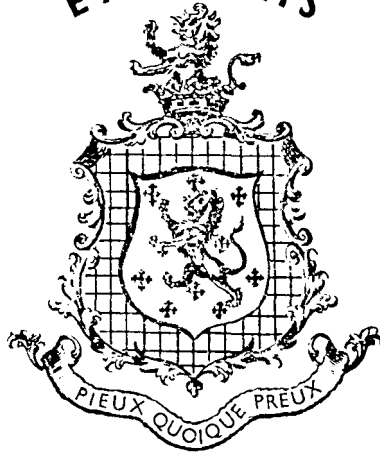


U. S. A.

^A
DEPOT
MAGIC.

COMPILED BY
HARRY LEAT.

EX LIBRIS



— WILL ALMA —
M.I.M.C. (LONDON)

U. S. A.
^
Depot Magic.

CONSISTING OF THE EXPOSITION OF
MANY TRICKS, ORIGINAL AND STOCK,
SUPPLIED BY THE PROMINENT MAG-
ICAL DEPOTS NAMED HEREIN.

COMPILED
BY
HARRY LEAT.

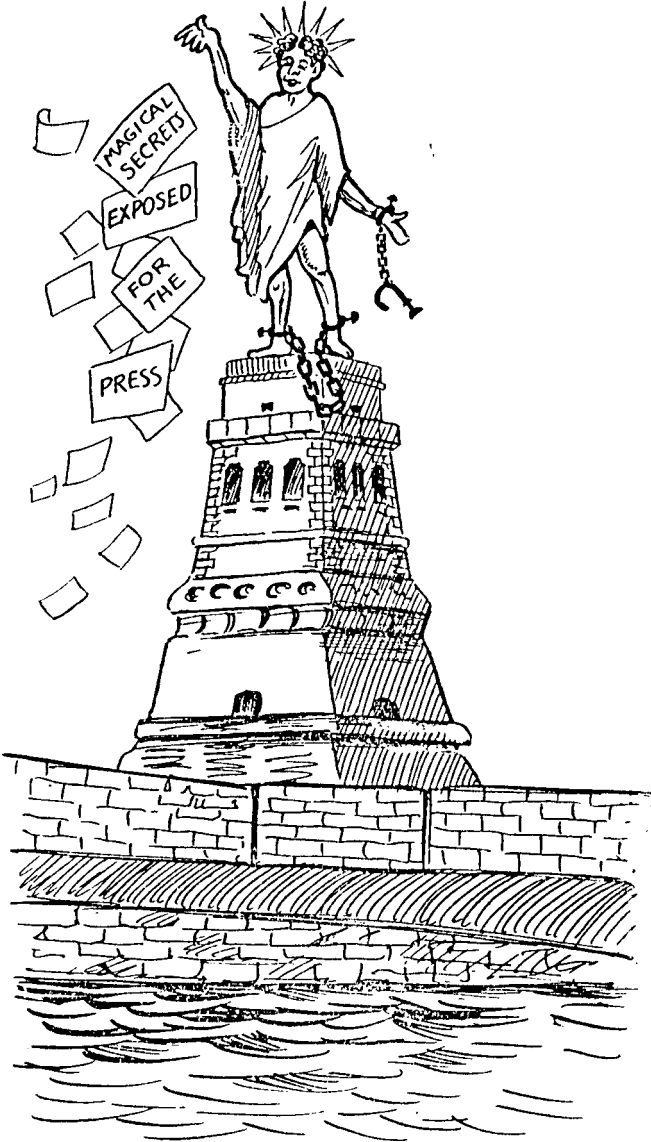
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S.W. England. August 1925.*

A bad trait of human nature is the readiness
to badger the timid, and fawn upon the strong.



LIBERTY.

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INTRODUCTION.

When I advertised that this book would be the first and last of its kind that I should attempt to publish, I had no idea that the comments on that statement would be so numerous. Yet having *gone through the mill*, and being of a determined, obstinate, or pig-headed nature, no set-backs could prevent me from carrying out my proposition.

When the idea occurred to me to publish a book consisting of magic of the Depots the English firms saw the advantage at once. Three things had to happen to make the book a success. The purchaser was to get full value for his outlay, the Depots the usual book profit plus the advertisement, and last, but not least, I was to get the profit on the production after standing for all expenses in every direction.

Having successfully accomplished the above for the English Depots, I waited a spell to see if anyone in America would imitate my idea. Nothing happened, so I approached the American firms direct.

Then everything that could happen did happen.

We will quickly dismiss from the matter the few firms who failed to even acknowledge my various letters. My proposition was a business proposition on the fifty-fifty basis - nothing given, nothing owed; yet maybe it did not seem good enough. Other Depots jumped at the idea, promised to join in, and then faded right out of the picture. Maybe one or two decided that their business was not worth advertising, for further correspondence remained unanswered. One or two did not quite grasp the idea; and as America is a big country, many moons came and faded whilst the correspondence continued. As there happens to be only a few months out of the twelve when books can be published with monetary advantage, time was lost through missing opportunities when the book could have been printed.

Now we will take the other side of the picture, and mention the firms with whom it has been a pleasure to deal. Mr. Paine of the CHICAGO MAGIC CO; Messrs THAYERS of Los Angeles; Mr. Carl S. Lohrey of Dayton, have all supplied valuable contributions. Mr. B. L. Gilbert, of the

GILBERT MAGIC CO. CHICAGO, gave me the greatest surprise. I do not know Mr. Gilbert personally, but I now imagine him to be the most generous man in America. He sent me one of the finest collection of secrets that it has been my lot to handle, with instructions to help myself. Well, the temptation to take full advantage of the offer is difficult to suppress, but to do so would be unfair. All the same I am helping myself generously as he intended I should. I would like to mention here that Mr. Gilbert does not claim to be the originator of all the secrets he sells, but he has improved the majority, and thereby made them more valuable - for the improvements are real.

Mr. Leo Rullman confines his magical business to books, and is one of the greatest authorities on magical literature in America. His article is valuable and interesting, and contains a prod or two that some of us could benefit by noting.

Then last, but not least (and alphabetically he will come first) are the varied items from that genial humorist - Mr. Baffles Brush.

That is the programme, and although not so great in number as I would have liked it, yet the quality is there. To the gentlemen mentioned I take this opportunity of tendering my sincere thanks, for they have gone to trouble and expense in joining me in this venture; but it is quite obvious that distance, and other obstacles, will prevent further editions of a book of this description.

I would like to take this opportunity of comparing America with England so far as my experience will allow. I have many sources of gaining unbiased and reliable information, and have no hesitation in saying that America can certainly now claim to be the Home of Magic. I should estimate that to every dollars worth of magical business done in England, America would do 500 times that amount.

In England it is how cheap can a thing be turned out. In America the first consideration is how well the apparatus can be made.

Speaking of the majority, when magic is taken up in America, it is taken up seriously. Real money is put into it, and real money is got from it; and the cry is always for good and large effects. Magic to entertain and be successful *must* be spectacular; yet here in England we have many advocating the disuse of anything that looks magical. They advocate using ordinary everyday articles, with the result that the stage would be littered with things from the kitchen,

bedroom, and sitting room. It all looks cheap and nasty, and some wonder why they cannot make magic pay.

Unfortunately, America is no better placed in respect to Magical Societies than we in England are. Most Societies are run by a *clique*, but I am informed that one in America seems to be run for the benefit of one man -- who so engineers matters that he can get the Council or Committee to back him up even if he is in the wrong. Of course we all know the *beggar on horseback* proverb, but it does seem strange that some men who rise from nothing immediately become egotistical and self-centered, and appear to assume the position of "Dictator" to the whole magical fraternity.

Quarrels between Societies are quite frequent, and these are not confined to England or America, but also to Germany, Australia, and other parts of the globe. When one probes to the root or origin of these quarrels, we find that they are caused by ungentlemanly conduct on the part of many of the members - generally those in office. All magicians should behave as gentlemen, but, unfortunately, some do not. I know full well that I shall be told that I should hush all this up, but I have no time for the weak-kneed. I will write of things as I find them, and always with the hope that drawing attention will help to remedy the faults.

A person can join some Societies when he knows little or nothing of magic. All he has got to say is that he is interested in it. Possibly the chief interest the Society has in him is to take his money, but that is no business of mine.

Yet America has recently broken away from the "All welcome" drug to Societies, and formed one EXCLUSIVELY FOR MAGICIANS. This is a step in the right direction, even though the idea is far from new. The first magical Society formed in England had the stipulation that each member should have a good knowledge of magic, and be able to perform. Societies should be used for the advancement of Magic, and not as a means of enlightening the member who is slightly interested, who possibly joined out of sheer curiosity, and would be the first to go around airing his knowledge by exposing tricks.

Again, unfortunately, America possesses more exposers of tricks than England. In using the word "exposers" I mean men who disclose magical secrets to the public. In my opinion I consider a man who writes a book disclosing secrets, knowing full well that it will be placed on the book stalls, in book shops, and public libraries, is an exposor, and ranks

level with the man who exposes tricks on the public platform. He is pressing it on the public whether they want it or not. The whole essence of magic is its secrecy, yet here in England you can see shop windows full of books on magic written by great, medium, and little conjurers. But in America they go the whole hog. In THE NEW YORK WORLD there is a RED MAGIC section by Houdini, and Thurston contributes to the NEW YORK SUNDAY GRAPHIC. Personally I fail to see the idea. I am left wondering whether they want the money, advertisement, or what. I have many copies that have been sent to me, infantile humour one side - magic the other, and every time I see them I am filled with disgust. I can only have but pity for the little conjurer seeking notoriety, but, in my opinion, no man has a right to expose a trick that is obviously not his own, and which he has no further use for except as a means of probably increasing his earnings, or obtaining publicity. These fundamental tricks are of vital importance to working magicians, yet we have Houdini, President of the S. A. M., and Thurston, second Vice President of the S. A. M. broadcasting to all and sundry by means of the public press. Yet I can remember the threatening letter Munro received when he, in a perfectly legitimate business manner, made a Milk Churn Escape for the Great Raymond. The boot was on the other foot then. Needless to add, the threat never materialized, and was like so much more talk -- just bluff.

Writing broadly, I should say that the English still lead in the designing of new tricks and illusions; but America is first past the tape in producing them to the best advantage. Many an illusion has been produced in England in a very crude manner; but later we have seen the same illusion worked by an American performer, and it has proved a delight in every sense.

The greatest blunder the English magician makes is in thinking that he can educate the masses to his ideas of magic. He cannot. Nothing varies more than an audience, and they from childhood have had their ideas of what a conjurer should be. If you can pick your audience then you might be able to pick your show, or style; but as that is not possible, why kick the wall, and try and force on them styles of presentation they know nothing of, and care less about. As one or two of us in England have been shouting for years past:- "Make Magic entertaining." and leave the theorists to work out their own ideas to special audiences in the magical societies

club rooms. What does an American performer boast first and foremost. He tells you how many cars of properties, and how many assistants he carries. He must have made money or he could not have kept buying them. He must still be making money or he could not travel them. But in England, the home of the theorist, the home of the elevator of Magic, the home of stint, why they brag about how little they can show an audience, and think they get away with it. There are no really big magical acts in England. I have one in mind where a lot of animals are used, but dispense with them and the show would be small.

Referring to small acts, I have often wondered why one or two American performers include what I call "filthy" tricks. Fancy going up to a gentleman, and -- gripping his coat -- tearing off one of his buttons with your teeth, and expectorating it out of your mouth into your hand to prove that it is no longer attached to the coat. Is it nice? Then we get a far worse one, in my opinion, by having the mouth, tongue and throat examined, and a number of needles and cotton apparently manipulated by the tongue until the cotton is threaded through all the needles. Then the cotton is withdrawn all saturated with saliva, and held up for inspection. It is beastly.

Many good acts have come from America, and they have been fairly original. Van Hoven, in his nervous and confused style, was greatly appreciated here in England. We could do with more of these speciality acts, and there is no reason why they could not contain some real magic. But the acts we do not want are the Handcuff Acts. Escape acts are as old as the hills, and many of them -- such as being tied to a post, etc, etc, -- proved effective; but the handcuff act seemed to savour too much of an association with old lags, and things of that sort. To see a man -- who possibly had not a fiver in all the world to call his own -- shouting out a challenge, and practically offering to bet any member of the audience £500 (or £5000) that he could, or they could not, do such and such a thing, is not artistic. It savours too much of the race course. Folks go to a Music Hall to be entertained, not to hear a man brag and offer to bet about his ability. You do not hear a singer challenge the audience that he, or she, will reach a certain top note. An acrobat does not offer to forfeit a certain sum of money if he fails to turn a number of summersets, and so on. It is the wrestler, boxer, bruiser or race course tout who offers to back his ability, and who talks in sovereigns and mostly works for shillings. From start to finish the

acts were sheer bluff, and, as they are now dead, let us sincerely hope no one tries to resuscitate them.

In England Mr. Oswald Williams is called:-- "England's leading magician." He visited Australia, and in a speech to some of the members of the Australian Society of Magicians, he advised them to learn to work in wood and metal. After seeing his act, a Mr. David Bell (I am quoting from the Official Circular of the Australian Society of Magicians -- Melbourne, and not from letters, which would be unfair) says:-- "Mr. Williams may have left his magical apparatus at home." He also quotes someone as saying:-- "If Oswald Williams is England's leading magician, then God help England." Another writer says that Mr. Williams spoke:-- "In a whining voice more adapted to a local preacher or Methodist ranter than a magical theatrical artist." I take it that the idea wished to be conveyed, is, that instead of wasting time in working in wood and metal a few lessons in elocution might have been advantageous. As Mr. Williams has always argued about the advisability of making one's own properties it is rather disappointing to read another extract as follows:-- "He (Mr. Williams) may exhibit (with great faith in his own marvellous power) that acme of legerdemain which the management of the Tivoli ordered to be scrapped for the rest of the season after his *first and only exhibition of it in this city*, to wit, THE GREAT ILLUSION YCLEPT "YE OLDE ARKE OF NOAH." Now all this must be rather disappointing to one of the greatest advocates of making your own apparatus, and goes to prove my various arguments in previous books that it is impossible to excel in both. It is so foolish to try and gather laurels one is not entitled to, or to try and achieve the impossible.

Mr. Oswald Williams also advised the members of the Australian Society not to purchase the magical goods offered for sale; yet I can remember the time when he was quite anxious to purchase tricks, for I have sold him many when with Munros. I only write about this because I dislike inconsistency, and because I understand that Ossy Williams' real start on the Halls was not with an act of his own, but with one designed by Julien Wyllie; and again because I sincerely believe he gained much of his knowledge by purchasing tricks when in the amateur stage.

As Mr. Williams publicly airs his views and opinions, he will not object to me doing the same.

Whilst on the subject of refraining from buying goods from

the Magical Depots, I am well aware many professional conjurers never purchase a trick from the Depots. There is no need. They walk around and pick them up. After inspecting the working they place them down again. They may gratuitously give their opinion of the trick, or they may not. I am also aware that it may be by sheer coincidence that some of the method finds its way into one of their illusions at a later date.

There is no doubt that magic in America is succeeding because it is being handled in the right manner; whereas, in England, much of it is controlled by men who can only talk about it, and who have no other interest in it than the cheap glorification derived from holding office in some Society.

Now and again I almost envy America the possession of the finest Magical Monthly in the world. Dr. Wilson's famous paper - "THE SPHINX" - is unapproachable. We have nothing like it. Why? Well, the Doctor is not afraid to speak out. Our monthlies are either "too pure" (as my friend Mr. Hugh Mackay so aptly expresses it) or they fail through lack of knowledge, experience, or support. Some English Editors adopt the "Hush; hush" policy, and never refer to anything that is not quite nice. One Editor wrote that he feared to insert an article on the misuse of animals, for he was afraid it would offend some of his subscribers who used them. This nervous apprehension is surely out of place in an Editor.

Still, I am optimistic enough to keep looking forward to the day when a real writer will step into the breach in England, and, when necessary, call a spade a damned shovel; and at the same time dislodge some of the old women from the clouds of magic. We do not want amateurs ruling magic, even though they may be splendid fellows in their proper sphere. We want professionals with businesslike brains at the helm, but unfortunately in England we have very few. I doubt very much whether the London Societies could produce ten men who get their living solely out of magic. I feel sure they could not. Apathy on the part of any conjurer will soon allow the societies to obtain complete control over Magic, and that will be the end. Magic at present is on the down grade, and almost played out, because Magical Societies have cheapened it to the extent of making it not worth while. There are very few secrets now that are not open to the merest outsider who cares to join a Society.

It is only necessary to read "The United Kingdom Gazette" to learn the financial standing of Magic at the present time.

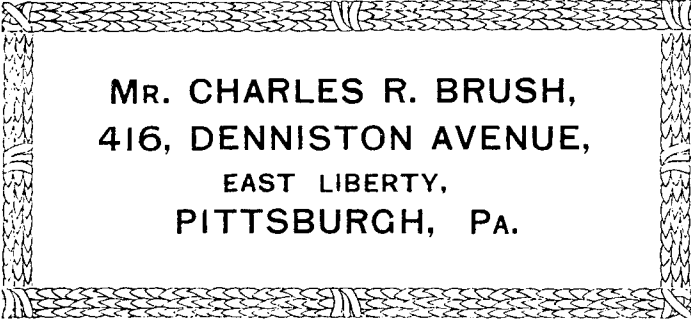
Mortgages running into thousands of pounds are appalling. Pawning is not a sign of prosperity.

Magic has been turned from a genuine business to a cheap pastime for amateurs. The Editor of the "Magic Wand" is fearful lest a casual reader may some day pick up "Tragic Magic," peruse it and soliloquise, "So these be the conjurers." This is exactly my object, and what I am writing for. It is to leave a record of the mis-deeds -- which all are so fearful to speak about, or to have known. It is not a case of "What is wrong with Magic?" We know what is wrong with Magic. It is poisoned; and the Magical Societies have supplied the poison. Unless an antidote is soon administered it will not be long before Magic will be quite worthless, or, worse still,

DEAD.



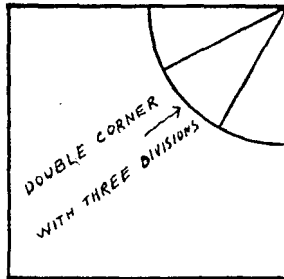
U. S. A. DEPOT MAGIC.



**MR. CHARLES R. BRUSH,
416, DENNISTON AVENUE,
EAST LIBERTY,
PITTSBURGH, PA.**

TWO HANDKERCHIEF SECRETS.

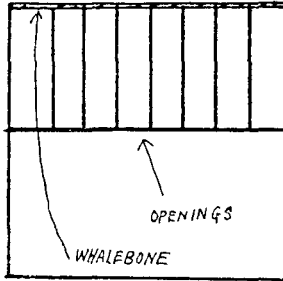
The idea for the first secret is to have a pocket in the corner of a dark blue handkerchief. This double corner can be divided into two or three pockets if so desired. One, two, or three silks of



different colours can be concealed in the pockets, and produced from first silk without use of handkerchief ball. The idea lends itself to combination tricks as well.

The idea for the second secret is a larger production of 8 or 9 silks. For this a large, heavy handkerchief, or cloth of dark colour is used. Across the top, in a hem, is sewn a piece of whale-

bone. The pockets run lengthwise, and are filled by folding silks to same size as pocket, and placing them between two pieces of tin, which are inserted.



The tin pieces are slowly withdrawn one at a time.

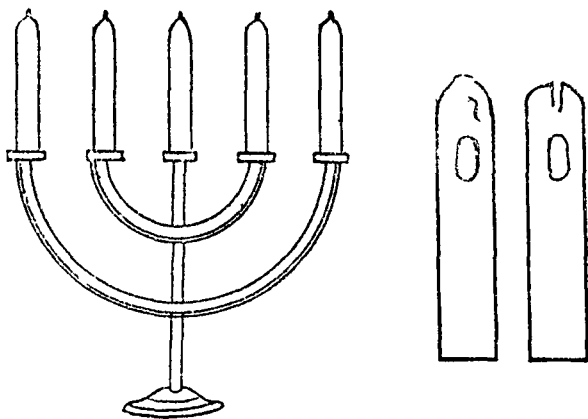
Pick up cloth, and show both sides. Bend the two top corners together, and owing to the whalebone you have a circle of cloth or tube. Hold with one hand while other reaches up from bottom, and produces the silks rapidly one at a time.

A COLOUR STUDY.

On performer's table is seen a beautiful candle-labra, with five candles in same. The candles are all white. The performer lights the candles, and then proceeds to extract five coloured handkerchiefs from the five candles. After producing each handkerchief, the candle is extinguished, and the handkerchief thrown over it. After all have been produced and so arranged, starting with first one the handkerchiefs are slowly pulled off, and it is

found that each candle is now of a bright colour to match the handkerchiefs.

The candles are made of wood, with a hole in rear so as to conceal the handkerchiefs. In top of candle is a small hole in which a wax match, or tiny candle can be placed for lighting. As the candles only remain lit a short time, this is all that is necessary. The candles are of five bright colours, and match the handkerchiefs. Over the candle goes a white shell, with opening in top, to pass over wax match. In rear of shell is an opening a little larger than the opening in the wooden candle, so as to



leave plenty of room to produce the handkerchiefs. There is also a tiny hook on shell at top rear. The candlelabra is unprepared. A corner of each handkerchief is allowed to protrude a little for grasping between first and second finger in producing from flame. The flame is blown out, and handkerchief draped over candle. Finally, when grasping hand-

kerchief, get hold of small hook also, and lift shell and handkerchief off together.

It proves a pretty trick, but requires just a little skill to work smartly.

MAGICIAN'S WAX.

Knowing that magicians have sought for years for a wax that would hold tightly, when least expected, and yet making a clean break — also when least expected, the following formula is explained for the first time.

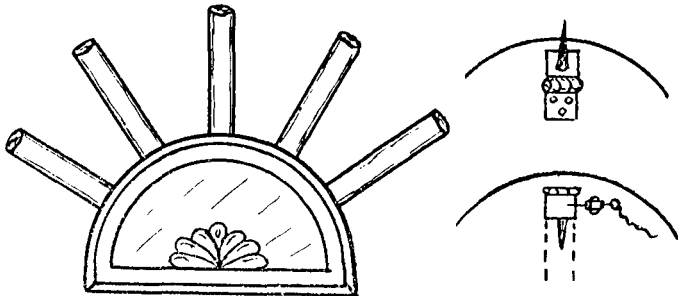
The founder, when but a small boy, was given a large pocket knife, which not only had a large and small blade, but also a screw driver and a cork screw — now obsolete in America. For good measure there was also a wicked looking curved instrument rather sharp and pointed on the end, which after due enquiry was found to be for cleaning horse's hoofs. During boyhood the founder had little chance for using this article, but after growing up to be a magician was much surprised to learn that a conjurer could do anything and get away with it. In a playful mood one day he caused a coin to vanish, and as there was a horse nearby, he said he would pass the coin into the horse's hoof. He took out his knife, dug around a bit, and produced the coin much to the bewonderment of the small boys; but unbeknownst he also dug out a

piece of his hoof, and concealed same in his palm. Later on, experimenting with same, he found it to be a most perfect wax for magical use. His favorite trick now is passing a coin into a horse's hoof, and obtaining thereby a small sample of this wax which he has placed on the market.

THE CIGARETTE STANDS.

These two stands are used for disappearing five cigarettes from one stand on one side table, which reappear on the other stand on the other side table.

The stands are half moon shape, and real cigarettes are used, being impaled on needles attached to mechanical hinges. They are vanished one at a time, and reappear one at a time on the other stand.



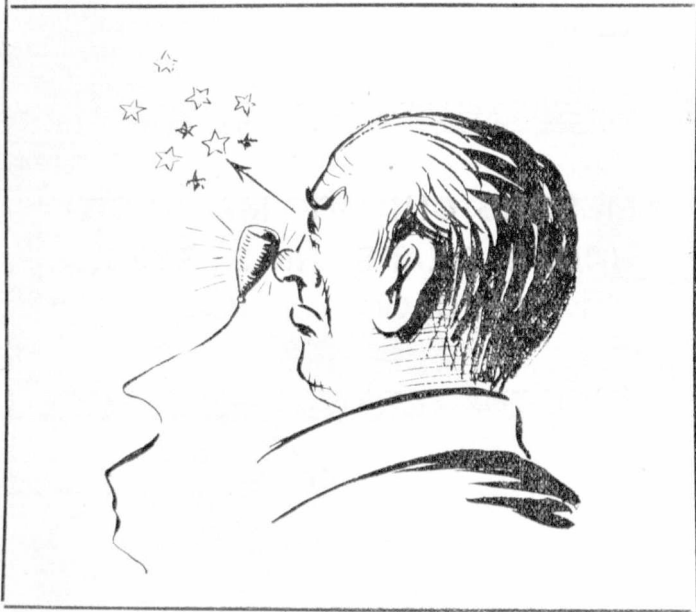
An assistant is necessary to pull out pins on second stand to release the spring hinges, which fly up and produce the cigarettes.

The vanish and production should be worked in a prearranged order, so that it will not look so mechanical. In grasping the cigarette to vanish, the fist is used and thumb held in slightly. Thumb flips cigarette, which falls to rear closing hinge. Hinges have felt glued on surface of both stands to eliminate talking.

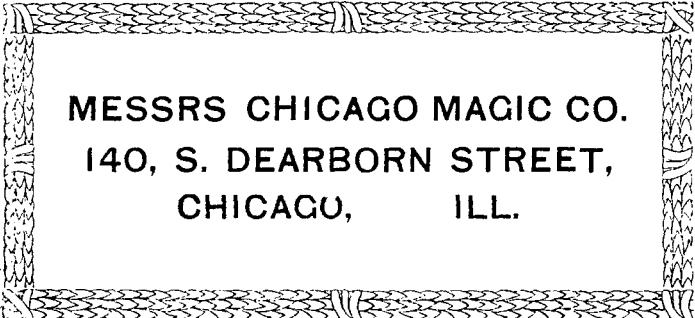
MAGICIAN'S ELASTIC.

Practically every magician at one time or another has made use of elastic — with various results.

Some elastic is known as *one time elastic*. You pull it out to see if it is all right, and it never goes back; but at last a suitable elastic has been found. It was quite accidental. A well known magician was staying with an old friend one night, who wore an abdominal supporter. This supporter had some wonderful elastic in it. Said magician rose early next morning, and departed — with some of the elastic. It was of orange pekoe colour. After dyeing it black, he has used it with success for several years, but is no longer on speaking terms with aforesaid friend. During the past six months he has lost any number of friends owing to the increase of sales of this remarkable elastic.



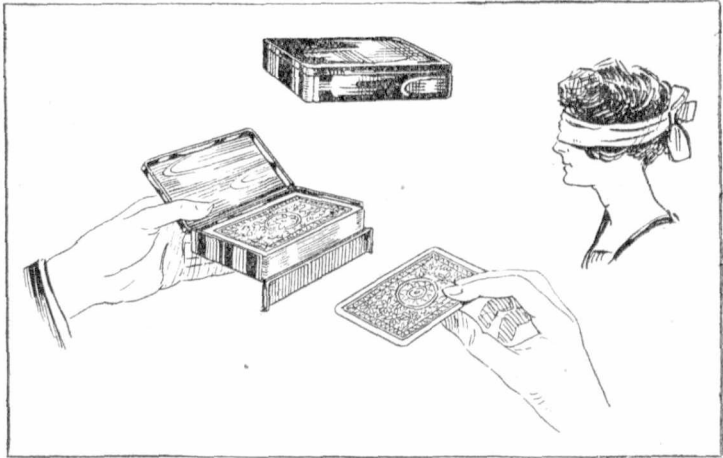
Here endeth Baffles Brush.



**MESSRS CHICAGO MAGIC CO.
140, S. DEARBORN STREET,
CHICAGO, ILL.**

THE MAGICIANS CARD BOX.

This is one of the most useful articles for card conjuring that we have ever brought out. A pack of cards is thoroughly shuffled by a member of the audience, and placed in an empty nicked card box, of such size as to comfortably hold the entire pack. Lid is closed, and box with cards in is given to spectator to hold. Immediately conjurer reads the cards in order, or his blindfolded assistant on



stage may do likewise. Or a member of audience may telephone to performer's assistant in some other part of the town or another city, and the assistant reads cards in order. Names of cards may be

written by spirits on slates, or on blank paper placed in envelope. This box may be used to change, vanish or appear cards. From one to nine cards may be forced from this box. The box has a hinged top and a hinged side in front, thus enabling a spectator to easily take out a card. Box may be given for examination, as there are no secret openings in it.

The secret lies in two faked plates that exactly fit in the lid, and which are polished to match it. One plate is double (polished both sides) whilst the other is backed with the back of one of the cards that will be used in the experiments.

MIND READING: Memorize six or eight cards, and place them in cover of box, using card (faked on one side only) to cover them. The box then appears to be empty. Balance of pack is given to spectator to be shuffled and placed in box. Front door is closed, also top, which causes the concealed cards to drop on pack. Performer or assistant on stage then easily names top cards in order.

FOR FORCING CARDS: Use same method outlined above.

FOR CHANGING CARDS: A card is placed in cover concealed by double fake. Selected card is placed in box, and box closed. On opening same, a different card is found in the box.

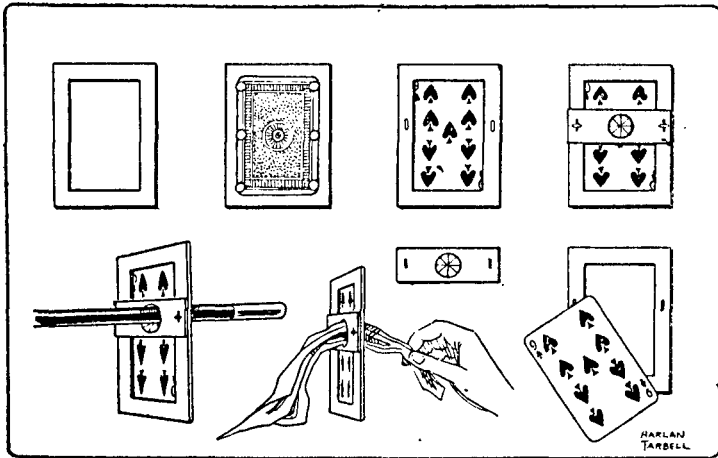
TO APPEAR CARDS: Several cards are placed in cover, concealed by double fake. Corresponding cards may be forced on spectators, taken up by performer, torn in pieces and vanished by any of the well known methods. Cards reappear in box, previously shown empty.

TO DISAPPEAR CARDS: Place double fake in cover of box. Cards selected by spectators and placed in box are made to disappear by closing same.

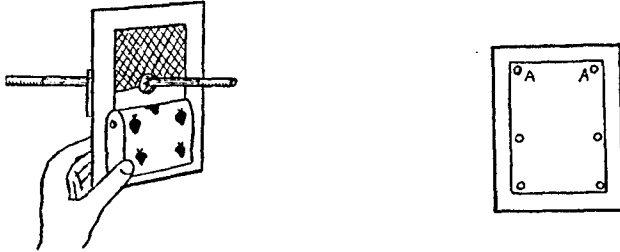


THE PENETRATED CARD.

A small wooden frame is shown, and passed for inspection. Next a spectator is allowed to draw a card from a pack of playing cards, borrowed if desired. Performer tacks the selected card on frame with six thumb tacks. One can then readily see that card closes opening of frame, and anything passing through the opening would also have to pass through the card. A small piece of wood with



a hole bored through centre (and a diaphragm of cloth placed over hole) is placed across frame and held in place by thumb screws. However, card can be readily seen above and below the narrow bar. Again frame is reversed to show that card is well held in place by thumb tacks. Showing front of frame again, articles such as a wand, a lead pencil, a handkerchief, or a pocket knife, are passed through the hole in bar, through the card, and removed from other side. Or articles are placed at rear and removed in front, proving that the card is penetrable. Quickly reversing frame, the card is still found securely held in place by the thumb tacks. The narrow bar is removed and card shown to be unharmed by articles passed through it. The



penetrated card is restored. Card is then removed from frame, and may be passed for examination.

The illustrations and description explain the trick very clearly.

Part of a card is pasted on the small cross-piece. This is a duplicate of the card which has been "forced" on a spectator. After card is drawn from pack by spectator, the performer places it on the table for a moment until he adjusts cross-piece and duplicate card on frame. In doing so cover the fake

card with the entire hand while fastening cross-piece to frame.

Turn frame over and place selected card face down on back of frame. The four lower thumb tacks are genuine; but the upper two are the heads of tacks with a small piece of wax on each so they will adhere to card and allow it to be turned back and down. After all is made ready, show frame back and front. In the act of picking up wand with right hand, bend card down with thumb of left hand, then push wand through opening, taking care that back of frame is not visible to spectator. After pushing through the wand, silk handkerchief, etc., fold the card up on frame, and show back and front. Card may then be removed from frame, and passed for examination.



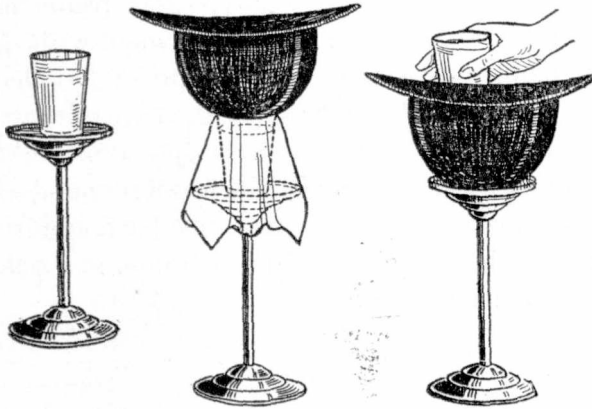
IMPROVED GLASS OF WATER THRU HAT.

A clear glass tumbler, filled with water, is placed on a tall handsome nickel plated pedestal, isolating the glass from the table. The glass is covered with a handkerchief, and on top of this is placed a derby hat, crown down. At command, the glass of water is seen to pass slowly upwards through the hat until the hat is resting on the pedestal. Performer immediately removes the glass of water from the

inside of the hat, and passes it with tumbler and handkerchief for examination.

The whole secret is contained in the pedestal, and the illustrations will make all quite clear.

The rod attached to the top plate is slid up by means of a button at the back of the pedestal tube, and it catches when at its full height. When re-

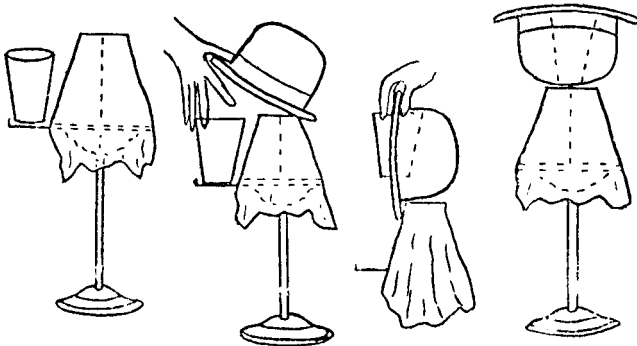


leased, a spring slowly unwinds, and allows it to sink steadily. The sliding shelf makes the trick possible, and thoroughly deceptive.

When presenting, stand at left of pedestal. From a pitcher fill a glass two-thirds full of water, and place on pedestal. Hold a handkerchief in the left hand, spread out as much as possible. A large handkerchief of heavy texture is best. Any ordinary plain lightweight tumbler, with straight sides, may be used. The tumbler must be at least one-half inch lower than top of fake disc.

When making opening remarks, face the audience.

In the act of turning towards pedestal, and just as the spread out handkerchief screens glass from view, press glass against rim of slide, and push it out. This acts as a shelf to hold glass. Place the hand instantly below, and push up the small button on side of upright until the disc is up to full height. Now place the handkerchief over fake; the back



part of handkerchief falling between glass and fake. A borrowed hat should be used.

Ask the owner of the hat whether he would prefer the glass of water to pass through the side of the hat, or through the crown. When saying this, hold the hat just above fake, grasping the glass between the fingers and lifting off shelf, holding it up behind the hat.

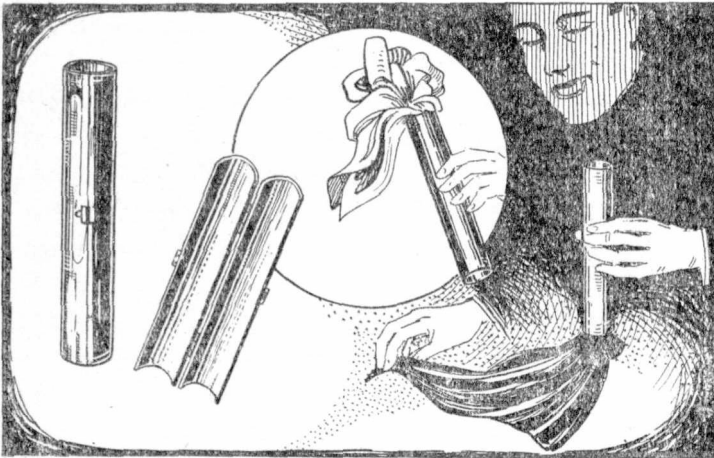
Pretending that you hear him say that he prefers the glass to pass through the crown, you say :- "Alright; we will place it crown down." As you say this, swing the glass into the hat in an upright position, and place hat on fake. Now push small release on the base, and the hat begins to descend

slowly, until it rests flat on pedestal. Pick up hat with left hand, and facing audience take glass out of hat with the right. When removing handkerchief from pedestal, push in slide under cover of it.



THE ENCHANTED TUBE, AND COLOUR CHANGING SILKS.

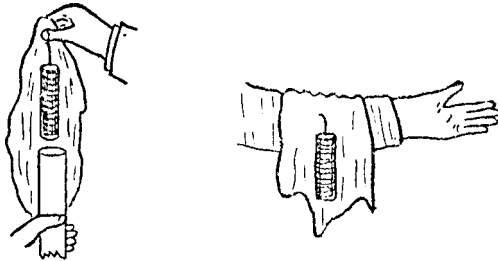
In planning a magician's programme, this would be one of the first pieces of apparatus I would advise, — especially where colour changing silks are desired. This beautiful brass nickel plated tube that opens on hinges, so as to be shown empty,



combined with the subtle method of working, rev-

olutionizes the old method of using the paper tube, as it requires no loading from chairs, table or body.

Three large white silk handkerchiefs are shown and allowed to hang over arm. Tube is then opened to remove any suspicion of its containing something. Tube is closed, and the white handkerchiefs inserted one at a time. Coming from the other end of tube, they are found to have changed to red, green and blue respectively. Tube is immediately shown empty.



The secret is a tube fake that fits easily in the hinged tube, and is operated very much after the style of the fake used in the Tripas Vanisher.

Load three coloured silks into bottom of inner fake, and place in nickeled tube. It will stay there suspended from top by hook. Show three white silks, and allow them to drop over left arm.

Nickeled tube is placed against inner part of left arm whilst calling attention to silks. Left arm is extended from body, and right side of body towards audience. Performer partially revolves so that body faces spectators from the front, outer part of

left arm faces audience, and while in this position fake is hooked on to white silks, and nickeled tube taken away, opened and shown empty.

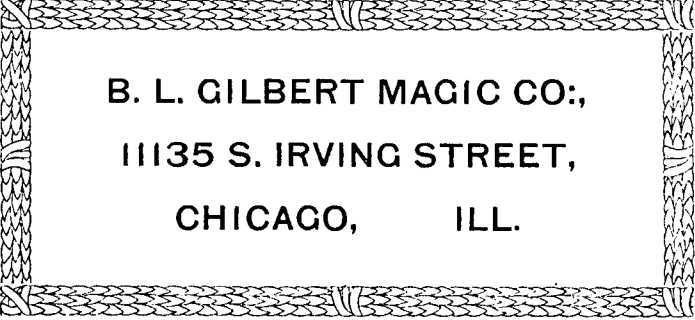
Sketch shows fake hooked on silks on left arm, silks screening same from audience.

A white silk is lifted up, and with it the fake. Fake is then let into tube, and hook holds same in place. Silk is allowed to slide down outer side of tube to show that it is free.

It is then introduced into top of tube, and likewise the fake. The other two silks are also placed into fake from top of tube. The coloured ones are withdrawn at the bottom, and given one at a time to the assistant. The last silk is removed and shown, and in lifting it in front of tube it catches the hook of fake.

The result is that the fake is drawn out of the tube behind the handkerchief, and given thus to assistant, who walks off stage with silks, or else lays same on table — the fake falling into a black art pocket or servante; or fake may be dislodged on assistant's clothes, and carried off stage after having placed silks on table.





**B. L. GILBERT MAGIC CO.,
11135 S. IRVING STREET,
CHICAGO, ILL.**

SILK PRODUCTION FROM BARE HANDS.

This effect makes one of the neatest and cleanest methods known to apparently produce a silk handkerchief from practically nowhere; for with both sleeves well rolled back and the audience having had full opportunity to note the hands are empty beyond question, a silk mysteriously appears at finger tips, which is, to say the least, a very puzzling experiment.

To prepare for this effect, tie a strand of thin flesh or pink coloured silk thread around the right wrist, having it well up on the forearm, that is far enough up so it is concealed by cuff. Under this thread you tuck a silk handkerchief, after rolling it up into a compact ball.

You now appear before audience, and showing hands empty, proceed to roll back sleeves and cuffs. Point to empty left hand with right forefinger tip, your right side being nearest audience.

Now turning on your left heel, you make a turn of body so that left is nearest audience, and as you do this you allow the left finger tips to scrape along right arm for an instant, and clip silk in fingers as thread is broken by left coming in contact with it. Your curled up fingers now secretly hold silk from view of audience, the silk being pressed against

left palm as left forefinger points to empty right hand. You now bring hands together, and gradually allow the silk to expand and appear at finger tips. Show hands after production so any question as to use of apparatus is dispelled from the mind of your audience.



MAGICAL EXTINGUISH OF A MATCH.

To perform this mystifying trick proceed as follows:- Hold match against inside of first and second fingers at tips by pressure of right thumb tip. This will hold match in the first position for lighting same.

Light match, and then lift right forefinger over same, and with thumb at its unlighted end, push match out at about first joint of first and second finger. If correctly held, the match will now be in this position :- Match held firmly between first and second finger at first joint, with about one-eighth of the unlighted end projecting inside of fingers, and the balance with blazing end projecting straight out at right angle to fingers that hold it, match being held very rigid and firm in this position ready for next move.

Ball of thumb is pressed against second finger to steady thumb, and thumb nail caught on end of

match. You are now in a position where you have a powerful leverage, only reversed; for if the thumb gives a quick pick at the end of match, and altho but a small amount of motion is given, the lighted end moves quite a distance, — the motion being multiplied many times owing to its projecting so far outward.

This is the whole secret, for by giving match a quick pick, the lighted end swings in a long arc so quickly that it cannot be seen, and in doing so the flame is extinguished by this action.

All these moves are blended together so quickly that it takes but a fraction of a second to light, arrange in position, pick it, and put out the flame. To better conceal the method used, proceed as follows :- After lighting, move the hand with match to your right, and as you do this, bring up the left sleeve towards mouth, turning head to left to meet it. Right arm should be timed so that as your lips reach the left sleeve, right arm is still moving outwards. Now as you blow up left sleeve, you pick at match with right thumb nail, and the illusion is effected that you have blown out match by blowing up the sleeve of your left arm, altho right is extended far away from all this, making it a neat trick that may be performed anywhere, and always attracts attention.



FIRE PROOF HANDKERCHIEF.

The performer should commence trick by lighting a cigar or cigarette, and after puffing same until it is burning vigorously, ask the loan of someone's linen or cotton handkerchief.

Having borrowed one, he either asks for, or produces from his pocket a coin. The half dollar size is well suited for the effect, but any coin will do quite well. Palming coins are specially suited for this experiment; for not only being correct in size, performer may if he wishes attribute the result of the effect shown to the peculiar magic properties of his magic coin.

Taking the coin and kerchief, and showing all freely so there can be no suspicion of a substitution, or switch for a piece of linen or cotton similar to handkerchief borrowed, the performer places the centre of handkerchief over the coin and brings the corners downward, and grasping the handkerchief up close to underside of coin, proceeds to draw the handkerchief tightly over the surface of coin so it is stretched quite taut.

Holding the kerchief and coin in this manner with one hand, he guides the burning end of the cigar or cigarette with other hand, as he brings head downward towards the kerchief. Pressing the burning end of same to kerchief, he puffs cigar or

cigarette furiously as same is shown to be in direct contact with fabric.

Removing the burning end from kerchief, he withdraws coin from same, brushes off any ashes that may have adhered to the cloth, and shows the kerchief is unbarmed. This astounding trick is perfectly practical and safe to exhibit; and if performer lacks the nerve to experiment on a borrowed handkerchief, he may prove that no harm can be done by trying it on his own.

The secret of it all is the fact that metal is a very rapid conductor of heat, while cloth is just the opposite; therefore, if you stretch the cloth tightly over the coin, the heat from cigar or cigarette passes so quickly into the metal that it does no injury to the cloth. Try for yourself, and see.



GRAVITY OUTDONE.

The effect of this mystifying experiment is as follows :- While seated at dinner table, performer takes a glass full of water or some other fluid, and after a few attempts balances the glass and contents at an angle that is really remarkable, and apparently showing that he is able to defy all laws of gravity. The glass is unprepared, and there is no visible indications whatsoever as to how this puzzling experiment is accomplished.

To prepare for this clever impromptu effect, secretly slip a match or toothpick under the table cloth near you, or better still under napkin that is spread out in single thickness. Be sure and have the match close to the edge of table so that later you may secretly remove it without allowing anyone to see you do so; as this will do away with all convicting evidence in case anyone wants to do any examining of place where you are seated.

Having placed match or toothpick in place, you take a glass nearly full of liquid, which may be a stem goblet or an ordinary tumbler, and tilt it away from you. This brings the rear edge of its base in an elevated position, and while held in this manner pull or scrape it towards you. This will bring the front edge that is away from you up against the match, and the cloth will also be gathered a little also from scraping the base as you place glass in position.

You will be surprised that the tiny ridge made by match and the cloth will act as a very secure rest for the glass when you manipulate it a little so it is perfectly balanced. Once it is made secure it will remain in this position indefinitely, much to the surprise of all who are watching the experiment and expect to see it fall eventually after losing its balance.

Having satisfied all that the goblet will stay in that position for any length of time you wish it to, you pick up and pass for examination, calling attention to the few remaining electrical sparks

that are still clinging to the glass, and whether they believe it or not, it gives you enough misdirection to allow your hand to get match out from under the cloth without being noticed.

Where napkin is used, the simple movement of dragging it towards you, as you pick it up to fold, will do the trick and dislodge match so it will drop on floor. A tiny silk thread attached to it will also help if you want to prepare beforehand, the latter method being very suitable if you have match under table cloth. As you raise table cloth to show them there are no spirits there, you can pull the thread and allow it to drop into your lap as you turn back cloth for examination.

Still another method is to raise the cloth, finger palm the piece, which by the way needs to be only a short length, and you may then show under the cloth as freely as you wish, using first opportunity to drop the piece of match on the floor as you offer inspection of cloth, table, etc., to those that have witnessed the baffling and apparently scientific problem.



LIVING OR DEAD.

This trick makes a good spiritualistic effect. Performer makes no other preparations than to have a sheet of ordinary paper, blank on both sides, and edges cut smooth. A committee of five are

asked to assist, and all may be disinterested persons as there is no confederacy required.

Performer takes a ruler, or something with a straight edge, and lays it across paper, and tears off a piece and passes it to one of the committee, asking him or her to write the name of a dead person; or to be more pleasing in the request, asks name written of some one they know who has passed away. He tears off four other strips, exactly alike in size as strip number one, and giving one to each of volunteer committee, asks each of them to write on the slips the name of some living person. The sixth or bottom slip is discarded for reasons you will presently see.

After they have written the names, performer having retired or turned his back, all are placed in a hat, or similar article, first having committee fold them up securely so no chance will be had to possibly learn the names on them by observation.

After folded slips are placed in hat, performer reaches in, and as he withdraws a slip he instantly tells whether it is of the living or the one passed away; or he may reach in and select that of the departed one. Yet he opens none of them, or in no way sees the names written.

This startling experiment is founded on one of the most clever ideas in magic and so called spirit manifestations or thought reading and transference, and the climax should be worked up to a sensational finish by performer stating that he is able to learn the fact that a certain one of the slips contains the

name of departed person from the vibrations he gets by touch, there being an uncanny feeling when that particular one is found, and the hand comes in contact with it.

The principle involved is simplicity itself. You tear off the first strip which is to be the one that the departed one's name is to be written on, and this is the only strip that will have one smooth edge, as the top edge will not be torn. When second strip and balance are torn off there will be a ragged torn edge at top and bottom, and as the strips are long, the ends will of course be smooth as they are the cut edges of sheet; but these strips should be about six times as long as they are deep, which gives you plenty of edge to determine if both upper and lower edge are rough or one has a smooth and one rough edge.

As soon as your sense of touch tells you that one of the slips has a smooth feeling as fingers run along edge, you immediately know that is the one given out to have departed one's name written on. Of course all the rest will be the living, and requires no further feeling. You may find at first that it is a little difficult to sense number one by touch alone, so you may resort to simpler plans that will allow you to get a glimpse of the slips, and as all are folded up, no one will question your motive in doing so.



THE BROKEN MATCH.

The effect is placing an ordinary match inside a borrowed handkerchief and then to grasp the match through the fabric and break same in two, everyone plainly hearing the crack of the wood when match is broken. This clever method is practically unknown and will prove a puzzler to any audience especially those who know the older method of concealing a match in the hem of handkerchief, etc.

To produce this startling effect you borrow a handkerchief as this will allay any suspicion as to the kerchief entering into the trick. You now take a borrowed match, or one of your own which may be examined, and place it in the centre of handkerchief.

Rolling it up well in same, you now grasp handkerchief in the following manner. Right hand holding match with fingers on top and thumb underneath, with thumb turned so ball of same is uppermost but concealed under handkerchief. Left grasps handkerchief, fingers at top also, but well to the front, thumb underneath, ball of thumb down.

You will now find that by a little adjustment of fingers and thumb that you can engage the two thumb nails so they catch on each other, and by apparently giving the match a twist or hinged movement as though breaking it in two, the thumb nails may be made to "crack" as you pick one with the other quite vigorously, allowing them to pick each other and slip past.

This sound is identical with the breaking of a wooden match, and makes a complete and perfect illusion that will deceive anyone that you show the effect to. Having "broken" the match, you proceed to unroll the handkerchief, or allow someone else to, and show match fully restored. Be sure and use care so that no one can accuse you of substituting or palming, else the effect and method of producing effect is lost.



THE BORROWED AND BURNT BILL.

This trick is without doubt one of the finest and most startling ever presented.

Prepare by taking a fairly heavy envelope, and cut slit in it lengthwise with long way of envelope on the front side, making this slit about two inches long and a little lower than the centre of envelope, measuring up and down the narrow way. Fold imitation bill in four, and place inside under slit.

Have a bill marked and ask them to turn down a corner, and fold bill in half, and fold this again in half so that there is now a quarter of the surface of the bill exposed and a corner turned down.

Walking to table you pick up envelope and with flap side towards audience you hold envelope with left hand and with right you insert bill into envelope, allowing it to go down part way out of slit at

back (really front of envelope farthest away from audience). You allow them to fully note you do not switch bills, as you call attention to the turned down corner of bill.

With envelope sealed you say you will now take a match, and set fire to the envelope containing bill, and as you say this you move away with envelope, the eyes following it, and as you do this the fingers of the left hand touch protruding bill and draw it out of envelope through the slit, and same is secretly carried to pocket as you get your match with the left hand. Leave bill in pocket, and come out with match.

Hold up envelope with match back of it, and show bill is inside of the envelope, or at least you show shape of bill as previously folded. You light envelope and allow it to burn, then put it out and say you hate to do such a trick on a good friend. Reach in burnt end, and pull out the partly burnt stage bill, show it, remarking that it is too late now as the damage has been done or gone too far; you relight the envelope and bill, and allow it to become entirely consumed.

During the final burning of bill you secretly get bill from pocket, and dumping the ashes from dish into hand, you rub them briskly between the palms and at same time roll up the folded bill into a ball and after a little patter and by play, you gradually develop the bill, opening it out from its spherical shape so it will appear as though you had rolled the ashes up into a ball, and was restoring bill from them.

HOW TO READ SEALED MESSAGES.

This is one of the finest effects in a so called Spirit Message Tests. Follow our directions carefully and you will find that you have a trick that will mystify an audience. Prepare for producing effect after the following manner.

Procure a very small tin salve or ointment box, one that the cover fits loosely so as it can be removed quickly. It will come off easily if you grease inside with a little vasaline. In this box fasten a small fine sponge, and have it sufficient size so it projects above the top of box when cover is off. Moisten this sponge with *Columbian Spirits*, an odourless alcohol of very high grade, place cover on and you are ready to work the experiment. It may be added that if you are a stickler for detail, this box should be painted flesh colour.

With this box in convenient pocket where it can be got at readily and unobserved, you prepare further by having some plain white cards, also some envelopes that the cards will fit into. The envelopes should be white, and not too thick.

Have these cards passed out, and request that messages be written on them by different ones holding cards, and to place them face down so you cannot see them. This ruse will bring the writing just the way that you want it, for you pass envelopes to place messages in, and the natural way to do so will be to have flap side of envelope up, as cards with writing is inserted.

Have the envelopes sealed and gathering them up, you walk slowly back to table and as you do so get box with sponge out and quickly rub across the front of the envelope and this will make envelope transparent enough so you can plainly read the writing on the card, which you remember so you can recall it again in a few moments.

A good way to get box in readiness is to stand with hand in pocket while you are waiting for the last envelope to be sealed, and in this manner you are in readiness to give the envelope a quick brush across surface as soon as you have turned and walked a little distance.

Remembering the writing in first envelope, you seat yourself at table that has a few books, or a box or similar article (one of our best magicians in this line has a small skull). At the back of this you place your envelopes, and box with sponge. Rub sponge across second envelope as you are about to raise first one to forehead.

As you repeat what you read as you walked back to table, with this number one to forehead, you appear to be reading in some strange abnormal manner the contents of the one held. As you do all this you also read and memorize contents of number two that is before you. After reading number one you pass it out and have it verified, or simply ask if it is correct.

Picking up number two, and knowing its contents you proceed as before, moistening number three as you *read* number two, and so on until you

have successfully made known the contents of all the sealed writings.

Another method is to have all writing placed on small sheets of paper and gathered up. Room is darkened, and performer or medium takes advantage of dark room to slip a rubbercloth, or opaque cloth bag, over head and shoulders, and using a pocket flash lamp, he holds the envelopes between himself and light, and plainly reads what is written thereon.

Having read the various messages, he memorizes them, and removing the black bag and concealing same, also flash lamp, he proceeds to tell what the different messages were, and to answer questions as he thinks most suitable to the person asking them. These two methods should furnish ample material to enable anyone to elaborate on same, and give some wonderful "readings."



BEWITCHED BROOM STRAW.

EFFECT. A broom straw is embedded in a mound of sand or in a small cup filled with sand, and a small sea shell or grotesque figure is cut from some material that is waterproof and not too heavy. This is fastened to upper end of broom straw, and the performer then sprinkles some water on the straw when immediately it seems to take on life and

commence to turn round and round, swinging the shell or figure in circles in a very mysterious manner, keeping this up for some little time.

PREPARATION. Take some good long and fairly thick broom straws and place them in hot water for several minutes, then take them out one at a time, and proceed to prepare as follows: Have a soft pine board of width that is about the same number of inches that the straws are in length. Use a small tack and fasten down one end of the straw; now beginning close up towards the tack, grasp the straw with finger tips and twist it similar to manner you would make a paper taper for lighting purposes. In other words, twist straw as far as you can, working down towards lower end until you cannot twist it any more without breaking it.

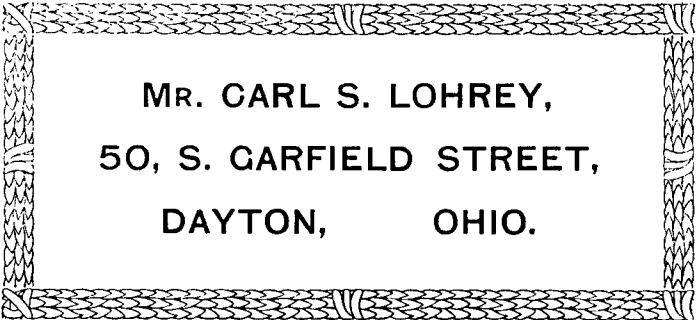
Now fasten the lower end securely, and proceed to do same with the next straw until you have taken a good number from the hot water, and have them all on board, twisted and tacked down secure at both ends. Now let these straws become thoroughly dry, when they can be taken up by removing tacks and will remain in twisted condition until wanted.

Now make use of them, have a small egg cup or similar article filled with sand, and put one end of straw well down into sand and press firmly around it. Placing shell or miniature manakin on top of the straw, you proceed to wet the straw in any manner you see fit (a florist's bulb spray is excellent) when it will be noticed that the straw will start to whirl

and gyrate in an unusual manner without any apparent reason for it.

As you will have guessed, the sprinkling of water in straw has moistened the twisted stem and by the action of its becoming soft and pliable from moisture, it attempts to resume its former condition before it was twisted and will continue to twist and turn until it is back to its normal condition. A few touches with green dye on stems when tacked down adds to effect when presenting as they look like green stems.





**MR. CARL S. LOHREY,
50, S. GARFIELD STREET,
DAYTON, OHIO.**

FATHER CHRISTMAS.

This makes a delightful effect round about the festive season.

A cardboard box (without lid, and with a round hole in the bottom) is shown. The outside is covered to represent bricks, and the inside is painted



black. One side of the box is double, and the inside part is cloth hinged much in the same way as the pocket on a calendar. In this is secreted the spring Father Christmas, and a few odds and ends.

A stubby round tube is shown, and fitted in the hole in box. This is painted to represent a chimney pot.

Then the fun commences. In putting the hand inside the chimney, it is found to be all sooty. It is impossible to go on with the trick until the chimney has been cleaned. It is blown up with gunpowder, and brushed. Finally it is wiped out with pocket handkerchiefs, and flags. Then the trick proceeds. Paper chains are pulled out, and hooked to the top of the chimney, and stretched to the corners of the table. Chinese lanterns are produced, hung around the table, and finally Father Christmas makes his appearance. This spring line is one of the superior quality now on the market, and is very effective, and deceptive regarding its solidity. As its size is somewhat larger than the Monster Hat baby, it can be classed as a small illusion.

The only explanation needed is the fun with the supposed soot. Needless to say, the chimney is perfectly clean, but in proving otherwise you appeal to a child's idea of humour. Behind the box you secretly lay the fingers portion of a flesh coloured glove, the fronts of which have been blackened. At the correct moment, you slip your fingers into them, and keeping them curled up, you dive the hand into the chimney pot, and withdraw it immediately. Then show the front—the black markings masking all edges. It looks an awful mess, but easily got rid of in a pocket handkerchief. Then patter that the chimney really wants cleaning, and you believe the

correct way is to blow it up with gunpowder. Luckily you have some that you use in your pistol, and you show a packet marked "Gunpowder." It really does contain a few grains of gunpowder, but it also contains our old friend—the flash tube. This you drop into the chimney. As there is a big flash and a puff of smoke, you assume that it has fallen into the fire place. Next you use a faked Japanese umbrella. (Get a small one that fits the pot when open, and remove the paper covering. To the ends of each rib you have tied some hairs from a real broom. Fun can be got out of this by gagging about a "Patent Applied For" as the brush opens and closes.) After the supposed sweeping with the brush you pick up the handkerchief that contains the glove fingers, and pretend to wipe the chimney with it. In reality you simply drop it, and open the double end, and withdraw a faked handkerchief, almost covered in black. Its exhibition will cause much merriment. All this can be curtailed or prolonged according to its reception, and then the paper chains are pulled out, and arranged. A few lanterns, and finally Santa Claus.

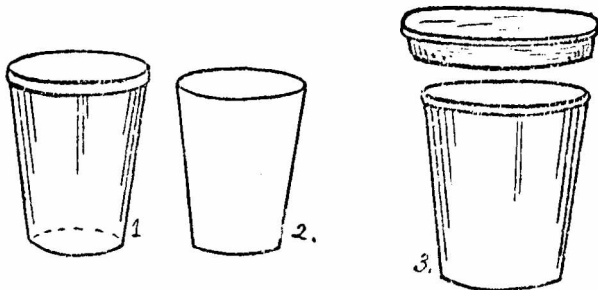


THE VEST POCKET STILL.

Performer shows two small aluminium cups. To prove cup No. 1 empty he tosses it into the air with right hand, then to prove cup No. 2 empty he places cup No. 1 on the inside of cup No. 2, this proves that without a shadow of doubt both cups are empty. Removing the inner cup—which is No. 1—with the right hand, he turns No. 2 upside down, then places the two cups mouth to mouth, repeats the magic words *Lets have a drink*, and pours a quantity of Whisky(?) from one cup to the other.

The secret of the trick depends on three cups, which we will refer to in numbers.

No. 1 is a cup with the bottom cut out, No. 2 has rim at the top, No. 3 is a bit larger than No. 2 and has a concave bottom.



To work the effect, place No. 2 in No. 3 and load with your favourite drink. Hold in left hand. No. 1 is held in right hand, and tossed into the air, care

being taken not to expose or give a direct view through the open bottom. Then place it in No. 2 (which is in No. 3) and give a press home with the thumb of the left hand; then remove No. 1 and No. 2 as *one* cup. The trick is now completed as far as you are concerned, place them mouth to mouth and finish as explained above.

Cup No. 1 and cup No. 2 should be so made that you can pass them for inspection. After you have performed, spectators will try to repeat your operation of placing one within the other, only to find out that it cannot be done. If cups are properly made even another magician cannot figure it out, as the cut off top of No. 2 must fit up snug to the rim which is turned over on No. 1.

A lid should also be made to clamp down over the set when nested in order to carry same in pocket loaded.

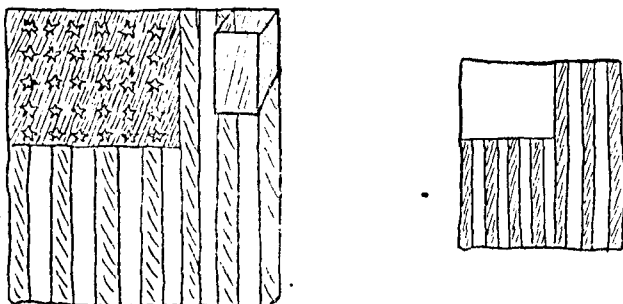
A COMEDY OF ERRORS

OR

THE MIS-MADE FLAG.

Performer shows the back and the front of hand to be empty and produces a red, a white, and a blue silk handkerchief which he places on a side stand, next a sheet of drawing paper is shown and rolled into a tube, and the the three silks are pushed

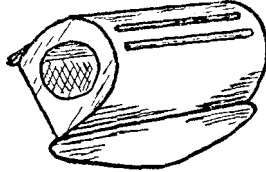
through the tube, and at the same time performer announces that he will form the silks in a magical way, into a "nice American Flag," however he hears a lot of noise from the other side of the footlights and finds that he is getting the horse laugh, when finally a small boy, more helping than the rest advises him that he has dropped the blue silk, however no attention is paid until the flag is pulled out — which should be about 9 by 12 inches — and he is very much surprised to note that the flag does not have a blue field, as this part of the flag is white,



and only the red stripes are there, as the laughter on the part of the audience continues, he finally listens to the boys and discovers that the blue silk is on the floor.

Of course everything goes with a magician, so he picks up the blue silk, and together with the mis-made flag announces that he will try again by pushing the blue silk and the unfinished flag through the paper again, produces not alone a finished flag but enlarges the flag to a 24 by 36 inches size.

The first part of the trick, is a flesh coloured fake known as the "Fly Handkerchief Producer," made



in the form of a tube with two ears on same. This fake is loaded with the three silks, and is back palmed on the order of a playing card.

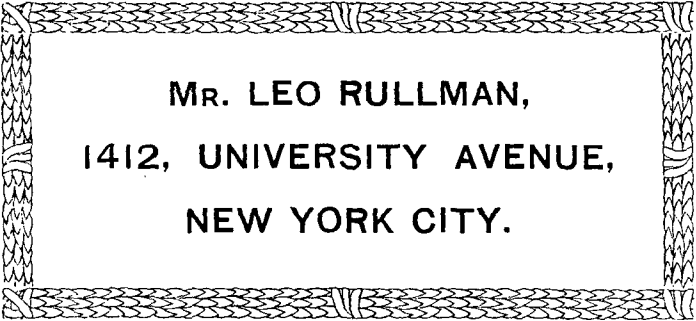
On opening, the hand is shown back and front, the palms placed together and the silks produced. This is without a doubt the cleanest silk production that a performer could make use of.

To produce the dying part of the effect, a square tube with folding corners is sewn in the corner of the large flag, and another piece of silk sewn over it, leaving the bottom open, the large flag is loaded in first, then the unfinished flag, and placed on the wire servante as used for the dying of handkerchiefs. The tube is loaded in the paper by your own pet method. However, at the finish you have no tube to get rid of, as the large flag is now out of the tube, and nothing remains in the tube but the small flag and the three silks, and the tube folds flat, under pressure of the fingers.

It is needless to mention that you should not use the regular flags as supplied by general dry goods and department stores, as they bulk up too much, use only flags made of the finest conjuring silk, and

you have here one of the neatest effects ever conceived, as every audience likes to see a magician in a predicament, but at the finish the laugh is on them.





MR. LEO RULLMAN,
1412, UNIVERSITY AVENUE,
NEW YORK CITY.

THE HOBBY OF BOOK COLLECTING.

Of the making of many Magic books there is no end.

Prefacing this article with an apology for paraphrasing a well-known quotation, I respectfully beg to submit that in respect to Magic books "the mills of the gods" *do not* "grind slowly," and certainly they have not, in the past, "ground exceedingly fine."

In the past decade, which marks the span of my association with the subject, the magical market has been literally inundated with a flood of "literature." Nearly every week marks the advent of a new title. Every would-be follower of the late Harry Kellar, every aspirant to the fame of Maskelyne, every neophyte in the mysteries of deception at some time in his life feels himself endowed with a "message" of which he must sooner or later unburden himself — which he generally does to the tune of "Magic and its Confessors," "Fretful Magic," "Banana Wizardry," "Making Magic Stay," "Excusable Magical Secrets," and so forth, *ad libitum* and *ad summum*!

During the past ten years not less than 432 magical publications, in nine languages, comprising pamphlets, brochures, and books dealing with the subject have been given (save the mark!) to a patient public that, in the vernacular of the street, "doesn't know what it's all about." Many of these

publications have long since passed, and been forgotten, consigned to the oblivion they merited.

And here — Enter the collector! For it is a curious trait of human nature to spurn the available and seek far and wide for the unobtainable. Hold up to the buyer of magical literature a new work by a practical writer; hail it as the greatest book on the subject in a generation, and he will probably advise you he has “all that” in his library at home. But let the cataloguer inform him, a few years hence, that the same volume is out of print and very scarce, and, though the dealer live in a wilderness, Mr. Collector will, literally, *beat a path* to his door to obtain a copy. And so it comes about that we have “book hunters,” or “book finders,” to the multitude. Personally, while having considerable experience in the first field I cannot lay claim to much success in the latter capacity.

But if the volume of magical literature has increased, so, too, have the collectors. Whereas formerly a few score individuals were possessed of libraries of magic, to-day there are literally thousands of collectors of books relating to conjuring and the allied arts. Nor are they confined to conjurers, amateur or professional; many men who toil in office or laboratory are enamored of this collecting habit, and the avidity and assiduity with which they apply themselves to the furtherance of their hobby are marvellous to behold — even though at times disconcerting to the “book find-ers.” No class of book shop is proof against their determination.

They labour persistently and incessantly towards the consummation of their ambition to accumulate a library that will be at once the envy and admiration of every collector; and it is my belief, confidentially, that the only reason King Tut's slumber through the centuries was not disturbed *lang sync* is because it was not generally known that he was a collector of magical literature.

And these collectors have their peculiarities. One gathers first editions and association copies. Another is interested only in English literature. Some want various editions of the same work; others want all books in any language so long as they relate to conjuring. One is a connoisseur of fine bindings. A few care not for outward appearance so long as the contents are intact. For several years I sold books to a gentleman in one of our mid-western cities who insisted on having each copy in immaculate condition as to binding. No matter how rare the volume, he would have none of it unless in outward appearance it was fresh and clean. His object, he wrote, was to have his library make a nice showing through the glass doors of his book case. Necessarily many excellent books were conspicuous by their absence from this collection. This man was not a collector; he was a book buyer.

The literature of magic has a very wide scope. No bibliography to date can be said to have adequately covered the subject. This is largely due to the fact that much of the literature is transitory in character and make-up. The cheap pamphlet of

to-day is thrown away and forgotten in a few months, or years, and the bibliographer, in compiling a list of publications of even twenty years back is often dependent upon the memory of others for his facts.

The pioneer American Bibliographers, Mr. Henry Ridgely Evans, whose valuable contribution to the subject, "A Bibliography of Magic and Prestidigitation." published as an appendix to the monumental work compiled by A. A. Hopkins, entitled "Magic, Stage Illusions and Scientific Diversions." (Munn & Company, New York, 1897), and Mr. H. J. Burlingame, whose "Bibliotheca Magica" appeared at the end of his brochure "Tricks in Magic Vol. III" (Clyde Publishing Company, Chicago, 1898), faced this difficulty, as is evidenced by the fact that a number of early American works escaped their attention. As a brief reference to early American publications, those appearing during the middle or first part of the nineteenth century, may be of interest, I may mention the following :-

VENTRILOQUISM AND LEGERDEMAIN EXPOSED. Amherst, 1834, p. 156. A curious little work, which, while giving grotesque explanations of the feats of ventriloquists and "jugglers," dwelt particularly on the futility of the experiments and their moral effect on the younger generation.

ENGSTROM, THE HUMOROUS MAGICIAN UNMASKED. Philadelphia, 1836, boards, p. 90, with 9 plates at the back. This book, while setting forth more pretentious feats, maintained the customary ambiguity in their explanation.

THE BOY'S OWN BOOK. Boston, n. d. (1831), 2d. Amer. ed. Boards, p. 316, ills. Contained several chapters on conjuring and legerdemain.

WHOLE ART OF LEGERDEMAIN; OR, HOCUS POCUS LAID OPEN AND EXPLAINED. Philadelphia, 1852.

COMPLETE BOOK OF MAGIC. Philadelphia, n. d. (1850). Boards, p. 172.

KIRBYE, THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF VENTRILOQUISM. By Professor Kirbye. Philadelphia, 1861. Wrappers, p. 43.

HARTZ'S NEW BOOK OF MAGIC. New York, n. d. (1860). Wrappers, p. 24.

MASON, E., VENTRILOQUISM MADE EASY; ALSO AN EXPOSURE OF MAGIC AND THE SECOND SIGHT MYSTERY. Published by Wyman the Wizard, about 1860. Wrappers, p. 96, illus.

WYMAN'S HANDBOOK OF MAGIC. (2d. series). Published by Wyman the Wizard, Philadelphia, about 1860.

PRESTIDIGITATION, OR MAGIC MADE EASY. Hinsdale (N. H.), about 1865. Wrappers, p. 64.

HOCUS POCUS, OR THE ART OF CONJURING MADE EASY. Philadelphia, 1827. Issued in conjunction with "The New Valentine Writer." Boards, 45 p.p. 24mo.

As stated in the beginning of this article, due to the tireless energy of the early collectors and the great increase in the number of magical collections, there is a dearth of worth-while items for the present-day enthusiast. The building of a "working library," that is, a reference library for the practical performer, is simple enough; but to put together a collection of historical importance, to pick up the little brochure or pamphlet that had its ephemeral

existence fifty, seventy or one hundred years ago, is quite another matter. Along this line it is my pleasure to refer briefly to a number of present-day private collections in the United States, my unfamiliarity with British and Continental libraries making comparisons impracticable.

First and foremost is, of course, the justly famous collection of Mr. Harry Houdini, of New York City. Mr. Houdini has been an avid collector. For thirty years he has been adding to his constantly growing collection, and very few worth-while magical items escape his tenacious and discriminating search. Books from many lands, and in most languages, fill his shelves. But it is not alone with the accumulation of books that he has interested himself. The chief historical value of this remarkable collection lies in its programmes, lithographs, portraits, clippings, manuscripts and historical documents. For several years the arrangement of this vast accumulation of material was under the direction of a practical librarian, who carefully mounted the items, and indexed and cross-indexed them, with the result that information relating to magic or magicians, historical or bibliographical, is instantly available.

Another large collection is that of Mr. E. F. Rybolt, of Palms, California. His own individual efforts in picking up rare items over a long period have been amplified by the acquisition of other libraries, notably that of Dr. Wilson, editor of *The Sphinx*. This latter included many autographed

books, and association items. Mr. Rybolt's collection also contains many valuable scrap books, containing magical miscellany from all corners of the earth, gathered and compiled by the late H. J. Burlingame and others. However, in adding other collections to his own, Mr. Rybolt has accumulated a large number of items only remotely related to conjuring, many of which could not strictly be considered magical literature.

Another splendid collection belongs to Mr. John Mulholland, of New York City. Not inconsiderable in size, it is distinctive in that it consists almost entirely of books relating to Conjuring in the English language. Mr. Mulholland is a discriminating collector, and considering the fact he has been collecting less than a decade, his books rank in the fore-front of magical libraries in this country. It is particularly rich in the older English pamphlets with coloured plates.

Dr. Milton A. Bridges, of New York, has a fine collection of magical literature. Like the Mulholland Collection, it is composed entirely of English books. He, also, has hewn closely to the line in accumulating only items relating to Conjuring.

Another extensive collection, though with which I am less familiar, is owned by Mr. C. A. George Newmann, of Kenyon, Minn. Mr. Newmann is a professional hypnotist, and a close student of conjuring. He, like Mr. Houdini, has been collecting for many years. He belongs to the school of collectors that believe a library is incomplete unless

it contains the literature of other lands, and to this end he has accumulated many rare and interesting works in Spanish, French, German, Italian and Dutch. While not as extensive as the Houdini Library, it yet ranks with the large collections of magical literature in this country.

Dr. J. E. Pierce, of Philadelphia, is the owner of a very fine collection. While I have never had an opportunity of examining it, it is my understanding that it comprises several hundred items, the majority in English.

The collecting of books is a hobby exemplifying many virtues — in particular patience, discrimination, foresight and energy. If these or similar virtues were practiced in the writing and production of books on the subject of Conjuring, magical literature would in time be accorded the respectful attention of bibliographers, and take its proper place in the writings of the day.

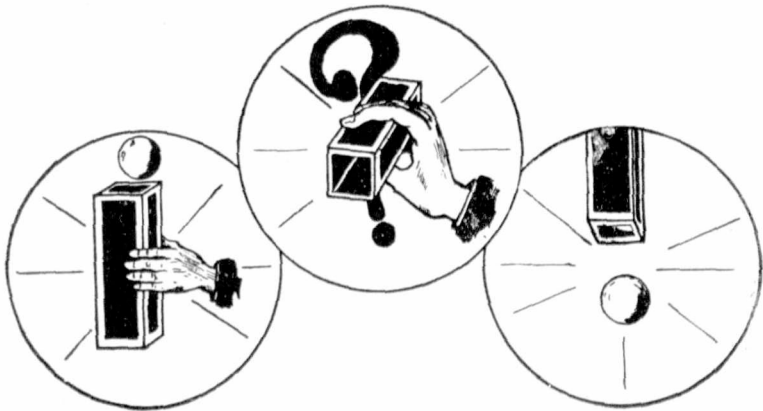




SPOOKY—OOKUM.

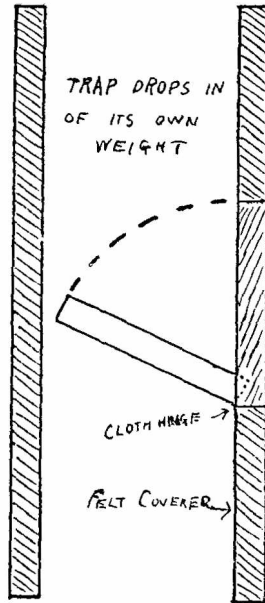
This trick consists of a square wooden tube, into which is dropped a solid billiard ball. The ball instantly vanishes. That is magic.

Without going into details of the various combinations that can be worked with this splendid piece of apparatus, we will confine ourselves to the secret of the above effect.



As the illustrations make quite clear, a trap is cut in the back of the tube. In presentation the performer would show the tube empty, and pass his wand through it. He would then drop the ball through several times, catching it at the other end

as it falls out, remarking about the laws of gravity which would make it impossible for the ball to do otherwise. Then, allowing the trap to fall in, he finally drops the ball in; but it vanishes. What has happened is that the ball simply rolled out of the back into performer's hand, where it remains hidden. Without any suspicious movements, the tube is immediately shown empty, for — in showing —



the flap is allowed to fall back into position. As the tube is held in the left hand, with the first and second fingers on the far side, and the thumb on the near side, it is obvious that this allows the third and fourth finger to catch the falling ball, and press

it into the palm where it is completely hidden.

The right hand could have pretended to catch the ball, and whilst apparently holding it, the left hand places tube on table — secretly dropping the ball into a black art well.

This is one of those simple effects that happens to be wonderfully practical; and it can be used for the vanish of silks, and other articles.



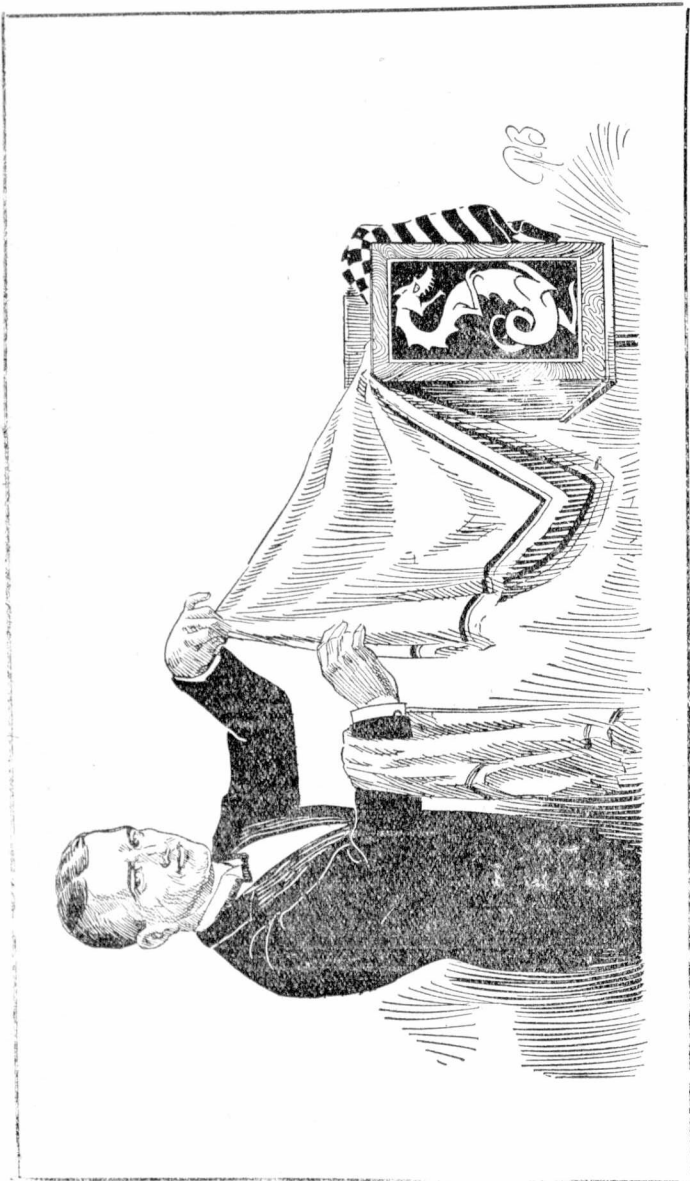
THAYER'S DROP MODEL PRODUCTION CABINET.

This most mysterious and charming production effect is very *simple to perform*, and can be used to equal advantage both on the stage and in the parlour.

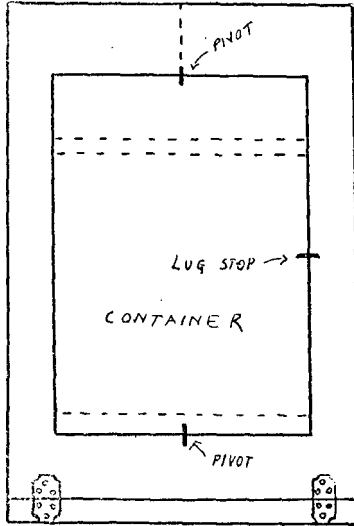
At the start, the performer loads the chamber for the production with all manner of things, such as silks, ribbons, flowers, fruit, a rabbit or whatever he desires. The top of this chamber is then closed and the catch fixed in place.

All sides of the cabinet are now let down, the side containing the load being to the front. The cabinet in this condition is setting towards the back of the stage.

The performer then steps to it, passing on the right side of the cabinet, and with the left hand



takes hold of the side nearest himself, and with the right hand takes the other side. Now, moving towards the front, the cabinet is turned around, and



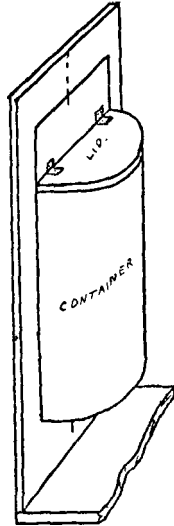
set down so that the load is hanging to the rear. In this way, and without calling attention to the fact, the cabinet is shown on all sides.

The performer then steps to it, and takes his position with his left side to the cabinet, and reaching over, lifts up the side farthest away from himself, and this side he holds up with the right hand, while the left hand brings up the back with load. By means of the catch these two are held together.

Now the side nearest himself is brought up, and hooked to the back. The right hand then brings up the front, and as it comes against the two sides

with a rather loud noise, the fingers of the left hand pushes the load around to the inside.

The cabinet can now be turned clear around, and finally in a position with the load facing the front,



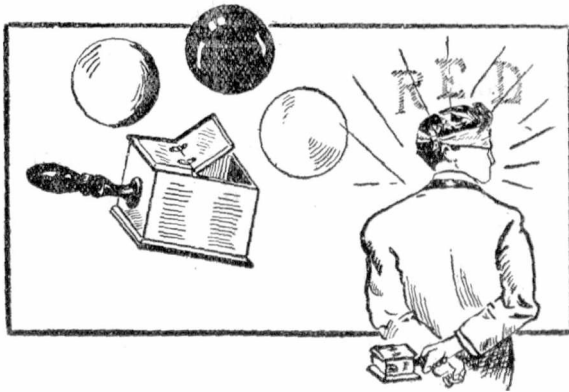
but of course on the inside. The lid is opened, and the production started. At any time during the course of the trick, the cabinet can be turned around, and otherwise shown to be empty.



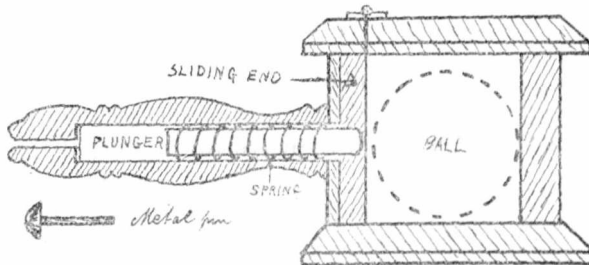
THAYER'S GREAT BALLOT BOX MYSTERY.

A small ballot box, and three balls of different colours. The three balls are handed to a person

who is requested to place one of the balls in the box while the performer holds same by the handle behind his back. The lid is closed, but no sooner done than the performer instantly names the colour



of the ball in the box. The trick can be prolonged to any extent, the box and balls being examined as much as desired.



Upon close inspection it will be observed that there is a slight variation in the size of the balls, and thus the real secret of the trick. But how?

The handle of the box is an ingenious piece of mechanism. It contains a spring plunger which is

attached to a movable panel inside of the box proper.

Now the performer can readily tell by pressure on key inserted in end of handle, the length of thrust required to determine the correct ball in the box according to size. Very little practice is necessary in order to guage the slight difference to a certainty.

In addition to this secret arrangement, there is also a small metal plunger, or key, which is used only during the actual demonstration of the trick. The key is kept concealed in the hand during the time the box and three balls are undergoing inspection; after which it is a simple matter to secretly insert the key in position, and proceed with the effect.

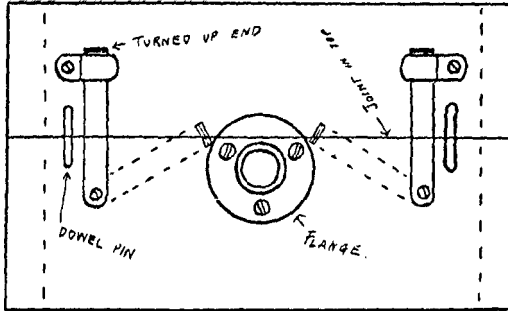


THAYER'S TWO PIECE TABLE TOP.

A notion that might prove interesting to readers of this section, is the idea of a two piece table top. By this very simple arrangement a fairly large size top may be reduced to proportions suitable for ordinary suitcase convenience.

There is more or less of a difficulty to be met with when it comes to hinging a table top so as to fold neatly in two parts, and especially if the top happens to be that of the Black Art variety.

In the method that we herewith suggest, however, the simple arrangement is very easy to grasp, and is more satisfactory than anything we have seen in the way of a top where the two parts are joined by hinges.



Reference to the sketch will make all details clear, and we feel sure that those who wish to try out this idea will more than appreciate the advantages derived.



GATHERING LAURELS.

There are very few conjurers who have not seen Okito. Many years ago he performed in England with a dwarf partner under the names of *Okito & Polising*.

One can easily imagine his life — travelling all over the world, performing in the afternoons and evenings, staying at different hotels or lodgings, and possibly spending his few leisure hours with Agents, or magician friends.

He is a splendid performer, both at sleight of hand and apparatus; but he seems to confine his act chiefly to old tricks. One could hardly call an act original that contained the Fishing Rod trick, vases of water and other productions from his Chinese costume, shower of feather darts, floating ball, and numerous tricks of the stock order. All the same, it is mighty interesting, specially as it is cleverly presented. Most of the apparatus used can be traced to various makers, and dealers, by anyone in the line, and little of it suggests *home make*; but all of it is well cared for in such a manner that seems to indicate the thoughtful attentions of a woman.

I will let it go at that, and take it for granted that you know as much about Okito and his act as I do.

Well, one Sunday evening he appeared at a concert held at the *Magician's Club*, London; and Harry Houdini was in the Chair. In announcing Okito, Houdini described him as "the world's greatest living mechanic." So that the audience should not miss the point, he repeated it with extra emphasis:- THE WORLD'S GREATEST LIVING MECHANIC."

* * * * *

Now I am waiting to hear what Okito calls Houdini.



TRAGIC MAGIC.

BY

HARRY LEAT.



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THE MAGICIAN MONTHLY.—In “Tragic Magic” Mr. Leat has given us that rare treat—something off the beaten track in Magical Literature. Mr. Leat is nothing if not outspoken, and he stands in the peculiar position of being quite apart from the ordinary considerations which govern publications of this sort. Mr. Leat is his own printer and publisher, and his own master, and he can, therefore, beat his own drum, blow his own trumpet, or bestow praise or blame where he wills, and with none to say him nay; and if he is sometimes inclined to flog a dying horse he is equally ready to bow to his audience, whip in hand, with his signature tied to the tail of his lash—and that sort of honest belabouring is sometimes more praiseworthy than the guarded utterances and qualified disapproval meted out by some; or the cowardly attacks hidden behind the rampart of an unsigned article or beneath the thin disguise of a *nom de plume*.

There is this to be said, there is nothing in the way of self-praise in the books which come from his pen, and if the contents reveal a somewhat mordant wit . . . he produces some fine sparks in the process which you may not always approve, but which curl the corners of your mouth, and produce a chuckle in your throat, nevertheless.

Much of the book is occupied by verse of an amusing nature, and having deeper meaning than one is, at first sight, inclined to credit. Of the actual conjuring articles, “The Miser,” “Almost Magic,” “The Falling Table,” and “The Lunar Rays,” all call for notice and commendation, being rich in suggestion and apparently practical. “My Hat” is another excellent idea.

Other articles which are noteworthy are a clever ventriloquial sketch, and a suggestion for an act which is novel indeed; and, in capable hands, perfectly workable. An article upon the misuse of small animals in conjuring is timely and outspoken, as is the tone of the whole book. Interspersed throughout the book are humorous articles which will give rise to considerable hilarity in all those afflicted, like the author, with a real sense of humour. The author has the courage of his convictions, and for this reason alone his books are widely read.

THE SPHINX.—And here is another one that awakens my cerebration—Harry Leat’s “Tragic Magic.” Here is a book of 122 pages of the queerest conglomeration of sense and non-sense, good magic and irrelative matter—yet relating to magic—that has yet crossed my rugged editorial path. The table of contents lists 42 items, and I advise the purchaser of the book not to skip a single one of them. I do not know why the book is named “Tragic Magic,” for the magic it contains is far from

tragic ; it is live and wholesome. "The Vanishing Pail of Water" out Hovens Van Hoven, and would be a scream in his hands. . . . All of Harry Leat's books are worth possession and reading, and "Tragic Magic" is not the least by any means.

CONJURER'S CHRONICLE.—To write and print six books on magic in eighteen months, is, we believe, a record. Yet this is what Harry Leat has accomplished, and he continues to give us 100 per cent. value for money in book value.

"Tragic Magic" contains some excellent items, and the author who in the past has contributed chiefly humorous effects proves that he can write "straight" or "serious" stuff ; in fact "The Lunar Rays" should prove very weird and thrilling, and is of the real Grand Guignol order. "Almost Magic" or "The Rainbow Waters" is a wonderful effect, and the cost of working practically nil.

THE MAGICAL OBSERVER.—Harry Leat's latest ("Tragic Magic") ranks about his best. There are too many items to mention singly, but they are all worthy of attention. Mr. Leat's lucid descriptions leave nothing to be desired. One of the most pleasing features of the book is the thoroughly enjoyable lilt which appears to infect the Author's writings. One seems to live in a particularly bright atmosphere all through—and this is as it should be. His poetry won't bring him a knighthood, but it amuses, and probably it is there for such. We read again of the Magic Circle, and if the attention they receive is not to their liking, the remedy lies in their own hands.

Extract from letter dated 20th February, 1925.—Dear Mr. Leat, . . . As a passionate lover of all animals—especially domestic ones—I am sending you a line to congratulate you upon your fearless article, "Tragic Blots on Magic" which appears in your last work. In all the five thousand volumes of works on magic which I possess, nothing I have read has given me greater pleasure than your plea for our dumb friends. . . . (Signed) Harry Price.

THE MAGIC WAND.—It is with something like a sigh of regret one lays down the book. . . .

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INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD
OF
MAGICIANS.

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J O I N T H E



N O W.

LIST OF HARRY LEAT'S BOOKS.

THOUGHTFUL MAGIC.

MAGIC OF THE DEPOTS - 1923.

FORTY YEARS IN & AROUND MAGIC.

DIVERSIFIED MAGIC.

MAGIC OF THE DEPOTS - 1924.

TRAGIC MAGIC.

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