urns upon the table travel across the stage in opposite directions and exchange positions with each other. Then one vase rises upwards and remains suspended in the air, while the performer passes a solid and examined hoop around it to prove that it is not suspended by any tangible support.

Live animals — from a cat to a tiger in a cage — can be easily produced or caused to vanish; and when the performance is concluded, the magician covers himself with a white sheet and disappears.

Such, in brief, is an idea of the wonderful illusions that can be accomplished by this method, and the reader will readily see how exciting and weird the performance must be when properly presented.

The principle of Black Art, which is here given, may assist the ideas of some and prove of interest to others.

While the mysterious cave of the wizard is entirely draped in dead black, everything that appears so suddenly is of a pure white color.

The magician himself is dressed in the Eastern style of a flowing white robe.

All the white-painted articles that are to appear are placed behind black screens upon the stage, and consequently they are invisible to the audience.

The darkness of the cave is considerably increased by having a few lights with reflectors behind them arranged around the sides and proscenium of this inner stage.

The performer himself does absolutely nothing towards producing the desired articles, all the work being executed by an invisible assistant. This assistant is attired

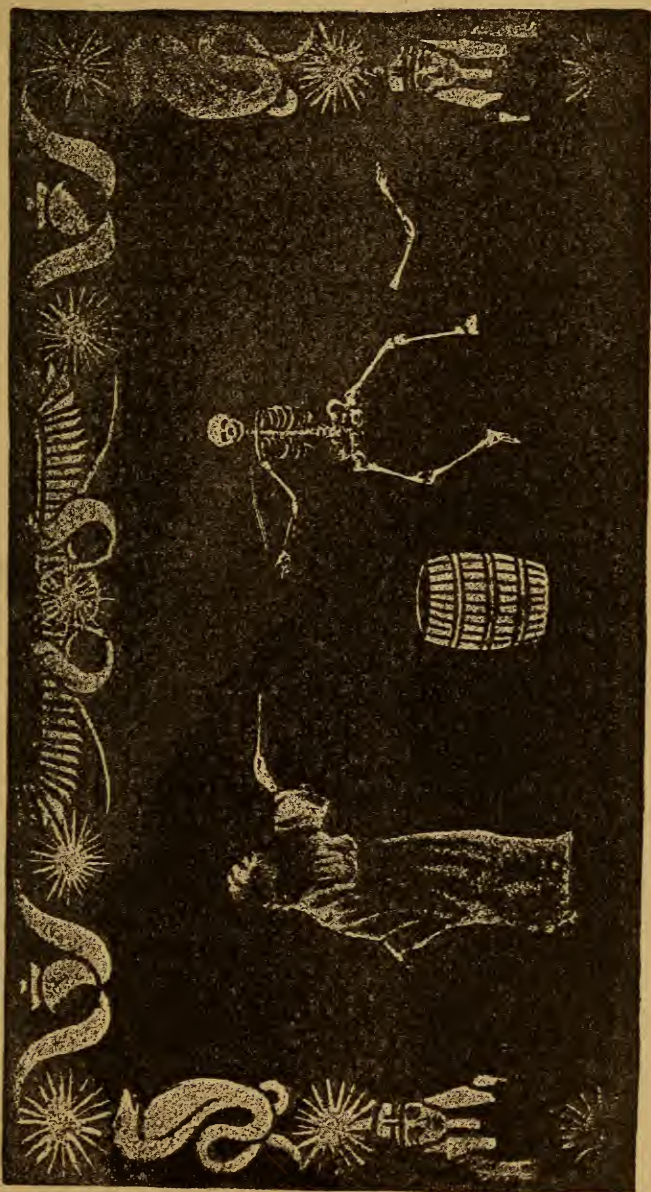


Fig. 44.

in a suit of black, with black gloves, and a hood for covering the head and neck; the hood has small eye-holes covered with very thin veiling, so that there is no fear of the luster of the assistant's eyes being seen.

Now it will be understood that the tables, tubs, chairs, etc., to be produced are first arranged in their proper position upon the stage, and covered over with black velvet. At the desired moment the assistant steps up to the article and seizes the covering; then, when the magician commands the appearance of the object, the cloth is rapidly whisked off and carried to the back of the cave. The appearance of, say, the tub, right in the center of the stage, is so sudden and noiseless as to be really uncanny; and as there cannot be any suspicious movement on the part of the performer, the secret of its appearance cannot be detected. The disappearance of any object is brought about in precisely the same manner, only reversed; thus, supposing the tub had fulfilled its mission and was not wanted any longer, at a word from the performer the assistant would simply put down a black screen in front of the tub, so as to completely envelop it, and under cover of the screen it would be pulled to the back of the cave. It will now be quite understood that the screens must always be manipulated with the greatest possible neatness and rapidity, because if the screens or covers are made to travel slowly, the illusion would be imperfect, and it would lose most of its effect upon the audience.

The assistant must take great care never to walk in front of any white object within the cave, and must never allow his gloved hand to be seen when he is lifting anything to the table, and he must never pass in front of the performer's person during the performance.

Now that the general idea of the principle has been thoroughly explained, let us describe the construction of the cave, and a series of the most up-to-date tricks and

illusions that can be accomplished within its mysterious portals, so that anyone possessing the inclination to produce a Black Art seance will be in a position to start with a complete knowledge of the subject.

Presuming that the reader desires to present Black Art at halls or bazaars, he could not do better than have his inner stage or cave erected to the measurements given in the accompanying diagram, Fig. 45. The width, it will be seen, should be just twelve feet, with a depth of nine feet, to allow the invisible assistant plenty of working room. The proscenium should be eight feet high, and the walls and ceiling must be draped with black velvet, while the floor is covered with black felt, which will completely deaden the sound of the assistant's footsteps.

A wooden frame must be made for the front of the cave, and this should be painted black, with Egyptian figures standing out in white. A special set of lights, with reflectors, must be arranged to fit on the head and side pieces of this framework. These lights shining in the eyes of the spectators make it an utter impossibility for them to detect any object within the mystic chamber, unless it is of a pure white color.

Electric lights are naturally the best and most convenient for use in illuminating the front of the cave, but, where it is impossible to secure them, ordinary bicycle lamps will be found to answer the same purpose.

Portability is desirable when constructing an inner stage of this description, and the most convenient method of erecting the wizard's cave is the following:

First mark out upon the floor of the permanent stage the exact position that your own chamber is to occupy; then fix four upright posts into the floor, one at each corner; these posts should be eight feet high, and each one have a steel pin in the top.

Four thin battens must be laid on the top of these posts, from corner to corner, being fixed by the steel pin



passing through holes made for that purpose in each end of the battens. Thus a strong but light framework is formed, and additional strength may be obtained by having two extra battens fixed diagonally from corner to corner, although this is not absolutely necessary.

The wooden frontage is constructed with mitered corners, so that it can be taken to pieces and packed along with the supports and battens. When required for use the front frame must be put together and fastened to the two first uprights; then the felt carpet should be laid, and the velvet walls and ceiling be put in their place.

It will be noticed that the diagram, Fig. 45, shows a two-foot opening in the center of the back curtain; this is left to allow the performer or his assistant to make their entry or exit unobserved, and, in order to prevent the opening being seen, a five-foot screen, reaching from floor to ceiling, is stretched in front of the cavity, about eighteen inches away from the curtain. Another screen, similar in size to the one just described, is fixed on the right hand side of the chamber, eighteen inches in front of the one hiding the opening in the back; and by looking at the plan the reader will see how it is possible to introduce or cause to vanish an object almost from the very center of the stage.

This ingenious arrangement allows the assistant to fetch from behind the back curtain any articles that are too bulky to remain hidden upon the stage until required in the performance, and it also serves to get rid of any large objects, such as barrels or tables, after they have been vanished.

The screens should be sewed to the velvet ceiling and tacked to the floor to keep them perfectly firm, and care should be taken not to allow any lights whatever to be behind the cave; in fact, all the footlights should be extinguished, and only those attached to the front of the inner stage allowed to shine.

Not one spot of color must be visible within the chamber, or there would be danger of the assistant's presence being detected by the audience, should he pass in front of

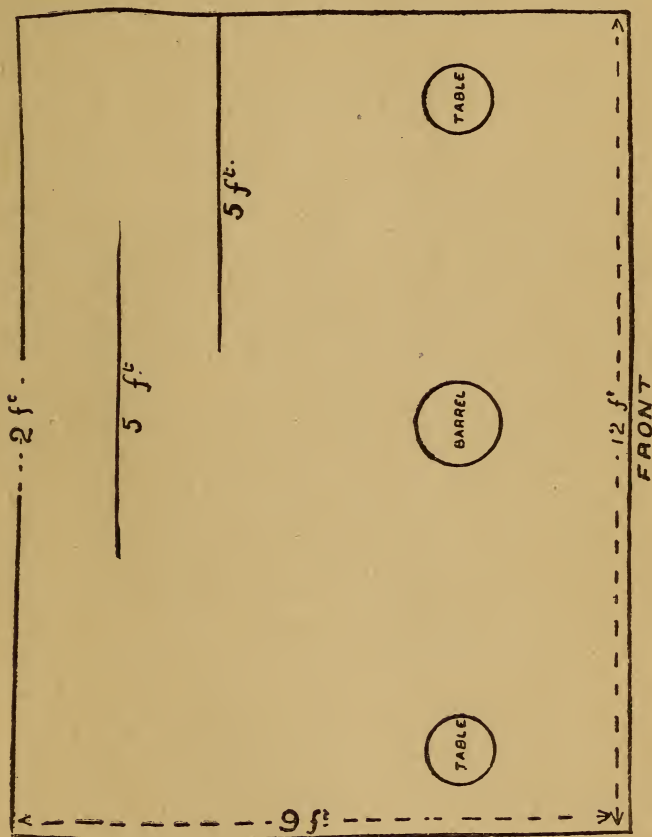


Fig. 45.

it; and as many lights as possible in the hall itself should be extinguished prior to commencing a *seance*.

Having followed the instructions for erecting a suitable structure, everything may be arranged and made

ready for a performance within fifteen minutes, providing the work has been well rehearsed.

Perhaps the best articles for commencing a performance with are two tables and a barrel, which should be placed in the positions indicated in the plan of the stage, and then covered with bags of velvet. Care should be taken that the covers or screens covering the white objects behind or beneath them should so hide the articles that when the curtain ascends the audience can see nothing except an apparently empty stage.

All the apparatus that will be required during the performance should be in readiness behind the cave, so that the assistant cannot fail to have everything at his fingers' ends to prevent any hitch in the show; and the assistant himself should stand well to the back of the stage when his services are not required.

The performer now appears, either magically or by simply walking in from the wings. He must, of course, be dressed in white, and it is advisable for him to say a few words describing the nature of the performance.

To cause the sudden and mysterious appearance of the performer it is necessary to remove the barrel from the center of the stage, so that it does not interfere with or obstruct the view of the audience.

The magician himself should stand behind a black screen in the very center of the chamber, and at the desired moment his assistant should rapidly drag the screen aside and expose the performer, who makes his bow while the invisible assistant disposes of the screen.

A white wand, encased in a black cover, is procured by the assistant, and directly the performer calls for the article it must be slipped out of the bag and made to float across the stage to his hand. This, of course, is accomplished by the assistant quietly walking across the stage, holding the wand in his hand by its extreme end.

With a wave of the magician's stick the barrel appears

just beside him; this had been pushed into position by the assistant, who, at the performer's command, snatches away the sheet of black velvet with which it was covered, leaving the barrel standing out in bold relief.

Being quite solid and quite ordinary it can be wheeled or rather rolled down for the audience to examine, in case they should imagine that it was merely produced by reflection.

The interior of this barrel should be painted dead black, so that any objects enveloped in a similarly colored velvet bag can be dropped into the tub and afterward produced without any fear of the secret of their appearance being discovered.

One very valuable accessory that should be constructed is a cylindrical box to fit easily into the interior of the barrel.

This cylinder should be covered entirely in black velvet, and its use will now be obvious. A good effect may be obtained by loading a peculiarly constructed skeleton into the cylinder, which is introduced into the barrel, from which the skeleton rises at the performer's command. The introduction of the cylinder into the barrel is quite invisible because of the color of the surroundings, and the assistant should simply lift it up and drop it into the tub.

The skeleton itself is made of *papier mache* or light wood, with the back of the figure completely covered with black velvet. The limbs are all joined, as is shown in the illustration, with handles affixed to each separate portion, so as to enable the assistant to operate the limbs without experiencing any difficulty. (See Fig. 46, which is the back view of the skeleton.)

After the skeleton has enjoyed his dance round the stage and has been fully dismembered and rejointed, its limbs are caused to leave the body one by one and drop into the barrel from which they formerly arose.



Directly every particle of the skeleton has been again deposited into the barrel, the magician turns it upside down and shows that it is quite empty. The quickness of this disappearance is really remarkable, and will always

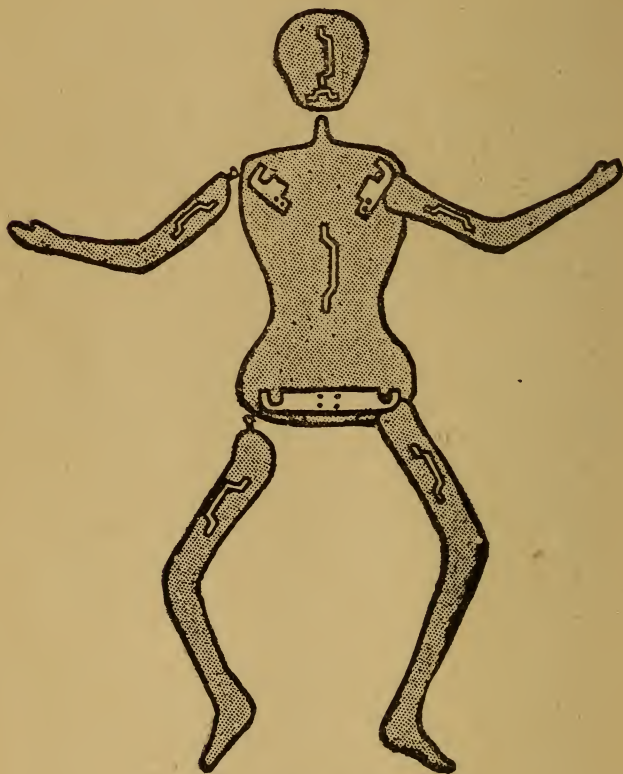


Fig. 46.

cause considerable astonishment. It is, of course, worked by dropping each separate limb into the same cylinder which introduced them into the barrel, and when the whole body is inside the assistant quickly lifts the cylinder out before the magician shows the barrel empty.

Should the performer so desire, a white skeleton can be painted upon the assistant's black suit, and a particularly weird or lively dance can be executed by him with good effect; and by the simple process of turning round, the skeleton can be made to vanish or produced *ad libitum*, because the assistant's back is only plain velvet.

Out of the empty barrel a score or so of pigeons, doves and geese can be made to fly, and a live child can be placed in the tub, and almost immediately the magician stabs about inside with a sharp sword, and afterwards shows that the little boy or girl has entirely vanished.

Both these effects are executed by the use of the same cylinder, which for the first production has to be furnished with a lid or cover. The birds to be produced are put into this cylinder, and the cover placed over the top; then it is loaded into the barrel, and at the proper moment the lid is lifted off, and the birds allowed to escape.

The child is lifted into the tub and placed in the same cylinder that was previously occupied by the birds; the assistant, of course, lifts this lining and its contents out of the barrel before the magician attempts to pass his sword round the interior, and the child, being an accomplice, is carried away to the back.

Many other startling effects can be worked up with the barrel and the cylinder to suit the style of any particular performer.

When the barrel has fulfilled its mission and is wanted no more, it should be made to vanish and cleared away, to allow as much working room as possible in the limited area at the magician's disposal. To cause its evanishment, another cylinder of velvet, of sufficient size to encompass the barrel easily, should be quickly dropped over the tub, so that it is completely covered, then it will be quite invisible and can be dragged out of the way.

The two white tables, hidden beneath velvet sheets, can now be produced at the performer's command. They

should be standing upon either side of the stage as indicated in the plan previously given, and at a wave of the wand the assistant must snatch the covering away, leaving the white table completely exposed. The same operation should then be repeated upon the other side.

Suddenly a large vase or urn mysteriously appears upon one of the tables; this is accomplished by the assistant bringing from the rear the desired article encased in a black cylinder. In this condition it is placed in the proper position, and then the covering quickly lifted off at the right moment. In the same manner a second vase can be made to appear on the magician's hand, and this is then shown quite empty and placed upon the other table.

The performer now steps down to the audience, and requests the loan of some four or five watches and chains. Having obtained these, he goes to either urn, and unmistakably drops each borrowed timepiece into it. Then, quickly walking to the other side of the stage, he extracts the same articles from the other vase and returns them to the audience. The secret of this startling effect is that the assistant slips a cylinder with a bottom into one of the vases while the performer is borrowing the watches. Then, directly they are all dropped inside the urn, the cylinder is removed and carried over and deposited in the vase upon the other side, thus allowing them to be removed therefrom. The principle of changing objects can be relied upon for many weird transformations.

## HOW TO BE A SPIRIT MEDIUM

### OR RULES TO BE OBSERVED WHEN FORMING SPIRITUAL CIRCLES

The spirit circle is the assembling together of a given number of persons for the purpose of seeking communion with the spirits who have passed away from earth into the higher world of souls. The chief advantage of such an assembly is the mutual impartation and reception of the combined magnetisms of the assemblage. These in combination form a force stronger than that of an isolate subject: first enabling spirits to commune with great power; next developing the latent gifts of mediumship in such members of the circle as are thus endowed; and, finally, promoting that harmonious and social spirit of fraternal intercourse which is one of the especial aims of the spirits' mission.

The first conditions to be observed relate to the persons who compose the circle. These should be, as far as possible, of opposite temperaments, as positive and negative in disposition whether male or female; also of moral characters, pure minds, and not marked by repulsive points of either physical or mental condition. The physical temperaments should contrast with each other; but no person suffering from decidedly chronic disease, or of a very debilitated physique, should be present at any circle unless it is formed expressly for healing purposes. I would recommend the number of the circle never to be less than three nor more than twelve.

The use growing out of the association of differing



temperaments is to form a battery on the principles of electricity or galvanism, composed of positive and negative elements, the sum of which should be unequal. No person of a very strongly positive temperament or disposition should be present, as any magnetic spheres emanating from the circle will overpower that of the spirits, who must always be positive to the circle in order to produce phenomena. It is not desirable to have more than two already well developed mediums in a circle, mediums always absorbing the magnetism of the rest of the party; hence, when there are too many present, the force, being divided, cannot operate successfully with any.

**Of Temperature.**—Never let the apartment be overheated, or even close. As an unusual amount of magnetism is liberated at a circle, the room is always warmer than ordinary, and should be very well ventilated. Avoid strong light, which, by producing excessive motion in the atmosphere, disturbs the manifestations. A very subdued light is the most favorable for any manifestations of a magnetic character, especially for spiritual magnetism.

**Of the Positions to be Observed.**—If the circle is one which meets another periodically, and is composed of the same persons, let them occupy the same seats (unless changed under spiritual direction), and sit (as the most favorable of all positions) round a table, their hands laid on it, with palms downwards. It is believed that the wood, when charged, becomes a conductor, without the necessity of touching or holding hands. I should always suggest the propriety of employing a table as a conductor, especially as all tables in household use are more or less magnetically charged already. If flowers and fruit are in the room, see that they are just freshly gathered, otherwise remove them; also avoid sitting in a room with many minerals, metals or glasses; these all injuriously effect sensitives, of whom mediums are the type.

I recommend the seance to be opened either with prayer or music, vocal or instrumental; after which, subdued, quiet and harmonizing conversation is better than wearisome silence; but let the conversation be always directed toward the purpose of the gathering, and never sink into discussion, or rise to emphasis; let it be gentle, quiet and spiritual, until phenomena begin to be manifest. Always have a slate, or pen, pencil and paper on the table, so as not to be obliged to rise to procure them. Especially avoid all entering or quitting the room, moving about, irrelevant conversation or disturbances of any kind within or without the circle room, after the seance has been once commenced.

The spirits are far more punctual to seasons, faithful to promise and periodical in action, than mortals. Endeavor, then, to fix your circle at a convenient hour when you will be least interrupted and do not fail in your appointments. Do not admit unpunctual late comers; nor, if possible, suffer the air of the room to be disturbed in any way after the sitting commences. Nothing but necessity, indisposition, or impressions (to be hereafter described) should warrant the least disturbance of the sitting, *which should never* exceed two hours, unless an extension of time be solicited of the spirits. Let the seance always extend to one hour, even if no results are obtained; it sometimes requires all that time for spirits to form their battery of the materials furnished. Let it be also remembered that all circles are experimental; hence no one should be discouraged if phenomena are not produced after the first few sittings. Stay with the same circle for six sittings: if no phenomena are then produced (provided all the above conditions are observed) you may be sure you are rightly assimilated to each other, you do not form the requisite combinations, or neutralize each other. In that case, break up, and let that circle of members meet with other persons; that is, change one, two, or

three persons of your circle for others, and so on, until you succeed.

A well-developed test-medium may sit without injury for any person, of any description of character or temperament; but a circle sitting for mutual development should never admit persons addicted to bad habits, criminals, sensualists, strongly positive persons of any kind, whether rude, skeptical, violent tempered, or dogmatical. An humble, candid, inquiring spirit, unprejudiced, and receptive of truth, is the only frame of mind in which to sit for phenomena, the delicate magnetism of which is shaped, tempered, and made or marred as much by mental as physical conditions. When once any of the circle can communicate freely and conclusively with the spirits, the spirits can and will take charge of and regulate the future movements of the circle.

**Of Impressions.**—Impressions are the voices of spirits speaking to our spirits, or else the monitions of the spirit within us, and should always be respected and followed out, unless (which is very rare) suggestive of actual wrong in act or word. At the opening of the circle, one or more of the members are often impressed to change seats with others; one or more impressed with the desire to withdraw, or a strong feeling of repulsion to some member of the circle, makes it painful to remain there. Let any or all of these impressions be faithfully regarded, and, at commencing, pledge to each other the promise that no offense shall be taken by following out impressions.

If a strong impression to write, speak, sing, dance, or gesticulate, possess any mind present, follow it out faithfully. It has a meaning, if you cannot at first realize it. Never feel hurt in your own person, nor ridicule your neighbors, for any failures to express, or at first discover the meaning of the spirits impressing you.

Spirit control is often deficient, and at first almost always imperfect. But, by often yielding to it, your

organism becomes more flexible, and the spirit more experienced; and practice in control is absolutely necessary for spirits as well as mortals. If dark and evil-disposed spirits manifest to you, never drive them away, but always strive to elevate them, and treat them as you would mortals under similar circumstances. Do not always attribute falsehoods to lying spirits or deceiving mediums. Many mistakes occur in the communion of which you cannot always be aware.

Strive in truth, but rebuke error gently; and do not always attribute it to design, but rather to mistake in so difficult and experimental a stage of the communion as mortals at present enjoy with the spirits.

Unless strictly charged by spirits to do otherwise, do not continue to hold sittings with the same parties for more than a year. After that time, if not before, fresh elements of magnetism are absolutely essential. Some of the original circle should withdraw and others take their places.

All persons are subject to spirit influence and spirit guidance and control, but not all can so externalize this power as to use it consciously or be what is significantly called a medium; and finally, let it be remembered, that except in the case of trance-speakers no medium can ever hope successfully to exercise his or her gift in a large or promiscuous assembly; while trance-speakers, no less than mediums for any other gift, can never be influenced by spirits far beyond their own normal capacity in the *matter* of the intelligence rendered; the magnetism of the spirit and the spirit-circle being but a quickening fire, which inspires the brain, stimulates the faculties, and, like a hot-house process on plants, forces in abnormal prominence dormant or latent powers of mind, but creates nothing. Even in the case of merely automatic speakers, writers, rapping, tipping, and other forms of test mediums, the intelligence or idea of the spirit is always measurably



shaped by the capacity or idiosyncrasies of the medium. All spirit power is thus limited to expression by organism through which it works; and spirits may control, inspire, and influence the human mind, but do not change or recreate it.

## MIND READING

The method of reading thought, as practiced by the late Washington Irving Bishop, and others.

With these "mind readers" actual thought transference by air waves, ethereal influence, etc., does not form any part of their programme; indeed, it is even a question to-day as to whether or not such is a possibility.

The usual feats of the mind reader who gives public exhibitions are to find concealed articles, write names thought of, pick out keys thought of on piano or similar instrument, and so forth. I will first explain

### HOW TO FIND A HIDDEN PIN.

Request that someone produce an ordinary pin.

Allow yourself to be blindfolded and accompanied to a separate room by some person in the audience, in whom the spectators place confidence. While you are thus voluntarily exiled, one person in the auditorium (whether it be parlor or theater), is to fix his mind upon some place, then slowly walk there and hide the pin. He then returns to his seat. The others who are present, of course know where the article is.

You are now taken into the auditorium. The person who hid the pin is requested to come and take your hand, you being blindfolded. Ask him to fix his right hand flatly upon yours, facing in the same direction, *i. e.*, his fingers are placed against yours. You now place your hand upon the back of his, thus holding his hand in a sort of vise. In order to hold his hand as above described, it will be necessary for him to remain close to your side, yet he should not otherwise come in contact with you.

Now tell him to fix his mind intently upon the spot where the pin is hidden, and that you will lead him to the locality. The secret of doing this seemingly supernatural feat is as follows:

Relax your vise-like position of hands, so that if he desired he could pull his hand away without much friction. Now, although you have not the remotest knowledge (and you should not have any idea) as to where the pin is hidden, start off suddenly in some direction and request that he follow you, but go so fast at first that you will pull away from his hand. By practice *you will learn that if you have started in the proper direction, he will willingly accompany you; if you should have started in another direction, he will unconsciously hold back.* His resistance will be very slight, almost imperceptible, except to a practiced operator. Let us suppose that you have found that you are going in the right direction, move along fast. When it is time to turn, his mind being intently fixed upon the place he wants to go to, will unconsciously, but very naturally, control his muscles, so that he will at once show a slight resistance, and if you take immediate action upon this "hint" and turn, he will either "favor" you or show more resistance, according to whether you turn in correct or incorrect direction. When you have approached near to the spot, there will be more resistance or freedom in accompanying you. Then your "fine work" begins. Change the position of hands so that his form the vise while your right hand is the one between. Your left hand is now extended as a "feeler." Request that while he attentively watches your left hand, he also keeps his mind more intently than ever upon the location of the object. Raise your left hand up, at the same time raising your right hand slightly upward. If his thoughts are upon a place that is above the usual level of your hands, he will willingly raise his hands (which are on your right hand flatly), or if the article

is hidden low, he will resist, but favor your hands when you begin to move them downward. Thus you can closely locate the article. If you are not blindfolded tightly, you can quite easily see what is below your nose, and this may enable you to catch sight of the pin and pick it up more readily, otherwise follow your "cues."

The foregoing explanation is the same as I once paid one hundred dollars for. The whole secret is in the fact that if a person is intently thinking of some object in a certain place, his head will generally unconsciously lean toward the spot in question. If he is walking with a mind reader, who declares that he is about to go to the certain spot, the person will involuntarily aid him in doing so, as I have indicated. Some performers do not adopt the first position of hands, and then change them when probably near the object, as I have described, but instead, use the last named position entirely, thus leaving the left hand of the operator free at all times.

The secret of picking out certain notes or keys on a piano is similar. In this case move your left hand quickly from one end to the other, at the same time moving your right hand. Your accompanist will involuntarily hesitate somewhere, then you may stop and move your left hand over a very limited space until you finally settle upon the exact spot.

To write a name thought of, is the most difficult of all. This is done on a large blackboard. With chalk in your left hand, mark out lines in shape of letters. The person whose thought you are reading will assist you without knowing he is doing so.

Other feats are done on the same principle.

If the person whom you are operating with does not keep his mind intently upon what you require, you will not be as likely to succeed. If you fail, you can ascribe this as the reason. The late Foster, a celebrated "spiritualist," used to tell names by picking out letters on chil-



dren's toy alphabet blocks. This he did in a similar way to that I have described for finding certain keys on a piano.

Pick out your "subject" or person whom you will operate with carefully. Avoid those of the extremely skeptical or "know it all" kind. Do not try to do much with women, unless they are aged and believe you to be a medium; in fact, those who believe in you will be your best assistants. Do not select as an accompanist a person who is about your own age; such a person is usually jealous, and does not want you to succeed. Avoid lawyers and doctors as assistants; they are recognized as being more adept in all things than the balance of mankind, therefore they will oppose you on general principles. The best "subjects" are clergymen, aged people and believers in spiritualism. Although most mind readers allow pins to be hidden, a knife, or pocketbook will do quite as well and is easier to locate when near.

Before trying anything of this sort in public, practice well. Remember that you cannot acquire all in a day.

I have told the secret, and anyone who cares to practice will soon learn the details and master them.

# VENTRILOQUISM

## AND HOW TO ACQUIRE THE ART

BY PROF. CALLAHAN

I presume that all professional ventriloquists have their own methods of accomplishing the art. I certainly have mine, and the instructions herein given are based upon my own experience. I learned without the aid of books or teachers. I did not *discover* that I possessed this art. I made up my mind I *would* possess it, and with a little perseverance I succeeded. My first exhibitions were given at sociables, amateur entertainments, etc. In a very short time my services were in demand in other circles, and my continued engagements throughout the country are but proof of what proficiency I have attained.

I mention this as an incentive to all ambitious students.

Apart from the financial value attached to the professional exhibition of this art, there is much pleasure and amusement to be derived from its practice among one's friends.

Requiring as it does little or no paraphernalia, it is applicable to almost any entertainment or gathering. Probably many can recall anecdotes or practical jokes perpetrated by persons proficient in the art.

The word ventriloquism is from *Ventor*, the belly, and *Loquor*, to speak. Literally, speaking from the belly. Many persons imagine that it is a natural gift. Professional ventriloquists favor the idea to keep others out of the field.

I am asked almost every day if a "person has to be

born that way." In answer, let me say here, that almost anyone, possessing an ordinary vocal apparatus, without defect, can, by continued study, become thoroughly acquainted with the mysteries of this art. I will not say that everyone can learn it.

The student should possess certain requisites. He should have an ear acutely perceptive to the nice distinction of sounds, combined with an ardent desire to learn, and a determination to "stick to it" until the study has been given a fair trial. The progress of the student will be greatly facilitated if he has a natural talent for mimicry. We very often meet people who can imitate the voice or mannerisms of some friend or acquaintance, although never having professional instruction. Such persons would invariably become good ventriloquists under proper training. All the works upon the subject that have come under my observation seem to be of no help whatsoever to the student. The methods are unintelligible, and almost impossible to follow. Many chapters are devoted to a detailed description as to how and when the art was discovered. "Ventriloquism among the Ancients," etc. All this is non-essential and not particularly interesting.

*My object in writing this work is to present, in as few and as simple words as possible, the facts which will be of material aid to those interested. I do not consider it necessary to give an anatomical description of the formation of the throat. How many of my readers would comprehend such terms as diaphragm, trachea, larynx, pharynx, etc.? They only tend to confuse the reader, and are of no essential benefit.*

Before giving instruction relative to the different voices, I would call your attention to a very important point. *The attention of the audience must always be attracted to the point from which the voice is to come.*

It matters not whether it is to come from the distance, or from an automatic figure. The action must be so skill-

fully unobtrusive as to effect its object without its being apparent to the audience — a look, gesture, or announcement, as occasion seems to demand.

If you but turn your head, after having made an announcement that "Mr. So-and-so is up there," the attention of the audience will be immediately attracted to that point, and before you have uttered a word, they will be impressed with the idea that the voice is to come from the suggested direction. With the audience in this expectant state it does not take much of the so-called "power" to deceive them.

How much easier it is to catch a ball when prepared to receive it. Having prepared your audience, the thing is to execute what I shall term the *distant voice*. To become proficient in this requires practice.

*As a beginning, the student should strain a little from the chest, as if in pain, making a prolonged grunting sound in a high key. Let the air escape slowly, keeping the lips and teeth but slightly apart.* Having tried this a few minutes, attempt to say such words as "Oh — oh, dear!" "I say!" "Halloo!" etc., straining a little all the time.

This will give you the exact location from whence this voice is to be started. After a few trials, you will be astonished at the proficiency you have already attained. It will be of great help to the student to note the effect produced by a person calling from the distance. Observe the sound carefully, and try to reproduce it by the method laid down. After a few trials, you will be able to execute the sound with scarcely an effort. The sound should be somewhat muffled. The hardest point to overcome is to make the voice appear to come nearer. As this voice is usually represented as coming from a box or closet, a suggestive movement of the lid or door will help the illusion. As the lid is gradually raised, the sound must be heard more distinctly. To effect this, the student



should gradually relieve the strain on the chest, making the sound farther up in the throat, so that when the lid is fully raised, the sound will come directly from the roof of the mouth. In closing the box, the same principle reversed will apply.

From the time the lid is raised until it is closed, use only the "distant voice." Do not interrupt it with the natural tone. You will find this, too, difficult to overcome, without long practice. Before you open the box, you can hold a conversation with the supposed character inside, or even opening the box and allowing the lid to remain up, have your dialogue; but as the tone is changing all the time the lid is in motion, it must be evident that the introduction of your natural tone only tends to make it more difficult. It is better to keep up a continual talking in the mimetic voice, while opening and closing the box, than to break up the speech. A very good exhibition of the "distant voice" can be given by bidding "good-night" to a supposed person outside. As the voice upon the outside grows faint and appears to go away in the distance, the natural tone of the performer should grow louder in equal proportion. In order to carry out the deception, it must be made to appear to the audience that the outside man could not hear your voice unless you called in a loud tone.

Another good illustration of the "distant voice" is to represent a charcoal man as if nearing the house, passing it, and going away. Use only the word charcoal. The "distant voice," *in the same key* can be made to represent different characters successively.

As an experiment, I have located this voice in a box, and turning around, used the same voice as if coming from above. According to the statements of the audience, it appeared to have an entirely different sound and to represent two distinct persons. This can be easily accounted

for. The audience were deceived by my suggestive movements. Having made up their minds that they were to hear a different person, they did not realize I was using the same voice.

It is so difficult to execute the "distant voice" in different keys that, where it is desirable to introduce a number of characters, it is best to do so by what I call *transition*. Transition means, according to Webster, a passage to another place. *The trick is to alter the natural tones of the voice, so as to make a very apparent distinction between it and the mimetic voice.* This can be done so skillfully that the audience will not realize the change. *This is one of the greatest secrets of the art,* and is essential to success.

If your mimetic voice is to be low, you must raise the natural tone in your announcement relative to where the voice is to come from. You will find that by making your reply in the mimetic voice, in a tone but a trifle lower than the natural one, the difference or transition will be so great that the mimetic voice will appear very deep in comparison. If you are to continue the dialogue, and the next voice is to be high, let your natural tone be but a trifle higher than the one you have just given as the low voice. This will make another marked difference. The whole secret is in making these jumps, or "transitions," without its being apparent to the audience. A little care is all that is necessary. As has been stated before, ventriloquism is talking from the stomach; yet a great portion of the work done by professional exhibitors is not, strictly speaking, ventriloquism. It is the power of imitating various dialects and different tones of the voice, without moving the lips. To do this it is not necessary to "speak from the stomach." In a work upon the subject that I have seen, it says: "It is very rarely that a ventriloquist shows a full face to the audience." This

statement appears erroneous. At the present time a professional exhibitor must be able to face his audience during the entire performance, and must have such control over the muscles of the face that not a movement can be detected while the voices are being heard. To become skilled in this portion of the art, the student should practice before a mirror.

It is best to learn to produce the sounds first without any attempt at holding the mouth still. Having mastered this, observe the following directions:

*Keep the lips in a natural position, opened but a little. The teeth should almost touch each other; hold the jaws rigid, and in this position you will find that the tongue can be used almost as readily as in ordinary conversation. There should be no apparent effort. The countenance should appear perfectly at ease.*

This rule will apply to all the mimetic voices used. At first it will seem impossible to pronounce certain words without moving the lips, but when the method is known, whereby certain sounds (resembling distinct pronunciation) are substituted, it will appear very easy. In pronouncing the alphabet the sound of V is substituted for B. M is pronounced like *eng*. For P use *fee*, W, *duggle-you*. Words difficult to articulate should be avoided as much as possible. In rendering a popular song, the performer cannot well substitute words of his own, but must adhere closely to the original. The fact of a song being popular is of great help to the performer. The audience being more or less familiar with the words are not apt to watch the pronunciation so carefully. Occasionally, very troublesome words will occur, and the exhibitor must substitute a sound resembling the original. Thus: *Babies on our Block* should be rendered *Vavies on our Vlock*; a *big piano*, a *vig fiano*; *My Mary Ann*, *Ngigary Ann*, etc.

A valuable adjunct to an exhibition is to have several

“character” dolls manufactured, with movable jaws. There is no limit to the variety of characters that can be introduced in this way, old or young, male or female, Irish, Scotch, Negro, and in fact, almost any character that may suggest itself.

The imitation of the sounds of animals, insects, the sawing and planing of wood, etc., is called Polyphonism. As it is so often used in conjunction with ventriloquism, a few words in explanation will not be out of place.

To be an expert mimic of any peculiar sound, the student should study from the original as much as possible. Some sounds are almost impossible to describe, and the reader must invent his own method of imitation. “What is one man’s physic is another’s poison.” I will attempt to describe the manner of making some of the imitations.

**A Bee.**—Use considerable pressure upon the chest, making exactly the same sound as has been laid down as preliminary practice for the distant voice.

**A Mosquito.**—Use the pressure as before in the very highest pitch you can reach.

**A Fly.**—Close the lips tight except at one corner. Fill that cheek full of wind and force it to escape through the aperture. In giving these Polyphonic imitations, the performer should help out the illusion by some suggestive action. Make the sounds faint, then loud. In giving an imitation of a bee, produce a handkerchief and chase the bee around. After pretending to catch it, put the handkerchief containing the bee (?) into the pocket. Inventing an excuse, reproduce the handkerchief, and as you bring it forth allow the bee to escape. A good finale will be to pretend to tear the handkerchief. Allowing the handkerchief to pass through the thumb and forefinger, make a noise which, as near as I can describe, is a spitting through the lips.

The sound of sawing wood is imitated by a sort of “hawking” sound. It will always cause a laugh to shift



off as if the saw had struck a knot. The sound is made by pressing the lips together and forcing them open with the expelled air. A meat saw can be imitated by the "hawking" method used in a higher key, and with the addition of a sort of hissing sound.

To represent planing use the syllable "sh," or "tsh," carrying out the movement of planing.

There is no limit to these imitations. The sounds of hens, roosters, dogs, cats, and in fact almost any animal can be imitated and prove acceptable.

The drawing of a glass of soda water makes a very good illusion. Practice from the original; that is the best way.

The mountain echo is a very pretty imitation. I have heard of people asserting that ventriloquism was an echo, but that unquestionably is a great mistake, as an echo only repeats, it does not answer a question.

To imitate an echo (and it can be produced in an ordinary-sized room, and invariably delights juveniles), whistle loud several short, quick notes, as if you were whistling for a dog; then, as quickly as possible after the last note, and very soft and subdued, whistle about a third of the number of notes; but it must be in exactly the same pitch or note. This will cause the whistle to appear exactly like an echo at a great distance. This imitation, if well done, is very effective. You can also produce an echo of any sentence you wish to speak. Always let your voice be formed close to the lips, and answer immediately, subdued and in the same note and words, forming the echo in the back part of the mouth. You will have a charming echo.

The reader must not be discouraged if not successful in his first attempts. Do not give up. I claim that almost anyone who can imitate any peculiar dialect, can become an acceptable ventriloquist by following the rule for holding the mouth rigid.

There is not so much difficulty in learning the art as is generally supposed. I am confident that I could, by personal instruction, teach any person of ordinary ability in a few lessons.

By carefully following the instructions given here, the reader ought to make considerable progress.

It is mostly a matter of practice. The art can be acquired by any person with the proper amount of study.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

I would offer a few brief remarks on points to be remembered in practicing mimicry and improving ventriloquial power. In the practice of mimicry study from nature, and make an especial study of sound for ventriloquism. For it must be remembered that the power and acuteness of hearing is possessed in a greater or lesser degree by different individuals, and depends on the sensibility of the auric nerves. It is said that the human ear is capable of appreciating as many as twenty thousand — nay, twenty-four thousand — vibrations in a second, and that the whole range of human hearing, from the lowest note of the organ to the highest known cry of the insects (as that of the cricket), includes nine octaves. It is absolutely necessary for the ventriloquist to possess all the organs of sound entire and without fault to succeed well, as by nice judgment of sound the professional ventriloquist judges the majority of his voices, especially those greatly obscured and muffled. The student of ventriloquism will become more proficient as he is able to understand thoroughly the human voice, for there is the language of emotion, or natural language, by which the feelings manifest themselves without previous teaching, and which is recognized and felt without teaching. For instance, there is the scream of joy, of terror, the laugh of satisfaction, laugh of sarcasm and ridicule, which are made by man, and understood by his fellow man, what-

ever may be the speech or country of the other. There is also to be considered the distinct qualities of voice peculiar to each person, both in tone and quality. Therefore I would advise the student to practice the imitation of different voices, and let each voice be in a different note or pitch. The student, to become proficient, must never tire of continual practice of sound as it falls on the ear. He will find it will clear away many difficulties of acquiring more or less perfection as a mimic, and improve him as a ventriloquist, if nature has gifted him with the power of ventriloquism.

#### CALLAHAN AND THE SKELETON.

Strolling down Broadway one day, Callahan and a friend came to a halt in front of a well-known phrenological store. In the window were busts of statesmen, authors, military men, murderers, idiots, and small heads of every description. They glanced in through the open door. There were half-a-dozen people standing about, staring into the glass cases ranged along the wall, fitted with plaster casts and skulls of celebrated characters, long since forgotten. A sallow, yellow-faced man, named Butts, with a fiery top-knot of hair, was standing before a little group of men and women, half-a-dozen in number, holding up an old ghastly skull in his hand, evidently describing it to them. Behind him, suspended to the wall, and artistically wired together, was a full-length, complete skeleton. Followed by his friend, Callahan walked in. "You see," said the sallow face, in a pedantic tone, "how large the organ of destructiveness is developed." "Hand-organ," said Callahan, throwing his voice near the skeleton, in a groaning tone. The crowd looked up at the motionless skeleton, then at Butts, and Butts glared around. There was a momentary silence, and then the phrenologist began again: "This skull was once a part of the living body of the notorious Gibbs, the pirate—"

"That's a lie!" This time the voice, harsh and grating, seemed to come from the skull in Butts' hand. He dropped the skull upon the hard floor, with a wild exclamation. The skull struck the floor so hard that it cracked the jaw off, and scattered the white and grinning teeth all around.

"There, you've broke my jaw with your nonsense!" came from the skull. "Great Cæsar!" tremblingly cried Butts, throwing up his hands and starting back; "It's a miracle!" At the same instant there came from the skeleton a horrible, fiendish "ha-ha!" laugh.

This completed the scare of Butts and his friends, and pell-mell they rushed out of the store, Butts half a lap ahead and gaining on himself at every swing of his long legs.

Butts, on the pavement, pitched headlong into the breastworks of a man in a blue blouse, with a large basketful of crockeryware on his arm, and in this collision away tumbled both of them upon the stones, amid the crash of plates and pitchers, the cries and yells of the downfallen, and the laughter and jeers of the crowd.

Callahan and his friend made their way out, and left the crockery man, Butts and the rest to quarrel it out among themselves.

#### CALLAHAN, THE VENTRILOQUIST

While performing in Philadelphia, I was out one afternoon, and feeling quite fatigued, entered a saloon, and seated myself in one corner. Just then an Irishman dropped in; and he was an Irishman, to be sure — a big, red-headed, raw-mouthed terrier, about six feet eleven inches high. He yelled out, with the air of a king: "Whiskey!"

I felt as though I would like to worry him, and so he became the victim of sport. Someone in the rear of the store cried out: "Give him turpentine; he's a lush!"



The Turk got angry at such an insulting remark, and offered to fight the man who made the suggestion, when the voice, a little nearer, answered: "You are too fresh; you could not kill a flea, you big Irish-Dutchman!"

"Oh! murther! what the divil ails me? There must be something wrong; there's a man down in the cellar, and I'm going to find him if it costs me my life!" "Don't let him go down in the cellar. He will drink all the whiskey!" said the voice that he was so angry at. Then the bar-tender joined in: "No; you had better not go down in that cellar. There's a dog down there — a Scotch terrier — and if you go down there he don't know you, and he may bite you."

"Let the terrier go down," said the voice, "and they'll both have a fight!" This angered the brave son of the Emerald Isle, and he swore to be revenged on the man who was insulting and poking fun at him. I however left the place, for I was so overcome with laughter that I could not stand it any longer. I met the same man the next day, and asked him to pardon me for playing a trick on him the day before. "How so?" says he; "I never saw you before." "Well," said I, "do you remember the man you offered to fight, yesterday, at the saloon?" mentioning Arch street. "Oh, bejabers I do," said he; "was that you? Well," said he, "they said, after you left, that you was a ventriloquist, and I would not believe them; I swore that such a thing could not be." Then I invited him to call and see me perform at the National Theater; he did so, and I'll venture to say that he'll never forget it, or me.

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