

WORKABLE WIZARDRY

BY
"HERMALIN"

BOOK
No. 1

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— WILL ALMA —
M.I.M.C. (LONDON)

WORKABLE WIZARDRY

COMPILED
BY

“HERMALIN”

To

my friend

Henry Bate

FOREWORD

I have compiled these little books for the beginners in magic who wish to acquire some good practice tricks which are really practicable.

I have worked all the effects herein myself, and made them a source of income.

Where possible I give credit for the origin and I have endeavoured to describe the methods in simple language.

I do not aspire to fame as a magical author, but being a great believer in the theory of my friend Will Goldston that every New Book on the Art, helps towards the Art's progress, I submit my contribution. Anyway I hope that I may be of some material assistance to beginners, helping them on to the right road by giving them some Wizardry which is Workable.

“ HERMALIN ”

A Vanishing Reef Knot

This was first shown to me by Kinye Imai a Japanese Magician and is a novel variation of the old effect which is so well known.

EFFECT

The effect is that the performer ties a reef knot with a silk handkerchief, asks the obliging gentleman from the audience to assure all present that it really is a genuine reef knot, and then at the word "GO" the knot vanishes from the handkerchief in full view.

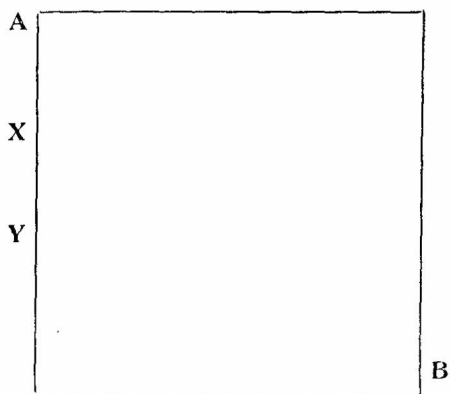


Diagram 1.

METHOD

A glance at diagram 1. will make the instructions quite simple. Instead of tying the knot with the corners A.B. grip the handkerchief at X. and B. and tie in the usual way, holding X. as if it were the corner A. This will appear to be quite a natural move. To vanish the knot grasp the handkerchief firmly at A. and Y. pull apart quickly and the knot will then fall to pieces.

The performance of the feat is extremely simple. The skill required is to hold the point X. as if it were the corner A. and at the same time conceal the corner A. When grasping A. and Y. be careful not to expose the fact that the corner A. is not in the knot, but make it appear that you are holding the handkerchief at points each side of A.

Biting the Plate

This is really a joke to inflict upon your host who has invited you to supper. It was shown to me by

my friend Frank Woods who is one of the good "old time" conjurers. It may be known to some of my readers, but it has always been pronounced new when I have shown it to fellow members of the Magicians' Club. As the working entails some sleight of hand, I am including the secret in this book.

EFFECT

You pick up a plate from the supper table, put the edge into your mouth and with the necessary expression on your face endeavour to take a large bite out of it. Suddenly a loud crack is heard, and if the plate is from a valuable service there is usually an exclamation of horror and the words Oh! my plate! The conjurer then smilingly, lays the plate down uninjured.

METHOD

Palm a coin in the right hand, a penny will do, pick up the plate with the left hand, bottom side toward you and under cover of this, grip the coin between

the thumb and first finger right hand. Place the coin against the bottom of the plate holding it at the angle shown in diagram 11. Thumb at A. tip of first finger at B. Place the remaining fingers of the right hand round the edge of plate at C. The left hand can also take the same position at the opposite side Thumb and first finger at D. remainder at E. and the two hands convey the plate to the mouth. After appearing to make a big effort to bite a piece out of the plate the joker exerts some pressure with the right thumb and smartly withdraws the first finger. This causes the coin to go snap on the bottom of the plate, and sounds as if the biting business has really taken effect. Under cover of the plate the coin is vanished, and then the conjurer shows that no damage has been done.

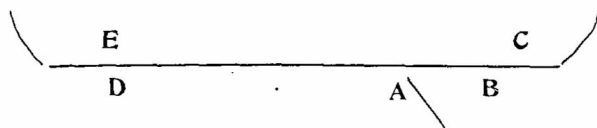


Diagram 11.

A Levitated Vase

The conjurer has upon his centre table a sheet of glass about 18 inches square, resting upon 4 tumblers on the sheet of glass, stand a Vase. This is handed out for examination and then replaced on the sheet of glass by the performer. At the word of command and preferably to incidental music the Vase slowly rises into the air, about two feet from the glass. The performer now passes his hands or wand under the Vase to show there is no support and then it slowly descends again. Members of the audience may examine all the apparatus to show that it is entirely without preparation.

METHOD

To work this delightful effect our old friend the black thread, running through screw-eyes overhead and worked by an assistant in the wings, is the motive power of the levitation. In this case however it must be a 'double thread'. The loop engages the Vase when the performer returns it to the glass sheet after it has been examined. After it has been suspended in the air, and returned to the glass the

assistant must release one end of the thread and pull quickly on the other. This withdraws it from the stage altogether. This trick is only successful if it is carefully adjusted and rehearsed. All details must be studied, such as the weight of the article to be lifted, strength of the thread, and the screw-eyes in which the thread runs must be highly polished. Of course other articles can be used instead of the Vase. Some comedy can be obtained by using a doll. The sheet of glass and tumblers are merely to show that the table is not mechanical, also they improve the general effect.

Personal Details

Hand a gentleman a piece of paper and a pencil. Then ask him to make an addition sum of the following;- First line his age, Second line number of years he has been married, Third line year he was born, Fourth line year he was married. While he is doing this (*out of your sight*), you take a pack of cards and select four with pips 3 - 8 - 4 - 4 respectively. Throw these down and show that it is the answer to the sum. This applies to the year 1922, next year it will be 3 - 8 - 4 - 6 and so on.

Milton's Original "Spelling Bee"

An entirely new version

There are many versions of the Spelling Bee trick, but the following is really good, and worth including in any performer's programme. It was given to me by that brilliant young member of the Magicians' Club, Herbert R. Milton, whose original effects in magic will establish him in the front rank of performers.

EFFECT

A card is freely selected, noted, and returned to centre of pack, which is then repeatedly cut by an assistant. The following questions are now asked by performer, and as each answer is given it is spelt aloud and one card dealt from top of pack for each letter.

"Was the colour of your card Red or Black?"

"Was it a Club or a Spade?"

(If red, alter accordingly.)

"Was it high or low?"

(Ace to 6 considered low, 7 to King high.)

“Were the number of pips odd or even?”

(Value of Jack is 11, Queen 12, King 13.)

“Exactly what value was the card?”

At the completion of the spelling, the last card is turned up and found to be the selected card.

WORKING

The pack is pre-arranged as follows;- At the bottom nineteen indifferent cards, then a “key” card, and above the following fifteen cards in any order, *viz*:- 3, 4, 9, 10, Jack, King, of Diamonds and Spades, Queen and 8 of Hearts, and 7 of Clubs. Remainder of pack on top. When presenting, the pack is false shuffled leaving order of cards undisturbed. It is then fanned for selection of a card, and it will be found quite an easy matter to have one of the fifteen above the “key” card chosen without actually having to force one. Whilst being noted the “pass” is made about half-way down and break held. Card is then returned to centre of pack immediately above original top card. Pack is now cut two or three times, and finally by assistant. Performer then takes pack and makes the “pass” at “key” card bringing latter to top of pack, and placing selected

card in the 21st position. No matter which one of the fifteen was chosen the spelling ultimately finishes at this position.

NOTE

Each conjurer has his own idea for a "key card". A "short card" answers the purpose very well.

A Second Sight Act

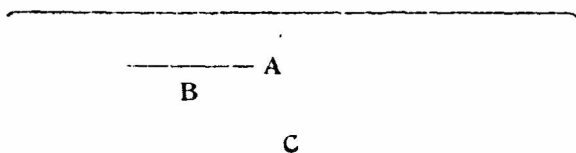
Beginners cannot do better than attempt a small act of this type in order to develop their "showmanship". The working is easily mastered with a smart assistant, the effect is good, and the practice of great value.

EFFECT

Performer introduces his assistant, effectually blindfolds her and then allows members of the audience to chalk figures, letters sums, etc, upon a large blackboard which is standing on the stage. The assistant is then able to read all the figures, letters, and give answers to the sums, although apparently blindfolded under test conditions.

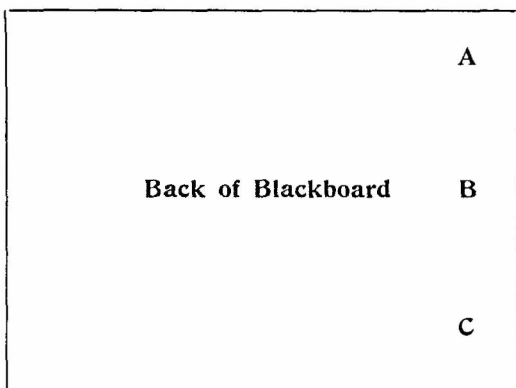
METHOD

The first thing to get perfect is the trick blindfold, and the following is one of the best methods known. Take a strip of black felt and iron it, this will stiffen it slightly. Then take a ladies hat pin, make it red hot and pierce two holes in the felt at the position of the assistant's eyes. This should make two perfectly round holes, invisible at a short distance, but if they are accurately placed the assistant is able to see quite plainly all that the performer does to convey by code the matter written on the board. It is even possible to have a piece of black gauze wrapped round the head as an extra blindfold. The blackboard should be placed near the front of the stage, and the assistant must be sitting at the centre of the stage so that she can see the back of the blackboard. Diagram 111. shows positions for setting the stage.



- A. position of performer
- B. „ „, blackboard
- C. „ „, assistant

The code for conveying the information to the assistant is worked by the performer with his left hand. It can be quite a natural move if a pointer is held in the right hand, and the left grips the side of the blackboard. The following answers very well as a code for figures.



1. Performer holds board at A. first finger extended behind board.
2. ditto with two fingers extended.
3. ditto with three fingers.
4. ditto with four fingers.
5. hold at B. one finger extended.
6. „ two fingers.
7. „ three fingers.
8. „ four fingers.
9. hold at C.
0. left hand does not touch board.

Thus it is possible by a prearranged set of signals to get a wonderful effect. It is quite easy for a performer to arrange his own code; improve on this idea and work it up into a very entertaining show.

A “Ten Card” Trick

The following is an old trick on a “mathematical principle” and is usually shown with the cards laid out on a table. If it is shown in the manner I will now describe it can be worked up into quite a good “drawing room” effect.

EFFECT

The conjurer takes a pack of cards from his table, shuffles them, counts off ten cards and lays aside the remainder of the pack. He announces that he would like a member of the audience to hold the ten cards face down, and then while his back is turned to move any number of cards from the top to the bottom, one at a time. He illustrates this by moving one or two himself and thus makes his meaning clear. This is done, the conjurer turns, takes the ten cards and without looking at them places them behind his back at the same time saying;- "Sir, the number of cards, you moved from top to bottom was"- and then bringing the cards from behind his back he exhibits the bottom card. The number of pips thereon indicates the number of cards moved by the member of the audience who is assisting. This can go on indefinitely without rearranging the cards and the result is little short of "marvellous".

METHOD

The pack of cards is prearranged. The top ten being cards with pips from 10 down to Ace. A false shuffle

is given and the conjurer counts off ten with the right hand. This reverses their order and the pips count from Ace (one) to ten. As he explains how he wants the cards moved from top to bottom, one at a time, he moves two himself. This makes the top card a 3 and the bottom one a 2. All that the conjurer must bear in mind is the number of pips on the bottom card, so that when he takes back the cards from the gentleman assisting he merely places them behind his back and moves (in this case), *two cards from bottom to the top*. The number of pips on which is now the bottom card indicates the number of cards moved, so that all he has to do is exhibit this. This number must now be remembered by the performer as it will be the number of cards to be moved to the top next time.

NOTE

The following question naturally arises;-

“Supposing they do not move any cards”?

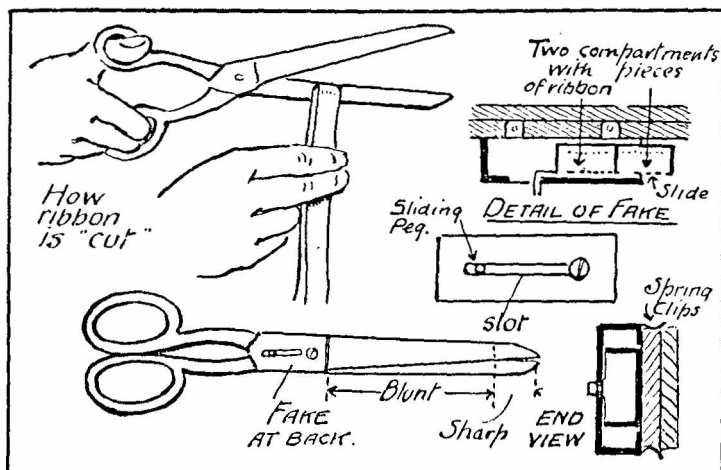
If you anticipate this make it an “eleven card trick” and let the eleventh card be either the “joker” or the “blank”. Specimen card usually found outside the pack when new. Work the trick as usual and if none is moved a blank will show, or if using the

“joker” say “You are a joker sir.” Next time the performer does not move any. The assistant makes his own answer.

A New Cut and Restored Ribbon

For the effect of this trick we are indebted to an American inventor and I should not have described it here if I had not had what I believe to be a great improvement on the original version. The effect is similar to that of the old torn and restored strip of paper, but with a few alterations. In this trick a piece of narrow silk ribbon is used, and as it would be difficult to tear it, the ribbon is cut with scissors. The ribbon is first folded in half and the performer, holding the loop of the doubled piece between his fingers, brings up the scissors to it and apparently cuts off the loop; at any rate, the spectators see the small piece fall away from the scissors. The ribbon is again folded in half and is cut in the same way, and of course, this time two pieces of ribbon fall away from the scissors. The ribbon is then rolled or folded into a small parcel and given to a specta-

tor to hold. When he unfolds the ribbon he finds to his surprise that it is whole again.



There is no exchange of the ribbon. The secret is in the scissors. On one side of the scissors is a little fake to hold the cut pieces of ribbon. This fake is closed with a sliding lid. The scissors are blunt. When the blades close over the first loop the magician merely pushes up the sliding lid of the fake, and the first piece falls away. He puts the scissors

down while he folds the ribbon again, and when he apparently cuts it again he once more slides the lid up and releases the other two little pieces of ribbon, which appear to the audience to have been cut off by the scissors. The scissors are then exchanged for a pair of ordinary scissors. My improvement consists in having the fake made in such a way that it can be removed from the scissors after the trick is over, and therefore anyone may examine the the scissors, and there is no need to exchange them. I think my readers will agree with me that the improvement is a good one. The accompanying illustrations show clearly the working of the trick. It will be noted that in this trick, the pieces cut away from the ribbon that is to say, apparently cut away are not joined on to the main piece at the end of the trick.



Note THE COMMITTEE OF THE MAGICIANS' CLUB LONDON. welcome applications for membership from enthusiastic amateurs.

A New Paper Tearing Trick



Max Holden

The following is a new version of that well known effect "The torn and restored strip of paper." It was given to me by MAX HOLDEN, whose clever and delightful act - 'Holden and Graham in Versatile Originalities,' is now a top liner in several countries.

EFFECT

The usual strip of paper about 30 inches long is shown, but in this case it is made up of three colours

10 inches Red 10 inches White and 10 inches Blue. After tearing it into small pieces you explain that you are fully aware the audience have seen the trick before and that they know you are going to restore it, but as a variation you offer to restore the strips so that the colours come in any order they care to choose. For instance if someone calls for Blue, Red and White, you immediately pull out the strip with the colours in the order named.

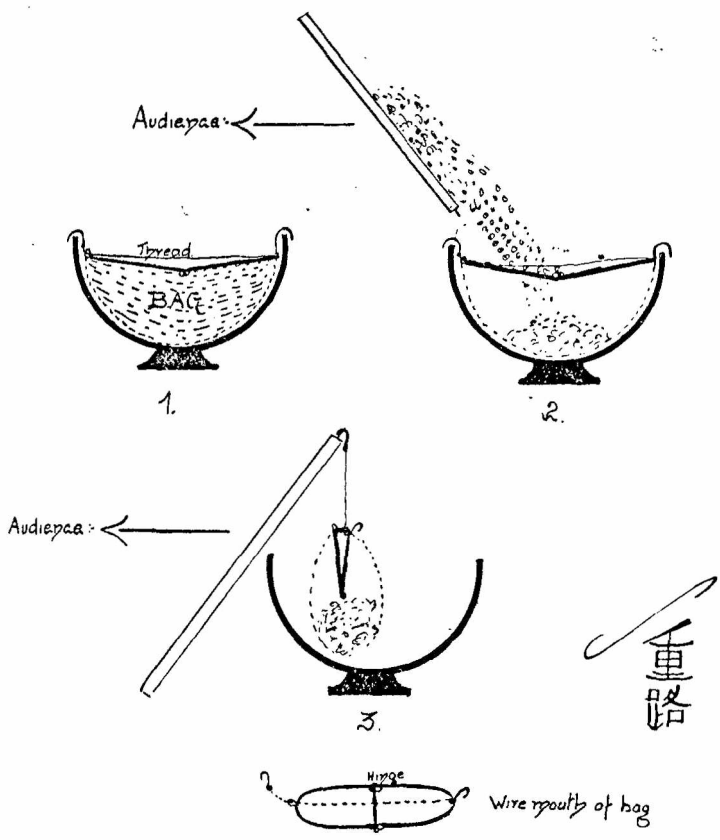
METHOD

Use the Thumb Fake (obtainable at Goldstons and other depots). Make up two strips with Red, White and Blue paper but with one, join the end of the red to the end of the blue making a complete circle. Pleat this up with the points where the colours join prominent and place this in the fake. Fix fake over left Thumb and hold the straight strip in the right hand, proceed to tear and when small enough switch for circular duplicate. As soon as you know the order in which the audience would like the restoration you have merely to disjoint two of the colours in the ring. For example to show blue in the middle break at join of red and

white. The result is astonishing and Max is to be complimented on the idea.

The 'Chung Loo' vanish of the contents of a bowl.

This trick is from the fertile brain of "Chung Loo" a performer of wonderful Oriental effects in a scene of great splendour. It is designed for use with rice tea etc.. For example let us suppose we are using rice. After finishing the rice bowls trick for instance, another bowl is picked up and placed on a thin tray or held at arm's length by an assistant. Some rice is now poured on to another thin tray (a square of three ply wood suitably designed in enamel is as good as anything) and from this tray the rice is poured into the bowl. This is done from the front, with the edge of the tray well above the rim of the bowl, so that everyone can see that the rice really does enter the bowl. The face of the tray is now turned to the audience to show all the rice is gone. (the under part of the tray has been facing the audience up to the present), and it is put down on a



—The Yajish of the contexts of a —
—Bowl.—

table or stood up against the leg thereof. Dipping his hand into the bowl the performer removes therefrom a handful of rice which he lets fall on to the stage, thus proving by conjurer's logic, that all the rice is in the bowl. Now he immediately throws the bowl into the air, where it spins round and is finally caught by him. The rice has vanished.

METHOD

The secret of this delightful vanish depends on a bag fake, shaped somewhat like a purse. It consists of two semi-circles of wire jointed together, upon which a bag is made (see illustration.) There is a ring at the centre of each piece of wire. On one side a length of line is attached to the ring; is taken across the top of the bag, threaded through the other ring and then attached to a fish hook. The bag also possesses a small hook near the first ring so that when placed in a bowl, the two hooks, one on each side, hang over the rim and so keep the bag open and in place. At the end of the tray is a flattened wire loop, or a small loop of catgut. When the rice is poured into the bowl the tray is

lowered towards it gradually as the rice passes from one to the other, so that when the last of the rice has left the tray, the lower edge of the tray is in such a position to permit the hook, (attached to the line) to engage in the loop. When the tray is turned over to show the rice has passed from it to the bowl, the bag is lifted out of the bowl behind it and owing to its special construction, closes automatically. The tray can now be placed flat on a table (the bag hanging down behind) or stood up against the leg. In order to convey the impression that the rice is still in the bowl after removal of the bag, "Chung Loo" suggests that the performer obtains some rice in the right hand from a side pocket, then quickly dips his hand into the bowl, and apparently takes the rice therefrom and throws it into the air.

In the hands of "Chung Loo" this trick is one of the finest Chinese effects I have seen.

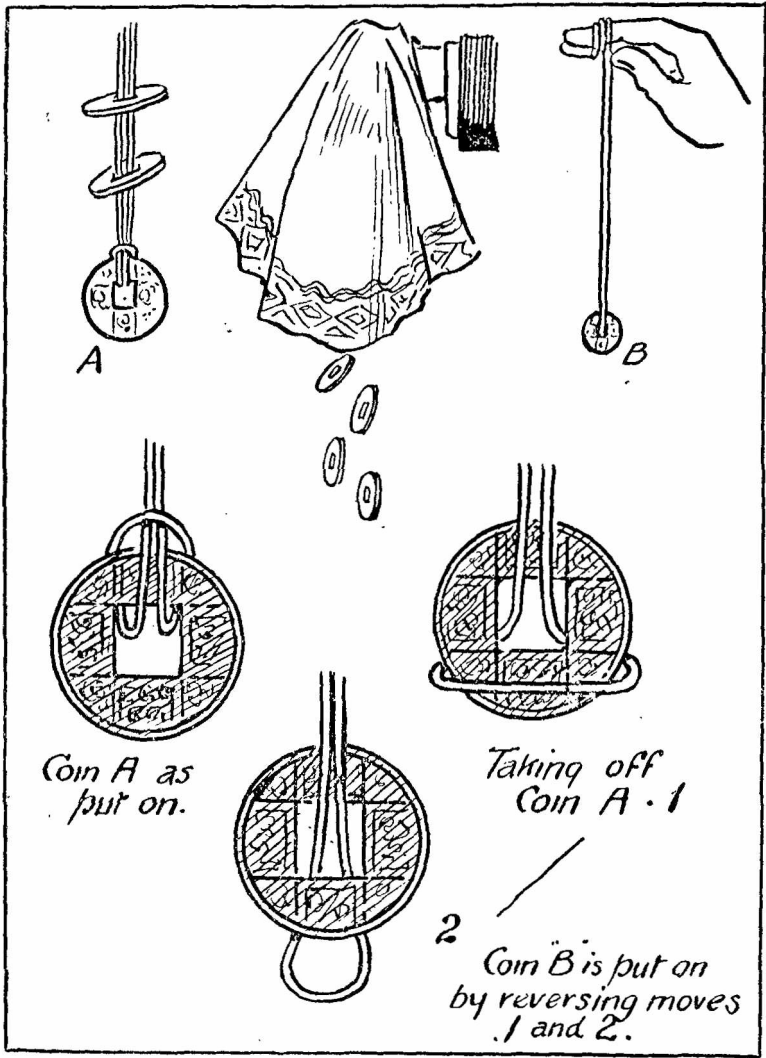
Mysterious Coins

by Long Tack Sam.

Half a dozen Chinese coins are required for this trick. One coin is fastened in a long loop of string in the way shown in Fig. A. The loop is passed through the hole in the coin, and the two free ends of the string are then passed through the loop which is brought up close to the coin. The remaining coins are then threaded on to the two ends of the string, the coin at the loop preventing them from falling off the string.

The performer then covers the string and the coins with a large handkerchief. After pronouncing the mystic word - - the word he likes to use in his entertainment - - the magician gives the handkerchief a shake and all the coins which were threaded on the strings fall away, but the coin at the loop is still in position. The puzzle, therefore, is this;- How did the coins threaded on the string get past the coin attached to the loop?

The illustrations give us the clue to the mystery. Fig. 2 shows exactly how the coin attached to



A

B

Coin A as
put on.

Taking off
Coin A - 1

2
Coin B is put on
by reversing moves
1 and 2.

the loop can be removed, and by reversing those moves the coin can be replaced. All that the conjurer has to do is to take the coin off the loop, hold it in his hand until the other coins have slipped off into his hand and then replace the coin on the loop.

The Travelling Clock

by Will Goldston.

The following exclusive 'plum' is given to me by the greatest and most prolific magical author Will Goldston. I have personally handled the apparatus myself and can assure my readers that it is thoroughly practicable. 'The Compiler'.

EFFECT:

An alarm clock is hanging on a piece of black velvet fixed into a gilt frame. The performer sets the alarm in motion for a moment, just to show the audience that the clock is in working order, and then covers it with a large handkerchief. He hangs the clock on a large nickel stand and sets the gong ringing again, Suddenly whisking away the hand-

kerchief the performer shows that the clock has vanished from the stand; at the same moment it appears on the black velvet in the frame with the gong ringing.

EXPLANATION:

The working of the frame is clearly shown in the illustration. There is, of course, a second clock concealed under the black velvet in the frame, and at the conclusion of the trick the black velvet, which is attached to a spring blind in the frame, flies up and reveals the second clock. A spring at the back of the frame, pushes the second clock forward to the front of the frame and passing through the back of the frame is a thread which, being pulled, sets the clock ringing.

So much for the appearance of the clock in the frame at the end of the trick. The first clock is made to disappear in this way. The handkerchief with which the clock is covered is a double handkerchief with a wire fake inside to represent the top of the clock. This frame is fitted with a weak spring hinge. (see illustration) Directly the clock

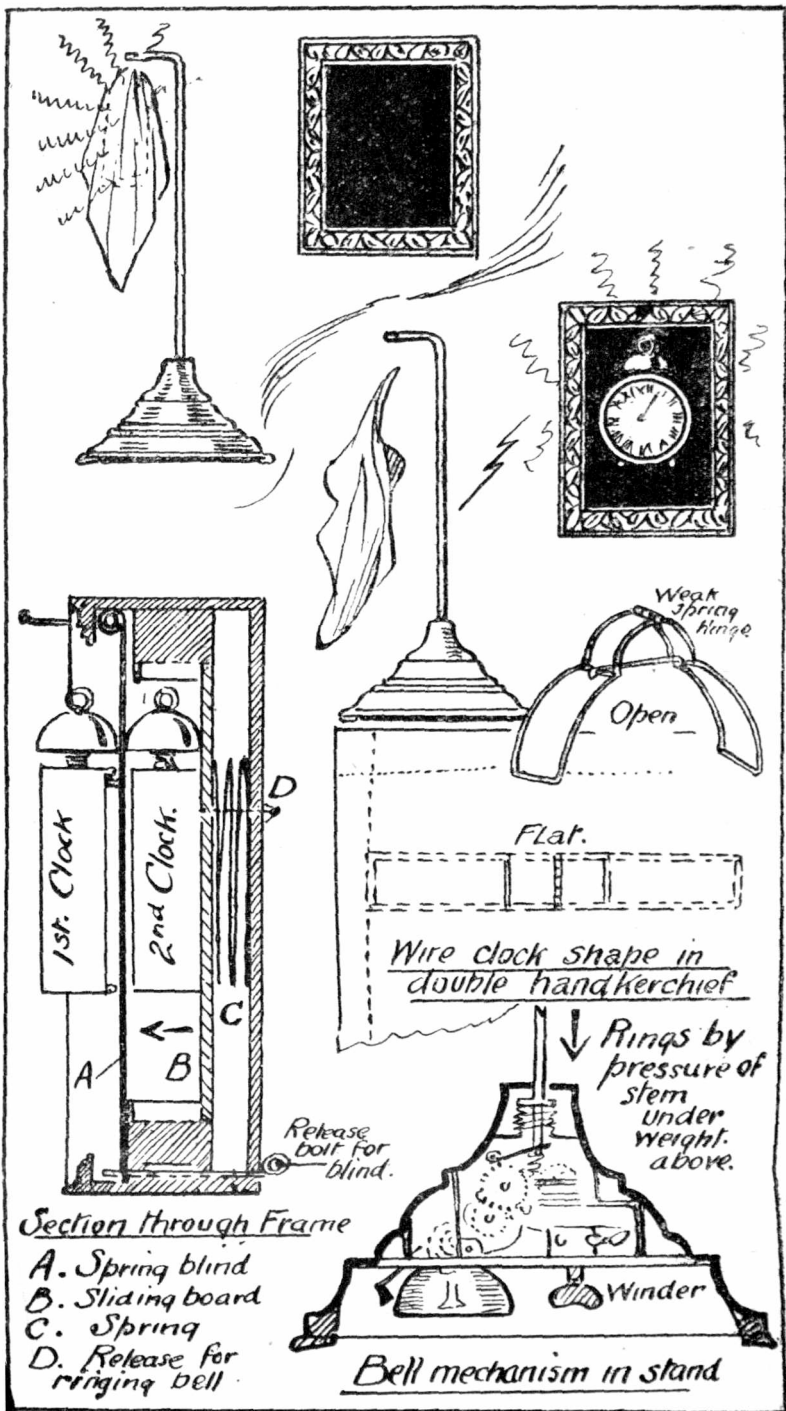
is covered with the faked handkerchief it is allowed to slip down into a well in the table, but the fake of wire conveys the impression that the clock is still under the handkerchief and this impression is deepened when the performer apparently hangs the clock on the stand because the clock (?) then rings. The ringing really comes from the base of the stand which, as will be seen from the illustration, is made in such a way that the slightest weight on the stand depresses the rod and sets the ringing mechanism working. When the handkerchief is removed quickly the ringing ceases and the clock is seen in the frame.

PATTER:

It has been suggested to me that this ought to be called a striking trick because the principal thing used in the trick is a clock. But the clock is an alarm clock, and it does'nt strike - the striking part having gone on strike-but it rings in the way that all good alarm clocks ring. I cover the clock with this handkerchief because it is rather a dangerous trick. Besides, it is a very modest clock; its hands are always in front of its face. I hang the clock on this

stand, and although you cannot see it I am sure that you can hear it. One, two, three, GO! Some clocks don't go at all, but this one has gone very well - as you see - and is now back in the frame.

(For part of this trick I am indebted to my good friend MAX HOLDEN).



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