



Part
One.

Modus Operandi

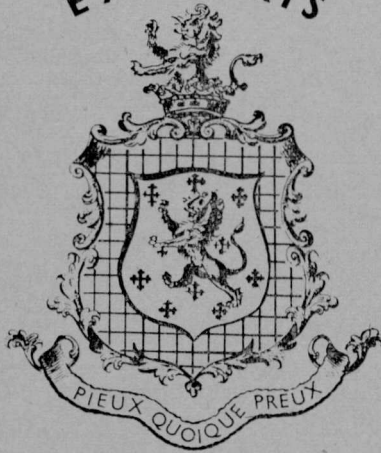
by
ERIC C. LEWIS

with
Illustrations by "Laurie"



MODUS OPERANDI.

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MODUS OPERANDI

(STUDIED, TESTED AND
MASTERED MAGIC).

DEMON



SERIES

BY ERIC C. LEWIS

AUTHOR OF "STUDIES IN MYSTERY" "MORE
STUDIES IN MYSTERY" "FURTHER MAGICAL
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MODUS OPERANDI

“Modus Operandi; such is the Latin expression that has been adopted in the modern parlance of magicians to refer to a studied, tested and mastered method for presenting an illusion.”

(G. G. LAURENS, in *The Sphinx*, 1915)

HENCE THE TITLE OF THIS BOOK.

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FOREWORD

This is a book with a guarantee; a guarantee that every item with one exception has been mastered and tested by myself. It has not been long since the three "Studies in Mystery" books have been written, but this does not mean that the routines in this book are the hasty concoction of the past few months, rather are they the result of many years of Studying, Testing and Mastering.

The book is practically a reply to a challenge. It was from a prominent conjurer who wishes to remain anonymous who commented that when a writer has written some nine or ten books on conjuring, there must be a decrease in the quality of the effects because the best material of the writer will have been used in the earlier works. So I wrote this book to top all that I have previously written. Many of the items described have been "up my sleeve" over a very long period and kept for my own shows. They have not been performed at Magic Clubs to prevent the fate that befalls so many original effects thus demonstrated. Quite a number were reserved for marketing, but war-time conditions constrained me to now release them.

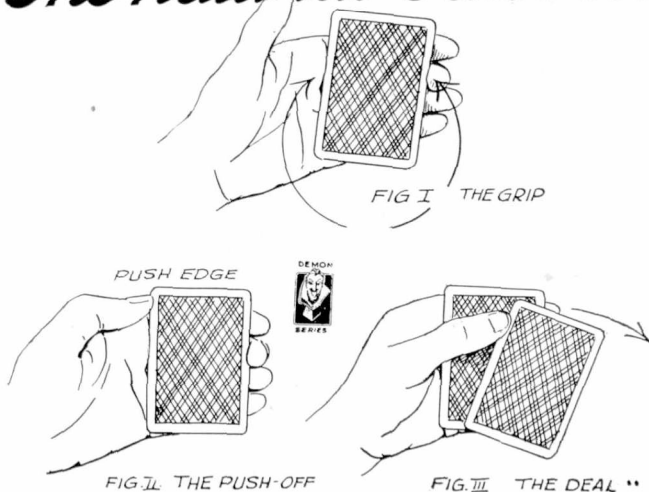
It was my intention in the first place to include only my own tricks, but so much really excellent material has been given to me by reputable performers, that I decided to include some of them. Mine and your thanks are due to these contributors. For example, look at "Commandos" which created so much interest at the Magic Circle Social when performed by Mr. Wilfred Tyler; also his Candid Camera. Look too at Mr. Steele's "Swings and Roundabouts," Mr. Beattie's "Card Guillotine," Mr. Harry Lewis's "Hypnotising a Rabbit" and other such effects. Are not these worthy of your profound consideration?

As in my "Studies" series, all effects in this present book are complete in themselves. They are not mere tricks, gadgets, or "moves." Each one has been carefully routinized and described in full to bring out the correct methods of presentation, and in all cases, entertainment value has been very carefully considered. With the routines in this book you will entertain as well as mystify.

ERIC C. LEWIS,

(March, 1944)

The Natural False Count



CHAPTER ONE

THE "LEWIS" NATURAL FALSE COUNT

Suppose I were to hand you a packet of cards and ask you to count them. How would you do it? Would you immediately hold the packet partly concealed in your hand, hold the arm out at an unnatural angle, and then slide the cards from the bottom one by one? You would be crazy or very eccentric if you did.

That is my criticism of the regular method of performing the false count for the six-card repeat effect, which we see everyone doing. To overcome this, various faked methods have been introduced, some very good, others not so good. As this false count has several possibilities other than the usual six-repeat routine, I devised a perfectly natural method of counting, and so good is this that it has fooled many expert conjurers even at close quarters.

The effect is that a packet of cards is held in the left hand just as though about to deal the cards, and they are then thumbed one by one into the opposite hand in exactly the same way that you **would** normally count cards if you were asked. Yet it is a false count with which you can perform any of the popular six-card repeat routines.

I shall commence this chapter by a detailed lesson in how to make this count. An actual demonstration is far more convincing than a written description, so should any of my readers

meet me at any time, hand me a pack of cards and I will gladly demonstrate, circumstance and time permitting.

After the description of the sleight, I shall detail several possible effects, most of which get away from the regular "three away and six left" routines. From these you should be able to devise still further effects. I can give a number of repeat shows in the same place and perform the famous repeat trick each time, but without the audience recognising it as being the same thing. As some of these are based on published ideas, or given to me for my own personal use, I cannot disclose them all. The selection in this chapter, however, should prove extremely useful.

THE NATURAL COUNT

The reader is advised to take in his hand a small packet of playing cards. About ten cards will be best to practice with, then when a fair degree of proficiency has been attained, the quantity can be increased to the usual eighteen or fifteen as used in six-repeat effects.

The initial grip of the cards is important, and must be practised. It is perfectly natural in appearance, but the grip serves the important function of keeping the packet securely squared while the count is being made, as this is a vital part of the action. A reference to Fig. 1 will show just how the packet is gripped. It is placed slightly diagonally across the **fingers** (not the palm) and then the second, third and fourth fingers press on the edge of the packet pressing it into the fleshy part at the base of the first and second fingers. The forefinger lies loosely under the top outer corner of the packet, just touching it underneath. The drawing shows the thumb pulled back to give a clear view of the grip; in practice the hand is doubled a little in a more natural position and the thumb rests lightly on the left upper corner.

With the thumb in this position (shown in Fig. 2), press downwards and sideways on the top card so it slides to one side. It will not slide level, but tilt as shown in Fig. 3. As the card is slid forward, it will be found that the forefinger which has been lightly lying under the right upper corner can feel the edge of the packet and can prevent more than one card being pushed aside. The card glides over the fingertips which still grip the edge of the packet. It may be necessary (as it is in my case) to let the little finger partly release its grip to allow the card to slide, but so long as the packet is kept firmly squared, this does not matter.

Now suppose we wish to count this packet of about ten cards, so they appear to be only six cards. Take the card just thumbed off, into the right hand. The packet remains squared in the left. Thumb off another three cards one by one into the hand so the right contains four cards.

In taking the fifth, it is necessary to thumb off **all** the remaining cards except one single card which remains in the left hand. This is the part than requires a fair degree of practice, but once the "knack" is acquired, the move becomes very easy. As each previous card was thumbed off, the thumb returned to the same position at the top left corner of the packet. Now with the thumb in this position, try this. **Squeeze** all the cards except the bottom one of the packet towards the right in exactly the same action as counting the single cards. "Squeeze" is the best description I can give of the move. The thumb presses firmly so the tip of the thumb lies partly on the top corner of the packet and partly on the edge of the cards. It will be found that the bottom card is held by friction against the forefinger if the thumb squeezes down on the edge of the packet and all the cards will be neatly pushed aside except for the bottom one. This is immediately taken into the right hand with the other four.

The last single card is then flicked with the thumb of the left hand holding it, and placed into the right with the other "five."

Practise this "squeeze" until you can push the packet across easily. Do not worry if the packet does not remain perfectly squared; a slight fanning of this packet is easily covered in the rhythm of the count. Perhaps I should have mentioned that the grip of the fingers on the outer edge of the packet should be relaxed while pushing the packet across, but if you are trying this as you read, you will already have found that is necessary.

So much for the mechanical action of the sleight. Learn this first; you will find that most likely you will hesitate when thumbing across the packet. This is in order while learning the move, but it is vitally important that this should not be so when actually using the count. Learn the move, then practice the count swiftly, counting one, two, three, four, five and six and with not the tiniest pause between four and five. The motion must be the same in every case, and the speed must be constant throughout. That is the **real** secret of the count, and which makes it so extremely illusive, that I have shown it half-a-dozen times before an experienced performer before he spotted what was happening. Do not ruin the thing for myself and others by doing this hesitantly; gain the natural swift facility for counting them, then use it.

THE NAP PLAYER'S DREAM

This routine is ideally suited for the conjurer who has just learnt my own method of the count as just described, as there are not many cards to handle. Furthermore, the effect makes an excellent variation on the usual six-card routine and give possibilities for a good patter story. The routine was devised by Mr. Reg Gayton of my home town, and is published here with his permission.

The conjurer patters to the effect that he had a strange dream the other night. He was in the Pig and Whistle (use a localised "pub") and was asked to play a game of nap. This he agreed to do, and the dealer dealt cards to each of the four players.

All was normal so far, but then a peculiar thing happened. The first player took up his cards, counted them and finding he had six cards, took away one of little value and put it into his pocket, which did not seem "quite the thing." (The performer counts six cards and puts one in his pocket.)

Then the second player took his cards and counted them. He also had six cards, so he took away one of little value and placed that in his pocket. (The performer counts the same packet as six cards again, and places the sixth one in his pocket.)

The third player, not to be outdone, counted his cards and he also had six, so he placed one in his pocket. (Again performer counts the packet as six cards and places last one in his pocket.)

Then the conjurer, thinking all this very queer, counted his cards, but he only had five. However, not to be outdone, but rather to do things in a better and bigger way, he takes one, two, three cards from his five, all three of which were no value to him. And that left him with only two cards, the Ace and the King of Spades.

But when the players each laid out their hands, the performer merely flicked the corner of his packet and he had five again, the Ten, Jack, Queen, King and Ace of Spades, and so scooped the pool.

Modus Operandi.

The "natural false count" is, of course used, in conjunction with a set-up packet. Set up a packet of cards in the following order face up and reading from top to bottom: 6D, JS, 8D, KS, QS, 3C, 2D, 10S, 5C, AS, 4H. The Six of Diamonds is at the face of the packet. Bend these to form a "bridge" and place them face down on top of the pack, and place the pack in its case. Now to work the routine:—

1. Remove the pack from the case and cut off a few

from the top, cutting at the bridge so the stacked eleven cards are held in the hand.

2. False-count this packet, face down, as six cards in the manner described previously, pushing the large packet over on the count of "five." Take the top card (Six of Diamonds) and place it into the pocket.

3. Again false-count the packet as six cards in the same manner, and again place the top card (Four of Hearts) into the pocket.

4. For the third time count the packet as six cards, using the "count" and put the top card (Two of Diamonds) into the pocket.

5. Count the remaining packet as five cards, using the false-count, but pushing the large packet across on the count of "four" instead of "five" as previously. Take the top three cards one by one and place into the pocket. These are the Eight of Diamonds, Three of Clubs and Five of Clubs.

6. Keeping the remaining packet well squared, turn them to face the audience and draw back the top card only to show on two cards, the Ace of Spades and the King of Spades.

7. Square up this packet, flick the corner with the fingers, and then fan them to show five cards—a real nap hand.

Simple though this routine is, with the patter along the lines indicated, you have an effect that will register well with an audience.

"A LITTLE TRICK WITH EIGHT CARDS—"

This item may not be everyone's "meat," but I can personally get it over in good style, and I have no doubt many of my readers will also do so. It depends upon the false count for the working, but largely upon the performer's histrionic powers for its effect upon the audience. If the performer can portray first a careless "it doesn't matter" attitude, then perplexity, then gentle annoyance, then bland assurance followed by intense disgust, and then annoyance increasing slowly to a pitch where the performer slings the cards away from him angrily and turns to another trick for comfort, then he will get this over. Without a spot of acting, the item will fall flat. Incidentally the effect is admirably suited for the conjurer who also comperes.

Bear in mind the changing emotions of the performer as I describe the effect. The performer enters holding a packet of cards (if a compere), or picks them up from the table during an ordinary show. He addresses the audience thus: "A little trick with eight cards, one two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight . . . nine!" He looks mildly surprised as he counts and finds nine cards, but with a "no matter" manner, he throws the odd card away and begins again. "A little

trick with eight cards, one, two, three, four, etc., up to nine again! Slightly perplexed he tosses this aside, and without addressing the audience, looks curiously at the cards and counts them as though to satisfy himself. Again he has nine cards.

The ninth card he throws a little more vigorously to the stage and then very rapidly counts the cards, to once again find nine cards. In disgust he flings the odd card away again, and makes as though to count again, but pauses, and then looking at someone in the front row of the audience asks him pleadingly if he will count the cards for him out loud. The packet is handed down and the spectator counts eight cards. "You are sure?" enquires the performer, "Count them again." This done, he takes back the cards and then in a confident manner addresses the audience. "Ladies and gentlemen, a little trick using eight cards, one, two, three, etc., up to NINE! Confidence changing to uncertainty he tells the spectator he is no better than the performer is and throws the ninth card away.

Then in rapid succession he counts the cards, each time finding nine and throwing the ninth away, until in sheer desperation he throws the whole packet aside and says "I'll try a little trick using a silk handkerchief" (or whatever is next on the programme). Or if compering, he announces the next item in a resigned manner.

Modus Operandi.

There is very little for me to tell here. The whole presentation lies in the way it is "put over." The "natural false count" must be used, of course, and a few extra cards are added to the packet.

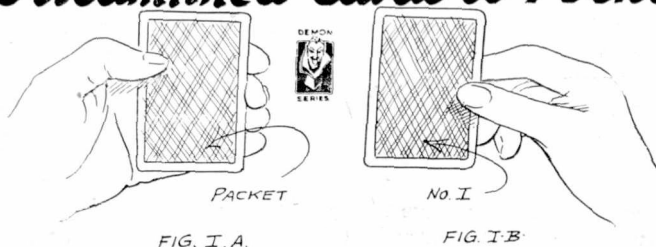
My own plan is to commence with twelve cards in my hand and an extra four in a clip under the right bottom edge of my jacket when in lounge suit, or on the right side of the trousers beneath the tails in dress.

The false count is used to show the cards as nine each time until there are actually nine cards. Then the odd one is thrown aside and the eight given out for counting. As the left hand offers the cards, the right steals the extra four. On receiving back the eight cards, they are held by the edges in the right hand, gripped by the thumb and forefinger with no attempt yet to add the palmed cards.

The spectator is then addressed and asked to confirm that there are only eight cards, and it is at this moment that the left hand comes up to take the packet, and the left fingers go under the palmed card and slide them up on to the eight cards, making a packet of twelve again for further false counting as in the "effect."

"I have described the adding of the cards in detail because I have found the misdirection good. You can, of course, use your usual method if you have one.

Streamlined Cards to Pocket



A "STREAMLINED" CARDS TO POCKET

Many of the popular effects take up too much time and give too much repetition for certain types of shows in these modern days. The short act on the legitimate stage, short cabaret acts and other such shows where time counts, prevents the performance of many very popular effects. Thus there has recently developed a vogue for "streamlining" such effects.

Al Baker speeds up the sympathetic silks by using four silks instead of six in a special two-minute routine. I can get a full effect out of a regular set of linking rings in just under three minutes, and likewise with the cups and balls. Charles Harrison has a five-ring linking routine. Now I introduce you to the streamlined cards to pocket. Usually one uses twelve cards and passes them one by one to the trousers pocket. The following routine uses only six cards, but has the full effect of the twelve, and also introduces several novel points in handling. The whole effect can be done in two minutes if desired, or one can make it last longer by more leisurely handling if you must make your tricks "hang out."

I have used this effect for over three years at the time of writing, but I must mention that Frederick Culpitt has also apparently been working along the same lines, as he described a similar item in the Magic Wand about a year ago. However, as we differ in many points of presentation, and as I intend to give a detailed "lesson" in how to handle this routine, I feel justified in publishing it. Take the trouble to master this, and you will have a card effect for the platform that you will not want to part with.

The effect is that six cards are counted from the pack, slowly and deliberately. The right pocket of the trousers is shown empty. A flick of the cards in the left hand and one appears in the trousers pocket. The cards in the left hand are counted and only five cards are left.

Immediately, and without any sleights whatever, the five cards are flicked and one more card passes to the pocket, leaving only four in the hand. This goes on one by one, the packet being quickly counted each time a card is sent to the pocket, until only one card is left in the left hand, and is, say, a Six of Clubs. This is covered with a silk, the silk is shaken and the Six of Clubs vanishes. The right hand is shown empty and the Six of Clubs, the last card, is removed from the trousers pocket.

Modus Operandi.

Sleight-of-hand enters largely into the working, and this is facilitated by other minor devices. It is a good example of how the "natural false count" can be used as a subsidiary sleight in routines entirely divorced from the "repeat" type of effect. Included in this routine are several other sleights which will be of interest, including a "put-back false count" which closely imitates the "Natural false Count" but fulfils another purpose.

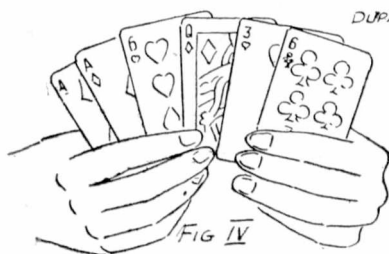
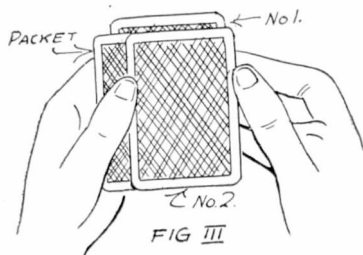
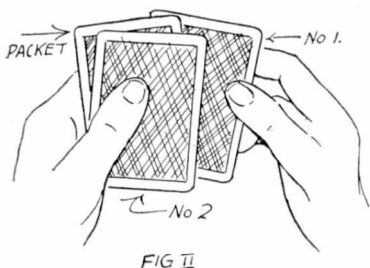
Let me describe this "put-back" count first. It requires practice, as does the "natural" count, but is not really too difficult. Its purpose is the reverse of the "natural" count inasmuch as the latter shows a larger number of cards as a smaller number, while the "put-back" count makes a smaller number appear larger. Practice the sleight until it is practically impossible to distinguish it from the "natural" count.

The position for holding the cards to be counted is slightly different from the "natural" count. Suppose you wish to count five cards to appear as six. Hold the five cards face down in the left hand ready for dealing in the position shown in Fig. 1A. It is a similar position to that before explained, but is slightly more forward and the finger-tips only touch lightly on the outside edge instead of gripping firmly as in the "natural" count. The top card is thumbed over to the right fingers which grip it lightly as in Fig. 1B.

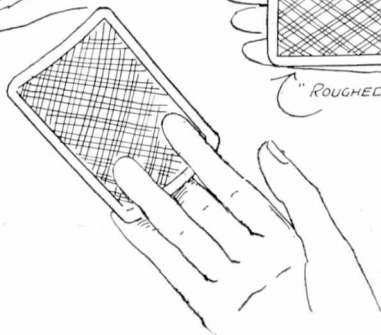
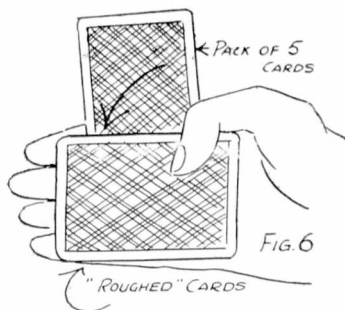
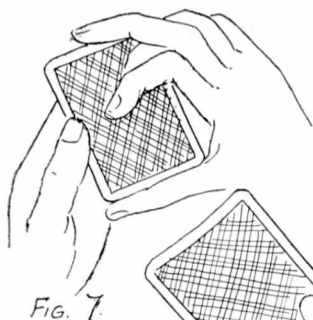
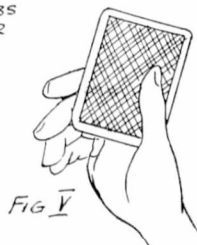
Now comes the false move which puts this first card back into the packet as the second card is counted off. The left hand thumbs off a card towards the right. The right hand comes to take it, and as it does so, the fingers of the left hand contract slightly under the packet of cards it holds so the left side of the first card (No. 1) can be slid underneath the packet (Fig. 2). Immediately the right fingers straighten pushing this card well under the packet and the right thumb grips the second card (Fig. 3) and draws it away, counting "two." Follow this with the unhesitating counting of the remainder of the cards from the left to right and you will appear to have six cards instead of five. The principle of continuity of movement holds good with this, and there must not be the slightest pause when making the false move. Simply count, one, two, three, four, five and six rapidly and you have done it.

Two cards can be counted as three in exactly the same manner. Get this right as it is used in the following routine.

Before commencing the routine you will require a double



Duplicate
SIX OF CLUBS
TOGETHER



silk handkerchief with a slit in one side to vanish a card, and a duplicate of one of the cards (let us say a Six of Clubs). With roughing fluid rough the back of an **indifferent** card and

the face of another indifferent card. Then stack them on top of the pack in the following order: first the rough-backed card, then the rough-faced card. Then three indifferent cards on top and finally the two duplicate Six of Clubs on top of all. All cards are face down. We will now go through the routine by numbers.

1. Count six cards from the pack into the right hand one by one reversing their order. Actually seven cards are dealt as on the count of "six" the two roughed cards are dealt together as one card, the roughing facilitating this.

2. The six cards are spread into a fan to show six cards all different. To do this hold the cards in the grip exactly as for the "natural count" described at the beginning of this chapter, but with the hands held up so the audience can see the faces of the cards. Keep the packet well squared and thumb the cards across one by one into a fan. In doing this separate the roughed cards, but keep the two Six of Clubs firmly in the flesh grip so only one is seen. Fig. 4 shows the audience view-point of this.

3. Close up the cards, hold in the left hand and with the right hand pull out the lining of the right trousers pocket and leave it hanging out while you make the following move.

4. Take the packet in the right hand while you remind the audience you have six cards. Tell them you will hold them in the left hand and then make them pass one by one to the pocket. As the cards were transferred back from the right to the left, the back two cards (the roughed ones) are palmed in the right hand.

You can use your favourite method if you have one, but even if you have, I recommend that you try the move I am about to describe, and for which was necessary to "Rough the two Cards." When you take the packet in the right hand, hold it in the position shown in Fig. 5. The hand is extended to the right of the body to exhibit the cards and the sketch shows the audience's view-point. The cards are gripped firmly with the lower corner in the crotch of the thumb and the opposite edge gripped by the second and third fingers.

The right hand now swings round to place the packet of cards into the left hand, and it turns back to the audience as it does so and the thumb, which in Fig. 5 will be noted to be lying along the long edge of the top card, pivots downwards carrying the top two cards level with the palm as in Fig. 5. Try this with ordinary cards and you will find that just one card slides down. Hence the roughing as it is necessary to pull both cards down. The left hand immediately takes the protruding packet and the two cards remain palmed in the right hand in the most unsuspected manner.

5. The right hand pushes the lining of the trousers back and leaves the two palmed cards therein.

6. The left thumb riffles the packet of cards in the usual way, then the right hand is shown empty and removes one of the cards from the trousers pocket, placing it aside.

7. The cards in the left hand are now counted (reversing their order) and shown to be five cards, which there actually are.

8. The cards are riffled by the thumb and the right hand removes the other card from trousers pocket and places it aside. Then removes the lining, leaves it hanging out and then shows four cards only in the left hand by using the "natural false count." This puts the duplicate sixes on the bottom of the packet.

9. The right hand replaces the cards in the left after the count, and under cover of squaring them up, the left thumb pulls the two face cards (the sixes) aside and the right hand palms in the usual way, the top three indifferent cards.

10. The right hand replaces the lining, leaving the three cards behind while the left holds out the two sixes, ostensibly the packet of four cards.

11. Another riffle of the cards and the third passes. The right hand removes one from the pocket and then the two sixes are counted face down using the "put-back" count to make them appear as three cards. This must be done swiftly and easily as you have only two cards to play with. Properly executed this is a very good move.

12. Riffle the cards again, pull another from the pocket and count the remaining cards in the left hand as two cards.

13. The next is a cheeky move, but one which you should be able to get away with. Riffle the two cards keeping them nicely squared, produce the fifth card from the pocket and place with the others, removing the lining again and leaving it hanging, while the two sixes are shown as a single card and flicked. This "flick" is difficult to describe, but as it is so very useful in all effects where a double-lift is required, I will detail it here.

The two cards are held in the left hand by the thumb along the left edge and the fingers on the right edge. The cards are neatly squared together. The right hand comes to take it, placing the thumb on the bottom narrow edge, the second finger on the centre of the top edge and the first and third fingers resting on the back of the cards about an inch from the top. (Fig. 7.) The cards are removed from the left hand, the right hand turned thumb upwards and the second finger presses down on the face of the card, while the right thumb releases its edge. The card immediately "flicks" to the position shown in Fig. 8, and with very little practice it will be found that the two cards can be kept perfectly squared. The fact that the second finger pressing on the centre and the

forefinger and third finger pressing on the edges behind it, bends the cards and allows their being held as one. The "flick," too, is very convincing.

14. The fingers now bend the cards inwards so the thumb may regain its hold on the lower edge (Fig. 7) but now all three fingers lie along the upper edge. The two cards are placed on to the left hand, but the top one is drawn off into the right and palmed.

15. The left hand turns the card to face the audience and calls attention to its value, and under the misdirection caused by this, the right hand casually replaces the lining of the pocket, leaving duplicate card behind.

16. The double silk is taken and thrown over the card in the left hand, and card is inserted through the slit. Upon shaking out the silk, the card has vanished, and it is reproduced from the pocket.

All this may seem lengthy, but I have tried to give you the exact moves throughout. They blend into a smooth two or three minute routine which is a masterpiece of its kind. I may also be forgiven for taking so much space for this item because incorporated is another false count, an excellent "palm" and a convincing double lift, which will be of general utility to readers.



This is an effect which, with prescience of excellent clarity, I foresee becoming extremely popular. You have to again thank Mr. Wilfred Tyler who, in another part of this book, contributed his "Candid Camera" effect. I first saw Mr. Tyler perform this at a Magic Circle Social and it had such appeal that many conjurers wrote and congratulated him on the effect. I thus feel honoured, and you should feel grateful, that Wilfred gives it so freely for this book.

It is included in this chapter because it is based on the false count, and my "natural false count" is ideal for the purpose. The effect is simply the regular six-card repeat effect **in reverse**, but with a topical story and a surprise finale.

The story is topical at the time of writing, but as I sincerely hope this book will be in circulation for long after the present war is over, may I mention that even in the coming halycon days of peace, the story may be told in retrospect as a tribute to the bravery of the Commandos during the Second World War.

The patter as used by Mr. Tyler will be given, which amply tells the story of the effect; any needed details of actions on the part of the performer will be given in parenthesis during the story.

The Story.

"I should like to introduce you to these fifteen very brave men of the Commandos. (15 cards, each bearing a picture of a Commando is seen in a row on a stand similar to a fortress wall). With their permission I intend to illustrate an exploit in which they were engaged.

"As you are no doubt aware, these units of men used a peculiar shaped craft called 'landing barges' for their excursions to enemy territory. I propose to thrust upon you no alternative but to accept by left hand as being the craft in

question used in this particular trip. To assist you in this stretch of imagination, I will fix this armband around my left arm which will also, as you observe, preclude any possibility of the passage of fifth columnists entering the boat. (An armband marked with the word "CRAFT" is placed around the left arm.)

"Now, instructions were received for six men of this unit to proceed to their boat and together with certain equipment to journey to the coast of France to carry out a daring raid. The Officer in Command admired every one of his men but did not know which six men to take. He decided to line them up as you see and take the last six men in the line just to be different from the usual way of making a choice.

"He instructed these six men to go down to the beach and board the boat. (Six of the cards are placed one by one into the left hand face down.) The officer also came on board and counted the men. (Count six cards.)

"Whilst this was proceeding, the remaining nine men got together and aired their disappointment with one another. They decided that they would not be left out, and so decided upon a plan. Three of them crept down to the beach and slipped on to the boat aided by their high training in fieldcraft and camouflage. (Three more cards are taken from the row and added to the six in the left hand.) The latter stood them in good stead when the officer came on board and ran his eye over the men to make sure he had the requisite number. He still counted, one, two, three, four, five and six men.

"When the remaining six Commandos found that their three pals did not return, they guessed all was well and another three set out to join the happy throng. (Three more cards placed into the left hand.) These men also used their camouflage ability, and when the officer returned to the ship with other special equipment, he ran his eye over the men and found still only one, two, three, four, five, six of them.

"Finally the last three men set out for the great adventure and joined their pals on the boat. (The last three are placed into the hand.) The officer looked at his watch and then at his men, still counting one, two, three, four, five, six men.

"When the boat was half-way across the Channel, was he surprised! He found that instead of six men, he had, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen men! (Count the cards in the left hand.)

"The fifteen men carried out the operation with great success and returned to their base, where they found a flag had been hoisted to welcome them. (The stand is taken up



and a flag fitted to one end.) The officer lined all the men up to congratulate them. (The fifteen cards are set back out in a row on the stand using impromptu patter here and there such as "This fellow is married," "This one ought to be married," "This fellow **will** pick his teeth with a bayonet," and so on.)

"When they were all lined up, the crowds had collected around the gates of the fort to cheer the heroes. So the officer cried 'About turn!' and the people all shouted—'BRAVO, COMMANDOS!'" (The stand is turned round to show the faces of the cards and they are now found to be letter-cards spelling "Bravo Commandos," giving the effect shown in the heading of this article).

Modus Operandi.

You require a "fort" which is simply a strip of wood about 36-inches long with a groove along the top edge in which fifteen cards may be displayed. At one end is built a small model tower with a hole in the top in which a small rod which will bear a small Union Jack may be placed. Cover the stand with either the red or grey brick-paper which can be purchased from shops which sell modelling requisites or from paper-hanging suppliers. The sketch in the heading gives a good idea what these will look like.

Thirty blank playing cards will be required. Fifteen of these have boldly drawn upon them in Indian Ink the heads of Commandos. If you cannot draw these, an artist friend or a professional poster artist will do them for you at a small charge. The remaining fifteen cards are boldly lettered to spell the words BRAVO COMMANDOS, the odd card simply having a dot in the centre.

An armlet is required, which is simply a strip of card-

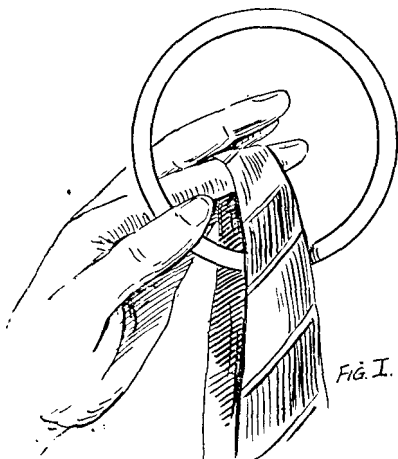
board about six inches long and two inches high bearing the word "CRAFT" and then bend into a semi-circle and joined with a length of elastic so that it can easily be slipped on to the coat sleeve just above the wrist.

A servante, black-art well, or any means of disposing of a packet of cards while setting it down on the table, is required. Suppose a simple bag servante is fitted to the back of the table. To prepare, place the fifteen lettered cards in the correct order face down on the table near the rear edge. Place the fifteen Commando cards in a row on the "fort" facing the audience and set the fort on the table in front of the packet of letter cards. The stand will no doubt be longer than the table, but if a wide base is used along the length of the bottom, it will stand quite firmly.

With the flag on pole and the armlet placed handy, you are ready to begin, and again, having described the effect in detail, and having given a detailed lesson in the "natural false count," little remains to be described.

Six cards are placed into the hand after the armlet has been placed into position. Each time three more Commando cards are added, the false count is used to show them as only six cards. When one arrives at the point in the patter when the craft is at sea and the fifteen men are discovered, the count is a normal count to show the fifteen.

Then the packet is placed down behind the stand at the same time that the stand is picked up with the opposite hand. The Commando cards are really dropped into the servante and the packet of letter-cards exposed. The flag is inserted into the end of the fort, the fort replaced and the letter-cards picked up. These are dealt in a row along the stand with backs towards the audience. When the officer calls "About turn," turn the stand to show the lettering and bring an entertaining effect to its conclusion.



The Cut Die

CHAPTER TWO

"AN ACT WITH THE OLD SCHOOL TIE"

Some time ago "Elliot" held a competition in the "Budget" of the British Ring in which members were invited to send effects using several items from a list he published. Later, having no response he "ribbed" members for being afraid of the list. This stung me so severely on Friday night, that I took his list of articles with me to my bath, and during the interval of soaking (the bath variety), the following routine was conceived. Later, the ideas were experimented with and polished to make an entirely practical and entertaining routine, and practice proved that this was no mere bath-dream.

I used the following items from his list: a tie, a six-inch nail, an eighteen-inch silk, a serviette ring, scissors, rubber band and fountain pen. Only in the following routine I have substituted a wand for the pen—indeed, any rod or stick could be used. There are four effects in all, each one separate, but all connected by a single patter theme.

THE ROUTINE WITH THE TIE.

The performer introduces a red and black striped tie. "You can tell from my accent," he announces, "that I am an old Narkovian. Here is my old school tie. It is not very old, as it has not been long since they let me out."

He then selects a helper from the audience by the process of getting a likely person to hold one end of the tie, and then invigling the person step by step on to the stage under

the pretence that this or that person in the audience cannot see properly. Having the victim established on the stage, the performer continues:—

“Narkover is an unusual college, and this is an unusual tie. It has been carefully trained to overcome the difficulties which beset Narkovians. One difficulty, for instance, lies in quickly removing one’s tie when the police might recognise it. Some ties get jammed, but let me show you how my tie sets about it.”

Performer takes a wand and asks the helper to hold it firmly by the ends. A few turns and the tie is tied firmly around the wand in a knot very similar to that used in the regular tie-knot, and it appears tight and genuine even under the closest scrutiny. Yet upon pronouncing the magic word “Narr-r-kover” (rolling the “r”) the tie comes smoothly away from the wand without the helper releasing the ends and without disturbing the knot. The knot is untied to show it is genuine.

“Sometimes the knot catches on one’s collar-stud,” resumes the entertainer, “and gets in no end of a tangle. A true Narkovian tie knows how to contend with such odds.” During this time he has retied a knot in the tie, using the regular knot-tie and leaving about a two-inch loop protruding from the top. (This is the loop which normally goes round one’s neck.) He then produces a wooden board, a six-inch (or smaller) nail and a hammer. He lays the tie on the board and gets the helper to nail the loop firmly to the board.

The spectator holds the board and the performer folds a silk and drapes it over the upper part of the board, covering the nail and top part of the board only. “When Narkovian ties are hampered by collar-studs,” says the performer, “we just say the magic word, ‘Nark-over’ and away it comes.” Performer pulls down on the visible end of the tie and it comes away unmarked by the nail. The silk is removed and the nail in the board left in the spectator’s hand for his inspection.

As the performer unties the knot, he continues to patter. “As you may have heard, Narkovians are fond of their little jokes. I will tell you of one of their favourite japes and how my tie was trained to foil them. Imagine that this serviette ring is a collar.” Here he removes a ring from his pocket and threads the end of the tie through the ring pulling the ring to the centre. “The tie is well and truly on the collar.” Performer grasps ring in one hand and pulls on the ends of the tie with the other with a series of sharp tugs.

“When one is standing talking, Narkovians are fond of sneaking up behind you with a pair of scissors and cutting one’s tie behind the collar so it drops off.” Performer inserts scissors in the loop of tie which passes through the ring, cuts through the tie, removes the ring and hands it to helper. “It is most embarrassing when that happens, but I have never lost

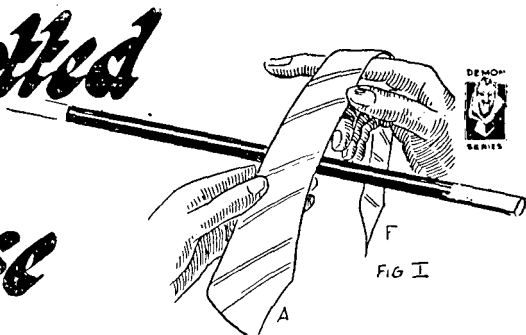
a tie. I just say the magic word "Na-Kover" and the tie just took it in it's stride." Performer shakes out the tie and shows it to be restored.

Slowly the conjurer commences to roll up the tie into a bundle and patters along these lines: "Near Narkover was a rival college known as Copsdowne and an intense feud reigned between the two pris— colleges. There was always a free fight when the men from one met the other. I hated this—always was suspicious of anything free—so I trained my tie to help me out." Having rolled the tie, the performer snaps a rubber band around it, deliberately covers the rolled tie with the silk (which should be a green one) and hands the bundle to the helper for him to hold.

"Whenever I met a Copsdownian, I simply say the magic word "Down-the-Cops" and for the time being I become a Copsdownian and go unmolested." With this he unveils the rolled tie, disclosing that instead of a red and black tie, he now has a green and black one, so bringing the series to a climax.

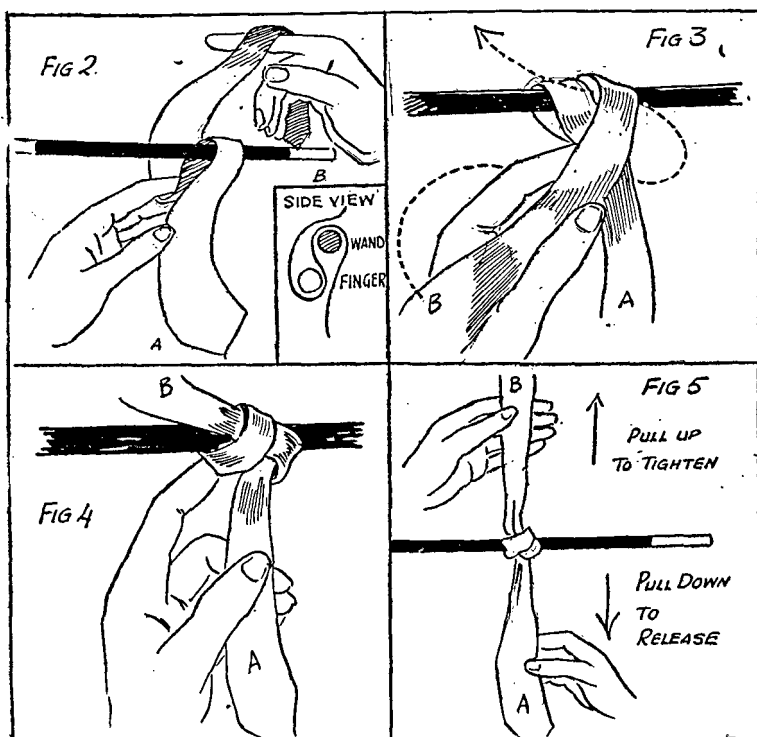
A number of novel methods of handling the apparatus are used in these effects, and we will describe each effect separately. It will be understood that they should all be joined together in a smooth, humorous series.

The Knotted Tie Release



THE KNOTTED TIE RELEASE

This is simply a faked knot. I experimented with several of the regular fake knots, but found none suitable for my particular requirements. Eventually I hit on the following, and after a little practice, found it perfect. I know it may not read too well because the principle is so very simple, but I can assure you that if the knot is tied slickly and without any fumbling, the knot is as puzzling as anyone could desire. My wife says it is good and that means plenty. I would prefer to show you this, so if any reader ever meets me, he is at liberty to remove his tie and I will show him just how it should be done. But here goes for a verbal description.



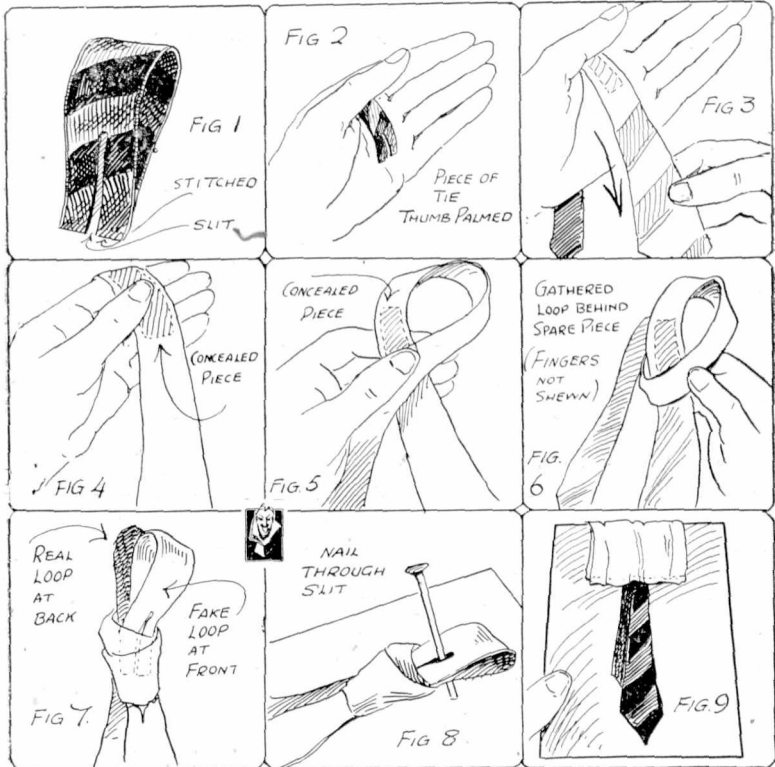
Hold the tie with the forefinger and thumb of both hands near the centre over the wand so that both ends of the tie hang down, one in front of the wand and one behind. (Fig. 1.) The narrow end of the tie (B) hangs at the back.

Pass both hands downwards as far as they will go **without letting loose of the tie**, so forming a loop over the wand with the fingers of both hands touching immediately below the wand. Immediately remove the left forefinger and grip both sides of the tie just under the wand and, without hesitation, the right hand brings end B back up again. This position is shown in Fig. 2. Without pausing, end B is carried over and passed diagonally across the **front** of the loop which has just been formed, where it is then gripped by the thumb of the left hand and the right leaves go. See Fig. 3.

Now pass end B around the back of the loop and then upwards through the bight that is thus formed. The dotted arrow in Fig. 3 shows this clearly. Pull end B upwards tightly and the left forefinger holds the secret loop at the back, from which it has not yet been removed. (Fig. 4.) As soon as the knot is formed, slip out the forefinger from the loop and pull downwards on end A, so that the secret loop is shortened and pulled inside the knot out of sight.

The next move is most convincing. Pull really hard on end B and not quite so hard on end A. So long as the pull on end B is superior to that on end A the knot will tighten. But by pulling more heavily on end A than on end B the knot will come away easily from the wand leaving the knot intact. Note how, when the knot is tied on to the wand, it looks perfectly genuine even if examined closely. I have found this a useful knot for many purposes and thank "Elliott" for giving me the incentive to work it out.

The Nailed Tie



THE NAILED TIE

This is difficult to describe, but easy in operation. A section is cut from the narrow part of a duplicate tie and is sewed into a loop about 2-inches long. A small slit is cut, about $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch in length, into the bottom edge as shown in Fig. 1. This is concealed about the person and thumb-palmed as in Fig. 2 at the correct moment after the first effect with the tie

was completed. I prefer to have it held by a small wire paperclip under the edge of my jacket on the left side.

With this palmed, drape the tie over the hand so the wide part covers the thumb-palmed piece, place the thumb over the tie and with the opposite hand, draw the tie downwards until the narrow part of the tie is just covering the fake loop. Fig. 3 shows the tie in the process of being pulled down. It will be found that the folds of flesh will prevent the piece from being dragged down with the tie. From this position, the right fingers grip the fake and tie and slide them to the left fingertips (Fig. 4) ready for tying the knot.

Now bend the hinder portion around the front and grip the portion where they cross with the left thumb and forefinger as in Fig. 5. Follow the next moves carefully. Transfer the tie to the right fingers while the left takes the narrow portion of the tie, forms a loop about 2-inches long and bends it up behind the tie so it lies flat behind the fake piece. Thus the fake piece is now sandwiched between the tie and the newly-formed loop. Fig. 6 shows this position, but the left fingers have been omitted from the drawing for the sake of clearness.

Retake the tie in the left fingers, while the right fingers are inserted through the front of the loop formed in Fig. 5 and grip **both** fake and small loop of tie, and pull them through the large loop as one. The left fingers pull downwards at the same time to tighten the knot. The resultant knot is now illustrated in Fig. 7 which shows how the fake loop is now visible at the front, while the genuine loop is concealed at the rear.

All you now have to do is to press the loop flat on the wooden board, and as you do so, fold back the real loop so it lies under the knot, leaving only the fake loop protruding. Hold the knot down with the left hand, while the right takes the nail and places the point on the loop, **through the slit**. While holding tie and nail thus, get the helper to hammer in the nail, leaving the loop nailed as shown in Fig. 8.

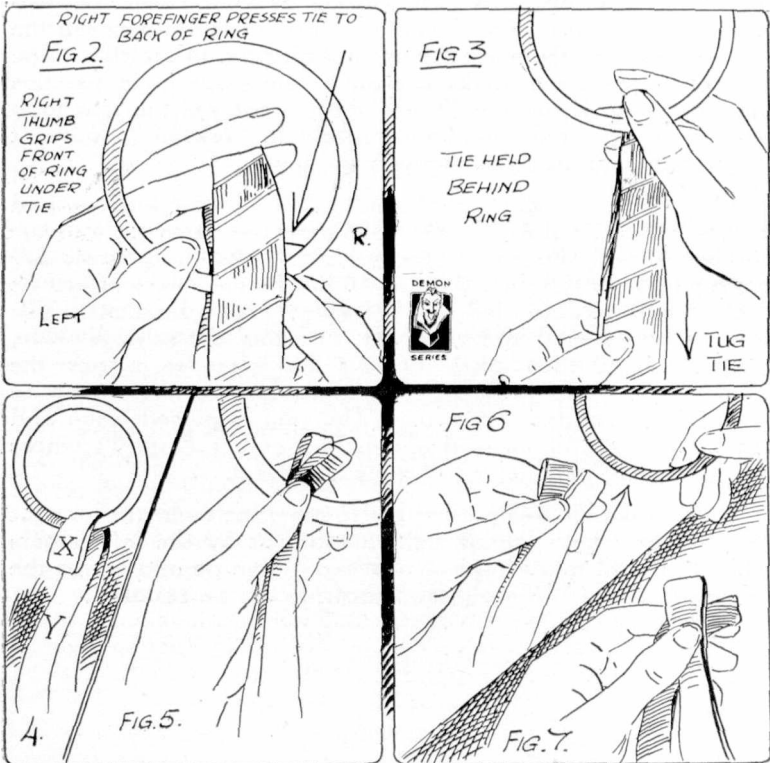
Give the board to the assistant to hold, and cover the upper part with a folded silk. After the patter as suggested, pull the tie downwards with one hand so that it comes away from the fake loop and the real loop springs back into its correct position, and grip the top of the fake loop through the silk with the other hand and remove the silk, taking the loop away with it. The loop comes away easily owing to the slit. Place the silk in the coat pocket, allowing the fake loop to drop to the bottom of the pocket, so you can later remove the silk again for use in the final effect of the routine.

THE CUT TIE.

Again the effect depends mainly upon manipulation, and must be worked smoothly and without hesitation. Performed thus, it becomes a swift surprising mystery. Although I mentioned a serviette ring in describing the effect, I find that a lady's bangle is easier to handle and would recommend that one be used. The scissors have been simply prepared by blunting the blades and slightly loosening the rivet to give the scissors a slight "headache." Here are the moves used, which must be practised thoroughly until they combine into flowing unity.

Thread the tie through the ring and hold the ring in the left hand, the tie hanging down. Then insert the left forefinger under the tie at the rear of the ring as shown in Fig. 1. The right hand comes up to take hold of the ring and the thumb grips the ring at the front **underneath** the hanging tie while the fingers press the tie firmly to the ring at the back (Fig. 2). Now if the right thumb encircles the hanging tie at

Figure 1. See Page 25.



the front and the forefinger is still held in place under the back of the tie, the left hand can be drawn swiftly down to the bottom of the tie and in doing so the side "B" Fig 2 of the tie is whipped through the ring and pulled down so that when the left hand grips the bottom ends of the tie, the ring is free of the tie as in Fig. 3. The fact the ring is no longer on the tie is concealed by the thumb which is holding the ring as shown in the drawing. The left hand gives a few short sharp tugs on the tie as though demonstrating the impossibility of removing the tie.

To the audience, the above moves appear only as though the tie on the ring was displayed in the left hand, passed to the right while the left slid down the tie and gave a few tugs to indicate how firmly tie is on the ring.

While telling how the Narkovians sneak behind one with scissors in hand, the performer turns to look for scissors and swiftly makes the following two moves, which take but a second to do. The right fingers pull the end of the tie through the ring as in Fig. 4, then grips the loop "X" and the top part of the tie "Y" (gripping only the one thickness, not both) and pulls them both upwards as in Fig. 5. It will be seen that two loops are thus formed with the ring in the hollow between the two. However, the **audience are not allowed to see this**. The drawings are thus to make it clear to the reader. In practice the front loop is made a little higher to conceal the rear loop and the fingers hold the loops firmly in position to prevent them from slipping and coming into view.

Immediately the right hand takes up the scissors and inserts the blade through the first loop (the one visible to the audience) and the cut is firmly made. As the scissors are blunt and slightly loose, the tie will not be cut, but will just be pressed between the blades of the scissors for a moment. The scissors are opened and removed. Placing the scissors aside, the right hand then takes the ring and removes it from the "cut" end, while the left fingers slide the two loops apart to look like cut ends. (Fig. 6.) The ring is placed aside and the ends of the tie crossed and held together (Fig. 7) where the illusion of two halves of a tie is perfect.

To conclude this part of the routine, the ends are brought together and held out of sight a moment by the left fingers while the right takes hold of one end of the tie and whips the tie away, giving it a shake and showing the tie restored.

THE COLOUR-CHANGE TIE

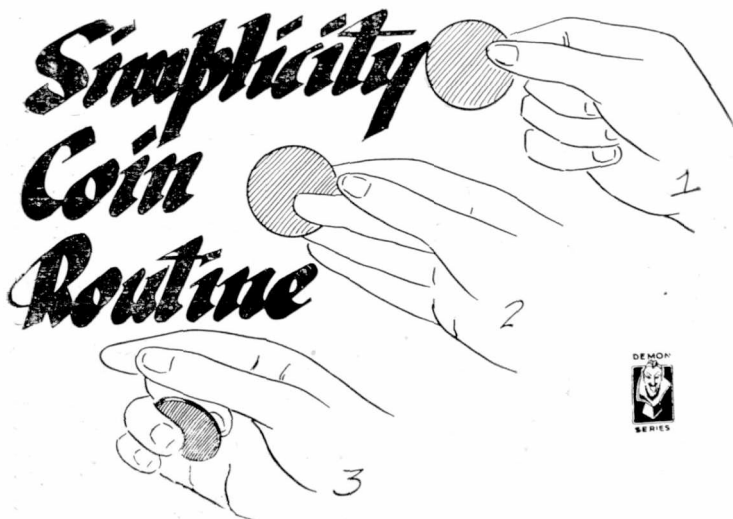
The following method, though not strong enough to stand alone, makes a fitting climax to the series. No doubt more elaborate methods could easily be devised, but it was my aim to eliminate a lot of faking throughout the routine and making it more or less of an impromptu nature.

The colour change I use is simply a switch of ties under cover of the silk, but before I describe the moves it may be well to mention one point; the tie used in the routine, and the second tie with green and black stripes, are both shortened by a few inches on the wider end. The usual "V" shape is retained in doing this. The reason for this is so that when the tie is rolled from the narrow end into a bundle, the bundle is not quite so long and not so bulky, so it may easily be concealed in the hand. Misdirection is the only secret of the colour-change, and this is aided by the rubber bands.

Place several rubber bands in the right coat pocket (or trousers, if working in full dress) and with them place the green-striped tie rolled into a bundle and secured by a rubber band which has been stretched around it.

While patterning as in the description of the effect, the red-striped tie is slowly rolled into a compact bundle, starting from the narrow end. The rolled tie is retained in the left hand while the right goes to the pocket to remove a rubber band. As the band is removed, the green-striped tie is brought out concealed in the hand and held by the third and fourth fingers, which bend in for this purpose. The rubber band is stretched round the red tie and then held in the right fingers in full view (green tie still concealed in palm) while the left removes the green silk from the left pocket.

This silk is thrown over the tie in the right hand, and under the cover thus afforded, the right hand turns palm upwards bringing the palmed tie upwards. The left then grasps the palmed tie through the silk and removes both tie and silk while the right hand palms the red tie. Immediately the hand goes to the pocket to remove another rubber band and leaves the red tie behind. The rubber band is then snapped around the silk so as to imprison the tie in a bundle in the centre, and this is handed to the helper to hold. The necessary magic word is spoken, and the helper uncovers the tie, revealing that it has changed colour.



CHAPTER THREE

COIN MAGIC FOR THE PLATFORM

THE SIMPLICITY COIN ROUTINE

The main item in this description is a mechanical method for making several coins apparently materialise one by one in mid-air and visibly drop into a tumbler or goblet. As it is rarely my purpose to merely describe a "gadget" but to give full routines, the following is a complete "coin act" based on very simple fundamentals, and all worked out for you to immediately practise. Some of the preliminary methods I cannot claim as original, but I believe I have simplified the routine to get the appearance of clever sleight-of-hand while only a modicum of actual skill is required.

The performer takes a wand and shows both hands to be empty. Then he taps one hand and a coin materialises. This is repeated until four coins have been produced, each being placed on a small stand. The four coins are vanished one by one and then reproduced in a small fan from the knee. The coins are replaced in a row on the stand.

On the table has previously been stood a three-fold screen covered with black velvet, apparently to form a background against which the hands are plainly visible. A glass goblet or tumbler is now stood upon a small pedestal in front of this screen. The coins from the stand are next taken one

by one and thrown towards the glass. They vanish from one hand and a second later appear to materialise about three inches above the tumbler from where they drop with a loud chink into the glass. The coins are finally poured from the glass, placed one by one into the left hand, and all four coins vanish cleanly and silently, leaving nothing, as at the beginning of the routine.

Modus Operandi.

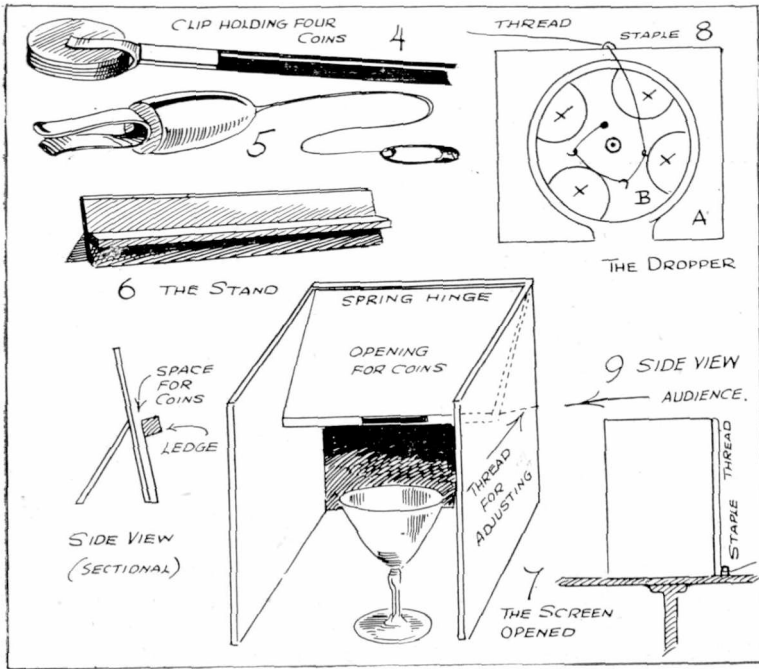
You will need several small items of equipment for this routine, and one method of making a coin vanish by sleight-of-hand. Any method can be used so long as it is the kind where the coin is taken in the right and apparently placed into the left, while it really remains concealed in the right. "Le Tourniquet" or similar is suitable. The following is the method I personally prefer, although in my own shows I use a different method for each coin. Master the following and you will have one sufficiently deceptive to be repeated several times without fear of discovery.

Figures 1, 2 and 3 show the essential move as seen by the performer. The coin is held by the tips of the thumb and forefinger so the coin is just slightly hanging down. The left hand comes to take it and the right hand also goes to meet the left to put the coin in, and the moment the coin is covered by the left hand, the second and third fingers of the right hand extend, grip the bottom edges of the coin (Fig. 2) and then double back taking the coin with them and pressing it against the fleshy part of the base of the thumb as in Fig. 3. There is no need to actually palm the coin and the thumb and forefinger must not move in the slightest. Thus the left hand closes around the empty right thumb and forefinger and apparently takes the coin away. Properly timed, the coin seems to melt into thin air as the left hand opens and shows the coin has vanished.

The apparatus required will now be detailed. A wand as shown in Fig. 4, with a clip at one end to hold four coins in a stack. This was devised, I believe, by T. J. Crawford of America. A special "pull" which consists of a rounded cone of wood at one end of which is a length of elastic and at the flat end two strong clips in which a stack of four coins may be pressed and firmly held.

A display stand for four coins is required and this is illustrated in Fig. 6. It has a wide ledge, behind which is a hollow space into which a coin can be dropped out of sight. The bottom is padded with strips of sponge rubber or other soft material so the coins will drop silently.

The last piece of apparatus to describe is a little more elaborate, but can very easily be made up. Refer to Fig. 7



for a general conception of the display screen. It should stand about 15 or 18-inches high and the back section is about 12-inches wide, while the two side flaps are about 10-inches wide. This is covered with black velvet. Hinged to the inside is a square fake covered with black velvet and arranged so it will fold down flat against the back of the screen, but spring-hinged so that when the screen is opened, this flap opens outwards. Threads should be fixed to hold this fake out at an angle shown in the drawing. This fake is invisible even when opened out at a short distance, owing to the black-art effect of the velvet.

The fake contains a "dropper" which is very easily made. To construct this, cut a rectangle of stiff cardboard the size of the fake. Then cut a rectangle of $\frac{3}{16}$ th plywood to fit over this, and from the plywood cut a circular hole with an opening at the bottom large enough for a coin to pass through, as shown in "A" Fig. 8.

Glue this rectangle of wood on to the cardboard sheet. Then cut a wheel of plywood which will fit very easily inside the cut-out portion of the rectangle and cut four divisions into this to hold the coins (see "X X X X" Fig. 8). Pivot this wheel to the centre so it will revolve very easily. If four

coins are placed in the spaces marked X and the board tipped at an angle, then the wheel slowly rotated, the coins will slide out of the bottom opening one by one as they come to it.

The method of rotating the wheel is very simple and consists of a strong thread pull. Notice in the drawing (Fig. 8) how the thread is fixed firmly at one point to the wheel, then passes around under three hooks, which are thin panel-pins driven in and then bent sideways, and then up through a small staple at the top centre. By pulling this thread slowly, the wheel will make almost a complete revolution. Do not attempt to groove the edge of the wheel and run the thread around it as this will interfere with the dropping of the coins.

To finish off the fake, glue another rectangle of cardboard over the top of the wheel. Be sure there is sufficient play above the wheel to allow for the bent pins and to prevent the wheel jamming. It is perhaps best to use thinner ply for the wheel, although my own has a more elaborate arrangement which I will not describe here for fear of confusing the issue. Any average mechanic could arrange this for himself, I am sure, as I do not claim to be a mechanic.

One more point must be mentioned. It must be arranged to revolve the wheel backwards to re-set, and I do this simply by having a slot cut in the cardboard underneath the fake where it is not seen, and then turn the wheel back bit by bit by "walking" it back with a pointed instrument through the slot. You may prefer to make the top removable; that is up to the reader to decide for himself.

Preparation.

The small stand is placed on the table to the right of stage, and the large screen, with four coins loaded in position in the fake is folded flat on a table on the left. The thread from the top of the screen is passed through a small staple fixed firmly to the table top and thence, after about three feet of thread, to a small bead. The thread is coiled on the table.

Four coins are stacked and placed in the clip at the end of the wand, and this is placed on the table on the right so the coins are concealed behind the small display stand. The special pull is placed in the usual position so it rests on the left side of the body under the coat. A small tray with a glass goblet should also be available, and, if desired, a small pedestal to lift the goblet into better view. Four extra coins are held under the left edge of the coat in a small clip.

The Routine.

Commence by picking up the wand in the right hand, the coins being concealed in the hand. Point with the wand to the left hand to show empty back and front. Then take the

wand in the left hand just above where the right is holding it and pivot the wand round so the coins go into the left hand and the left holds the wand, while the wand now points to the right hand to show it empty. During this process, the stack of coins is eased from the clip and finger-palmed in the left hand. Then the wand is retaken in the right, reversing the above moves so as to keep the clip out of sight.

The four coins finger-palmed in the left hand and then produced one by one at the finger-tips, by sliding the coins up one by one with the thumb. As they are produced, the right hand takes them and places them on the ledge of the display stand, taking care that they rest well on the ledge and do not fall inside.

Now the coins are taken one at a time and vanished. To do this, the first coin is actually taken (not dropped into the recess as this is required later) and apparently placed into the left hand, really keeping it in the right in the manner already described. Then with the left hand closed, the right takes up another coin from the stand, and at the same time drops the first coin behind the stand.

The left hand is opened to show first coin has gone, and then the move repeated with the second coin. This goes on with the other coins, until one coin is left palmed in the right hand. Pick up the wand, which was replaced behind the stand earlier, and drop the last coin on the table. Touch the left hand and vanish last coin. The performer should be behind the stand while doing this. The wand is replaced on the table, and the right hand makes a feint as though to pull coins from the right knee, and under cover of this, the left steals the stack from under the left edge of the coat. Finding nothing at the right knee, the performer plucks at his left knee and produces the four coins in a fan. These are replaced on the ledge of the stand in a row.

The large screen is now taken up, opened, and set down on the table with the centre of the back resting against the staple in the table. The fake flap automatically comes into position as the screen is opened. The goblet is shown to be empty and placed in position under the slot in the edge of the flap. While the right hand does this, the left takes the bead at the end of the coil of thread on the table.

Walking back to the table at the left, the thread is stretched until it is just taut. Then the right hand apparently takes a coin from the stand with thumb behind and fingers in front, but really pushes the coin back so it drops into the recess. The right hand comes up as though holding the coin and throws it towards the goblet. The coin "vanishes" and a

slight pull on the thread will revolve the wheel and cause a coin to drop from the flap into the glass. This looks very weird. The effect is repeated with the other three coins.

Walking to the glass, the performer takes it in his right hand, and at the same time gets the special pull in his left hand, and then he pours the coins from the glass on to the tray. The coins are then taken one by one and pushed into the left fist and into the clip on the pull, where they remain partly in sight. The stack is then seemingly placed into the right hand, but pull is released and allowed to fly back under the coat. Left hand is shown empty; right hand is squeezed and opened to show the coins have returned from whence they came.

If you work with an assistant, she could very well do the thread pulling for you, giving you better movement for vanishing the four coins. If you do pull the thread yourself, you will find that so long as the back of the screen is touching the staple on the table, the screen will not wobble when the thread is pulled. Fig. 9 shows how the screen should be set against the staple.



COLOURED WOOLS

I put the above title to encourage you to read this. Had the full and correct title been given, namely "Coin in Ball of Wool" you would have skipped it with the remark that you had left that trick off when you donned long trousers. Perhaps so, but if you did you are missing a good item. Not that you could do the old version in the old way, but all these old effects can be "streamlined." By that I do not mean that the trick can pass through the atmosphere with the minimum resistance, a more accurate definition of the word, but the wider meaning that is now being adopted of the word, that of modernising.

So hoping that these remarks, and the intriguing illustrations have inveigled you into reading thus far, here is the effect. A coin, preferably a half-crown, is borrowed and marked for identification by the loaner. This coin is placed in a prominent position in a clip on top of a small stand while a long box is introduced. This box is opened, having a drop lid along the front and a lift lid on top, and it is seen to contain six balls of brightly coloured rug wool.

The person who loaned the coin is requested to choose one of these balls of wool, and as an absolutely free choice is given, the person can be allowed to change his mind or do as he pleases, stressing the freedom of choice. A ball finally being chosen, it is removed from the box and tossed to the spectator to hold. He is then asked to bring it up to the platform and drop it into a glass goblet or bowl given to him by the performer.

Then the performer takes the coin from the stand and causes it to vanish in a flash of flame. Taking hold of the end of the chosen ball of wool, the performer quickly winds up the wool. As heavy rug wool is used, this does not take too long, and when it is nearly all wound up, a small box is discovered in the centre, which drops into the bowl. The spectator removes this, finds it is encircled with rubber bands, and then,

opening it at the request of the performer, he finds his own original marked coin therein.

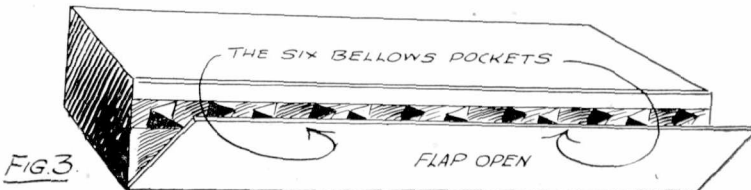
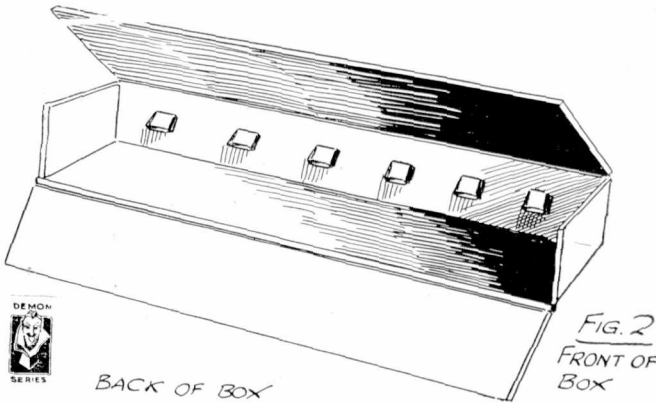
Put yourself in the place of the audience and you will find you have a piece of magic that is impossible of explanation. The cleanness of action; the fact that the ball is only held a second or two by the performer, and even then at the extreme tips of his finger and thumb and the rest is handled by the spectator, makes this a real "streamlined" conjuring item.

Modus Operandi.

The box containing the wools, and the display stand for the coin are both prepared. The coin clip-stand can be easily dismissed. Just refer to Chapter One of this book and under the effect "The 'Perfect' Torn and Rising Card," you will find a detailed description of a clip-stand for five sections of a playing card. This stand is built exactly the same except that it is made to hold only one clip and plunger. A general view of this stand is given in Fig. 1.

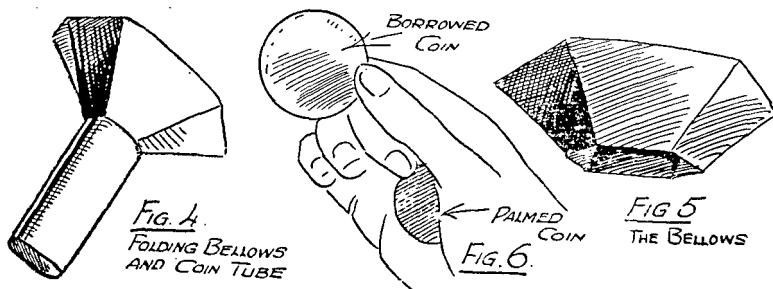
The box containing the wools needs more explanation. A simpler box is possible, but this one has been specially designed to obtain the effect with the least amount of fumbling. In fact, there need be no fumbling whatever.

The usual "coin slide" is used, but in a novel manner. Six tin tubes, lined inside with cloth to prevent the coin from "talking" are set along the inside of the box at a slight downward angle as shown in Fig. 2. The inside of the box and the



outside of these coin slides are covered with black velvet. When the box is open, the slides are invisible even at a short distance. In working only one slide will come into view, and owing to the "flash" effect of the balls of wool left on either side of the slide, the slide is completely invisible even at fairly close quarters.

For a simple box, these slides could be left open at the back of the box so a coin could simply be inserted from the back and so slide down inside the box. I recommend, however, that the following addition be made so that it is only necessary to drop the coin from the palm and it automatically slides in the correct manner. This makes for speed and slickness of handling.



The back of the box is double, having a space of about half-an-inch in it. A flap opens outwards about half-an-inch down from the top, and as it opens, it pulls with it six funnel-shaped bellows. These can be made of stiff canvas or buckram and cloth hinged. Fig. 3 shows the appearance of the box when the back flap is open, the six openings of the flattish funnels being seen, and Figure 4 gives a side view of one of the slides with the opened funnel fixed to the top. The funnels are made of six sections of material, one on top, one on the bottom, and two hinged together at each side. (Fig. 5.) The top sections of these are glued to the inside wall of the hollow back immediately above a slide and the bottom sections glued to the drop flap, so as the flap opens, the funnels are pulled open. Strips of cloth should be glued to provide easy passage of the coin from the funnel through the mouth of the slide.

Six small boxes about $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inches square and $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch deep are required as well as six balls of brightly coloured rug wool. Prepare the box by opening the box lids slightly and inserting end of slide inside the box, then stretching several rubber bands around the box in various directions. Having placed a box in position, wind the wool round to form a ball. This, like the unwinding, does not take long owing to the thickness of rug

wool. Tuck in the end of the wool to keep the ball compact. Repeat this with the other five slides and prepare the small clip-stand with flash-paper as described in the card rising effect in Chapter One, and you are ready.

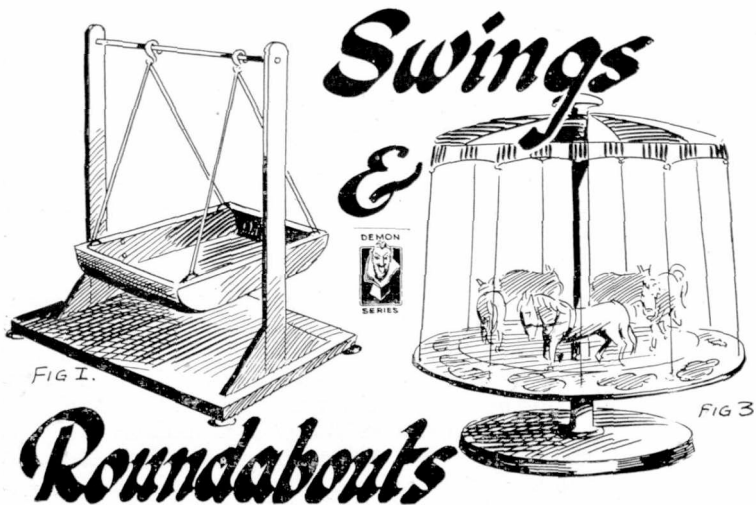
State that you will perform an effect with a coin, and place your hand in pocket to get one. Then alter your mind and tell the audience you had better borrow one and have it marked so they know only one coin is used. Your right hand, when removed from pocket, has brought with it a half-crown palmed.

A half-crown is requested and the spectator marks it well. Then take the coin, switch it for the duplicate and place the duplicate in the clip-stand. You may have your own methods for a switch, but here is mine. The extra coin is palmed normally. The borrowed coin is taken between the forefinger and thumb of the same hand so the coin is hanging down a little towards the fingers (Fig. 6). Apparently drop the coin into the opposite hand, but really the palmed coin is dropped while the fingers scoop the borrowed coin into the finger-palm position.

This hand, with finger-palmed coin, picks up the small stand, while the opposite hand places the duplicate coin in place. At the distance it is not possible to see whether there is any mark or not on the coin.

Having accomplished the switch, you now take the box of wools, casually show it all round, and then open the box lid and front flap to show the six balls of wool. Give the spectator a choice, and while he is considering this, let the rear flap fall open. You have also meanwhile transferred the palmed coin to the normal palm. When the ball is decided upon, the hand with palmed coin grips back of box behind the chosen ball while the opposite hand removes the ball with the thumb and finger. The load is instantaneous. Drop the palmed coin into the funnel and it slides into the box inside the wool even as it is being removed. Smooth over the space in the wool caused by the removal of the slide while setting the box of wools down, and toss the wool to the spectator. You do not leave the platform while having this choice made.

The remainder of the effect is routine work and is left to you to make the best of it. You will know how to vanish the coin after reading the rising card effect in the first chapter.



SWINGS AND ROUNDABOUTS

A coin effect suitable for platform work is well worth having, so here is a showy effect that will prove completely baffling to the spectators. The effect was given to me by Mr. J. H. Steele, of Beverley, and although it was intended to market the effect, he has kindly given permission for its publication in these pages. The patter is Mr. Steele's and helps make this into a trick with real entertainment value. The effect is quite self-contained, and although it gives the appearance of great skill, there is nothing difficult at all in the working.

Patter and Effect.

(On the tables are seen a miniature roundabout with cut-out animals, a model of the usual type of fair-ground swings and a stand displaying twelve pennies in two rows of six.)

"When you look at this paraphernalia, you may imagine that I am an amusement caterer, which is quite correct. Perhaps you may think this is an easy way of earning a living. Well, there is no harm in thinking, they are your brains. Mind you, I admit that some days the money rolls in, but like the hairs on grandfather's head, they are few and far between. But I am comforted by the knowledge that what one loses on the swings, one gains on the roundabouts. I would like to demonstrate the truth of this statement.

"The cost of running these machines is sixpence a day so before commencing, I will place the running expenses in

the machines—so.” (The swings are examined and six pennies are place into it, and then the roundabout is also examined and a further six pennies placed in the base, one against each of the animal figures.)

“ Let us assume that this is one of my unlucky days when I lose on the swings and as I depend upon the public for losses or gains; perhaps someone will choose how much I am to lose. Here are six cards numbered from one to six which I shall pass from hand to hand and perhaps you, sir, will call stop at one card, this will denote the choice.” (This is done, and suppose “ 4 ” is the chosen card.)

“ I will now set the machine in motion so that the four coins acquire the power of propulsion. And here in the swings are one, two pennies only . . . (two coins removed and swing handed out for examination) . . . and here in the roundabout are one, two, three, four, five, six, and seven, eight, nine, ten pennies, and I can breathe freely knowing I can still carry on as a showman.” (The ten pennies are removed one by one, and the roundabout may be examined again, although this is not necessary in this case.

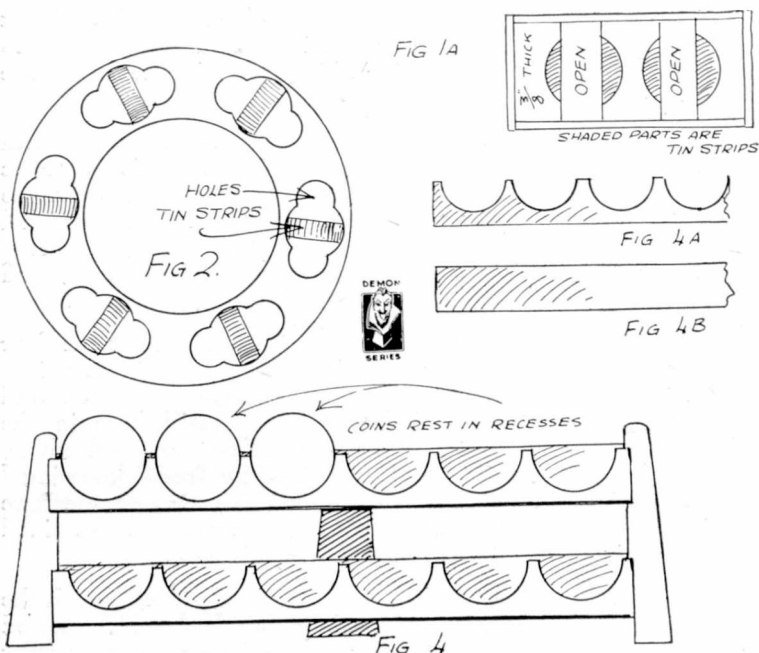
That is the effect and general outline of patter, which the individual can build upon as he thinks fit. It should be noted that the moves are all clean and unsuspecting, even at very close quarters, that the swings and roundabouts are unprepared, and that any number of coins from one to four may be sent across.

The apparatus.

Although Swing, Roundabout and Coin Display Stand are all unprepared, they must be built in a certain manner to facilitate the handling of the effect.

Fig. 1 illustrates the Swings. This is a base with two up-rights and a cross-bar. Hooked on to the cross-bar are four chains or cords to the bottom of which are attached the swing. The swing is shaped from wood and has two compartments inside, each being capable of holding three coins in a stack. Notice how, in Fig. 1A the bottom is cut away so that the fingers can be easily inserted for the insertion and removal of the coins.

To make the roundabout, first cut a disc of plywood about $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick and $8\frac{1}{4}$ -inches in diameter. (The sizes are that on my own model.) Then cut from the centre a hole $4\frac{3}{4}$ -inches in diameter, leaving a wooden ring as in Fig. 2. Bore six holes to easily take a penny at equal distance round this ring, and then bore two smaller holes on each side of these six holes to allow the fingers to be inserted for the easy removal of the coins. To prevent the coins from dropping through the holes,



strips of tin are fixed under each of the six larger holes as shown in the diagram. Thus a penny can be placed in each hole and removed again without fumbling.

Next cut six small figures of animals from plywood, each one being different and fix one against each of the holes on the inside of the ring. Cut a disc of wood about $7\frac{1}{2}$ -inches in diameter, bore a small hole in the centre and fix on top of wooden knob which has had a small hole drilled into it. A stand is made as shown in Fig. 3, which is a circular heavy base with an upright rod in the centre on top of which is fixed a short length of metal rod which fits easily into the hole in the circular disc and knob. Thus the disc may be placed on top of the stand and spun round like a roulette wheel. The coin-holding wooden ring is then suspended by thin chains or cords to give the appearance of a roundabout as shown in the drawings. Both the roundabout and the swing should be gaily painted in imitation of the regular articles.

The stand must next be considered, and any stand will do so long as it displays two rows of six coins, and is arranged so each coin can be taken up without fumbling. Fig. 4 shows a suitable stand. It is simply made by cutting two strips of plywood as shown in Fig. 4A and gluing them on two strips like in Fig. 4B and mounting these on two uprights, finally putting a strut at the back.

In addition you will require six cards numbered from 1 to 6 (or six playing cards with values from ace to six may be used) and a set of faked shell and solid coins as follows: two triple pennies and four double pennies. These faked coins can be purchased from most of the larger dealers such as Messrs. Davenport & Co. The double coins are simply shell coins which contain a solid one slightly turned to allow it to fit loosely into the shell. The triple coins are two shells and a solid made to nest inside each other to look like a single coin.

Preparation.

The Swing is placed on one table at the side and the Roundabout on another table at the opposite side. The stand is on a centre table. If working on one table only, the display stand should be raised to give full visibility.

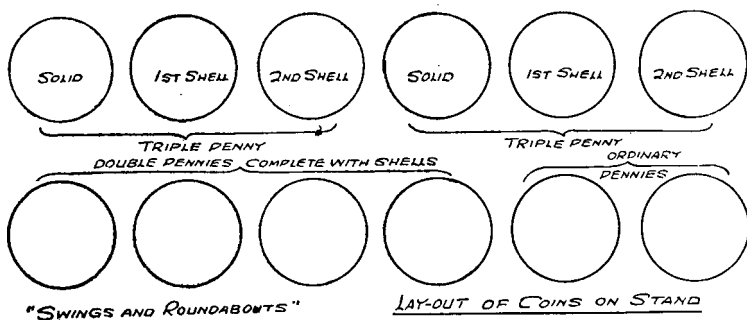
Take the set of faked coins and two extra genuine pennies and arrange them in the stand in the order shown in Fig. 5. The triple coins are spread into three coins each along the top row. On the lower row the double pennies containing the solid ones are placed in a row of four and then the two genuine ones. The six numbered cards are placed on the table and the effect is ready for working.

Modus Operandi.

After the opening patter, the swing-boat is unhooked from the stand and given for examination. This is less clumsy than giving the whole contraption out. When it is replaced, the six coins from the top row (the triple pennies) are placed into the "boat" in a special manner. First the solid coin is placed into one of the recesses, then the shell placed over it, and then the third shell over them both, so they appear as one coin. This is not noticeable by the audience owing to the depth of the boat. The second set of coins is placed in the second recess in like manner.

Next the Roundabout is shown and the roundabout part removed from the stand and also given for examination. When this is replaced, the remaining six coins are placed around in the six recesses cut for them. The four double ones are placed in first and the position of the first one noted by the animal against the recess. It is best to always commence at the same hole with the same animal so one does not trust to memory.

The next task is the simple one of forcing any of the numbers 1 to 4. (5 or 6 coins cannot be passed). Mr. Steele recommends that the six cards be shown in order from one to six, mixed slightly keeping the 5 and 6 at the back, then turning them face down and passing them from hand to hand. Ask someone to stop you at any card and make sure that the five and six have passed before completing the request. My own method is to shuffle the six to one end and the five to the other, and then fan the cards face down and ask someone to remove one. The top or bottom card is never chosen so one is quite safe. If one was chosen, which is extremely unlikely, I should have



another chosen and then taking the two force the correct one by the usual equivocal force, explaining this away by saying that one was doing this with two or three people to disprove the idea of a confederate. However, I have never yet been compelled to do this.

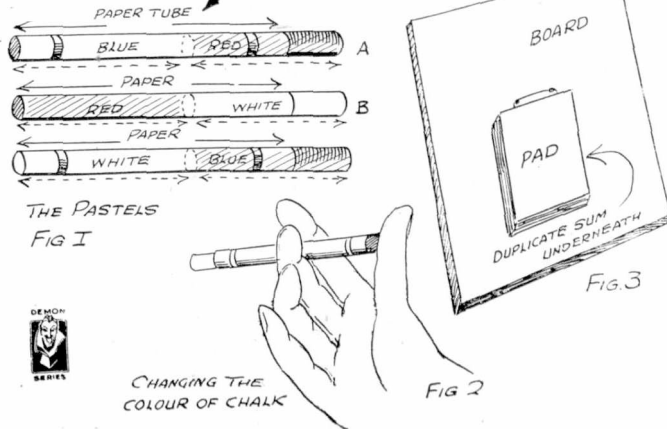
The remainder of the effect depends upon how many coins are chosen, and the method will be obvious to anyone handling the apparatus. Suppose three coins were to be passed, set the machines working, then when they are stopped, remove a shell from the boat and place on the stand; then the remaining shell with the coin inside and place on stand, and finally the remaining triple coin as one coin and place on the stand. The boat is empty and may be examined.

Going to the Roundabout, the performer removes the shell from the first of the four double coins (the position is known by the animal marking it) then another shell from the second double coin, and a shell from the third double coin. After this the remaining double coin would be removed as one and all the remaining single coins, all being placed on the stand as removed. Do not remove the shell and then the solid, but one at a time as stated above, as this is more convincing and helps the performer to remove the correct number of shells.

If four coins were to have been passed, then the two triple coins would be removed from the boat and two single coins, and all four shells removed from the Roundabout before the six solids are removed. If only one coin is to be passed, the first triple coin is removed from the boat as three coins, then the outer shell from the remaining triple coin and finally the last shell and solid as one coin; only one shell being removed from those in the Roundabout.

With these instructions the working should be perfectly clear to the reader, and I can assure him that he will have an effect that is well worth making up and using as it is good for both children and adults, and gives the appearance of clever sleight-of-hand, besides which may be made very entertaining, which to my way of thinking is the important thing.

The Triplicate Slates



CHAPTER FOUR

MISCELLANEOUS MAGIC

THE "TRIPLICO" SLATES

This is an effect which will make the mental worker's finger itch to get to work. Even those who do not specialise in this field of conjuring, will find the ingenuity of the routine and the general showiness of the effect will constrain them to include it in their repertoire. Perhaps that is a pity in some ways, because I am loth to part with it and only my desire to give some of my best in this book eventually persuaded me to include it.

Frankly it was inspired in the first place by Peter Warlock's "Trigon," an excellent card prediction explained in one of his books. Before the publication, Peter Warlock demonstrated this effect and it appealed to me. It was this that aroused the desire for a more elaborate effect, and I set myself a task, to produce the effect I desired without unnecessary equipment, and in a perfectly clean, straightforward manner.

This was my problem, and the one which, after much experimenting and heart-aching, I solved without detracting from the original freshness of the idea. Three large slates were to be shown together with a pack of cards, a pack of cards bearing geometrical designs and a small writing tablet. I was to ask a person in the audience to act as subject No. 1

and he was to be designated by the colour Red. I was to make a prediction for this gentleman, and taking one slate I was to write a large capital "R" in bold red chalk on one side of the slate and a prediction, not yet shown to the audience, in red chalk on the other. Then, after this was done, the person was to be allowed a free choice of a card from the pack which he held in his own hands.

Next another subject was taken and given the pack of design cards. He was designated White, and taking the second slate I was to write a large "W" in white chalk on one side and a prediction in white chalk on the other. This slate to be placed with the other. Then, after the prediction was made, the second subject was to have an entirely free choice of one of the design cards.

Finally the third slate was to be taken, a large "B" in blue chalk to be put on one side, and a prediction in blue chalk on the other. This slate was to be put with the other two. Then, all the predictions being made, a few sets of figures was to be collected from two or three members of the audience and a third person, who was to be designated "Blue" added them up and kept the answer in mind.

The finale was to be clean. Summing up what had been done, I was to show the three slates spread out with the red "R" on one, the white "W" on the other and the blue "B" on the third plainly showing, and then to reverse the slates one by one showing that all three predictions were correct, the name of the card in red chalk on the "R" slate, a drawing of the chosen design in white chalk on the "W" slate, and the answer to the sum in blue chalk on the "B" slate. A perfectly convincing triple prediction when artistically performed.

That is exactly what I am describing here. Flap slates and the one-ahead system was the first means to be experimented with, and that meant getting rid of the flaps. I wanted to avoid that, so the slates could be in the hands the whole time if necessary, or at the worst, placed down in a stack on a plain unprepared table. The flaps were retained and a very simple and perfectly natural manipulation was developed. The result is delightful to the performer himself in practice, and completely baffling to the audience.

Apparatus Required.

1. Three slates and two flaps, the flaps being black on both sides.
2. A pack of cards with designs painted on them, a pack of playing cards and a writing tablet of the vest-pocket type.
3. Three specially prepared chalks. These are illus-

trated in Fig. 1. Each chalk is capable of writing in two colours. I find that artist's pastels are better than chalks as they are not tapered and also are more distinctive in colour. If pastels are used, white paper tubes can be placed around them and a narrow red band painted round the red pastel, a blue band round the blue one and the white one left blank. Ordinary chalks are never wrapped and for this reason should be avoided. Note that each chalk consists of a paper tube with two half-pastels in each. These are a sliding fit in the paper tube. The tube is about half-inch shorter than the two pastels when placed together.

It will be clear that if the red pastel, with the red band around it is taken up, it can be used as a red chalk. If held behind the slate, reversed and the red pastel pushed in with the thumb (Fig. 2) it can be used to write in blue, the blue being pushed back again after the writing is finished.

Preparation.

As we are using the one-ahead system, the answer to the sum must be forced. There are several ways of doing this and you may prefer your own way. Here I shall describe the way I favour, which move I believe should be credited to Frank Lane. It is necessary to use a small panel of plywood, ostensibly as a rest and so that performer need not handle the pad, and to have the pad, which is coverless, hinged loosely with wire or string to the centre as shown in Fig. 3. On the face of one side of the pad write three two-figure numbers in different handwritings in the form of a sum and draw a line underneath. Reverse the pad so the blank side comes to the top.

See that the two packs of cards are ready and also the three pastels are set with the correct colours showing. Finally prepare the three slates and flaps. Follow this preparation carefully, as it is very important.

Take a slate, which we shall call No. 3, and write a bold capital "B" on one side in blue pastel. Then take a flap and write a red "R" on one side. Use large letters almost filling the side. Then place the flap on the slate so the "B" and "R" come together and the slate appears blank. Place this slate on the table with the flap side upwards.

Take the second slate, which we shall call No. 2, and leaving it blank and unprepared, place it on top of slate No. 3.

Take the last slate, which we shall call No. 1 and write a bold blue "B" upon it. Then write a white "W" on the flap, place the letters face to face as with slate No. 3 and place this slate, also flap upwards on top of the other two slates.

This No. 1 is on top of the stack, No. 2 in the middle and No. 3 at the bottom. You are then set to work this remarkable prediction.

Modus Operandi.

Hand the pack of playing cards to the first subject, tell him to remember that he is represented by RED and ask him to shuffle the pack while you make a prediction. Take up slate No. 1 and the "red" chalk and write a bold "B" on the flap side making the letter match your concealed "R" as much as possible. Then, holding the flap with the fingers, reverse the slate and write your prediction. Apparently you are writing the name of a card in red pastel, but behind the slate you reversed the pastel as described, and write in blue the total of the sum which you prepared beforehand. Then put the slate down with the flap (and "R") side upwards, taking care blue writing is not seen.

Have the subject take a card from the pack and contrive to learn its name. You can do this by glimpsing it quickly while showing it to the audience; you can use a marked pack, or you can eliminate the shuffling by spectator and use a stacked pack. I prefer the "glimpse."

Now hand the design cards to subject No. 2 and have him shuffle them while you make a second prediction, telling him that his colour is white. Take slate No. 2 (unprepared one), write a "W" on one side, and switching colour of white chalk to red, write the name of the glimpsed playing card in red on the back. Place this with "W" side upwards on top of slate No. 1 on the table.

Then have this person choose a design and glimpse it as with the playing cards, remembering the design. Return and take up the last slate (No. 3) and write "B" on the flap side, turn slate over, switch the blue chalk to white, and draw the design in white on the back. Place the slate on top of the others with the "B" side upwards. Remember to reset the pastel each time after writing, so that when it is placed down the correct colours are seen.

Now follows the forcing of the pre-arranged number. Using the method I suggested, have three persons write two-figure numbers in the form of a sum, and turning to a fourth person, change the board from hand to hand and secretly flip the pad over, bringing the prepared sum to the top. Tell this person he is "blue" and have him add the sum. Tear off the top leaf and give it to him, taking the pad back with you to prevent dangerous examination.

Revise what has been done, and then casually look over the slates as though checking up on your predictions before

showing them. It is this casual checking over which does the job of transferring the flaps correctly. Follow the moves about to be described carefully at first, then learn them so you simply quickly flip over a couple of slates and back again as though looking at the writing on them. Fortunately the moves are very simple so this manipulation is never suspected. Here is what you do:—

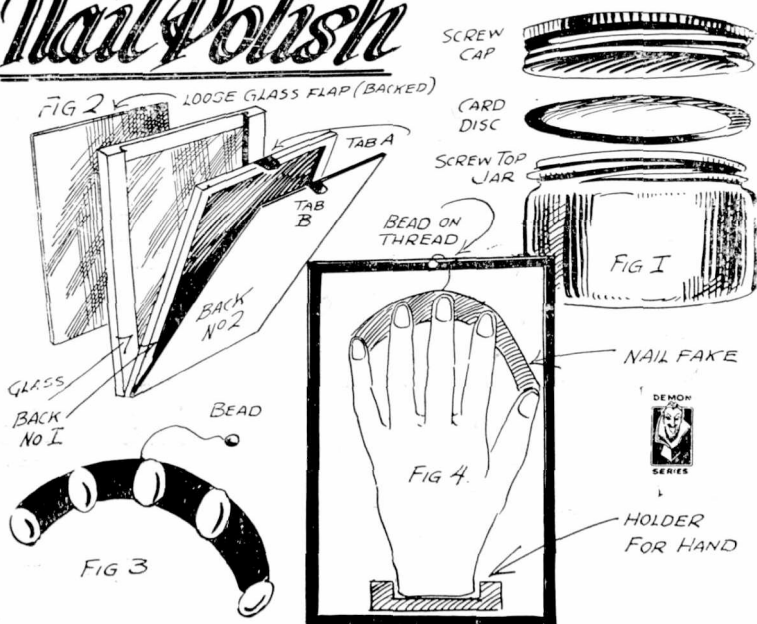
Pick up the stack of slates and hold in the left hand, letters towards the top. Right hand turns over the top slate on top of the stack, secretly drops the flap on the slate below, and then the slate is turned correct way up again.

Next the right hand grasps the slates on the right side while the left slides off the bottom slate and drops it on top of the stack, reversing it in the process so that the flap is again dropped on to the slate below. Immediately turn the slate the correct way up again. That is all. You have apparently glanced at two slates to check up, but the work is done. Be sure to hold the slates horizontally while making the moves so the audience cannot see any of the writing.

All you need do now is to separate the slates, and you will find that the letters come out in **correct order**, i.e., Red, White and Blue. Making sure to retain the transferred flaps on the slates, turn them round one by one showing the predictions are correct. So there you are. Very simple really, but it took me quite a time to work it out smoothly.

NOTE.—In my own routine I use Bagshawe's "Thought Ray" cards for the design instead of the pack described above, and I recommend the reader to purchase these and use, as the design is apparently only thought of, yet performer knows what it is. Messrs. Davenport & Co. now hold the rights of this trick and being a marketed item, it cannot be described here.

Nail Polish



NAIL POLISH

This is somewhat novel in effect and gives good scope for entertaining patter. The effect itself was suggested to me several years ago by Mr. J. H. Steele, and we had some correspondence concerning ways and means. Mr. Steele had in mind using the small bakelite pots about the size of a shilling in which nail polish is sometimes sold, and a cut-out of a lady's hand. The method evolved would, however, have only been suitable for drawing-room work, and later I designed the method which is about to be described. In this form the effect is not only fool-proof, but large enough for the average concert audience to see what is going on. By using for the effect an unusual colour of nail polish such as green, the result is somewhat ludicrous.

In effect the performer introduces a large plywood cut-out of a lady's hand. This should be about 12-inches high and is a representation, nicely painted, of the back of the hand showing the finger-nails, which are normal flesh-colour. This hand he passes for examination, and when it is returned, he places it inside a glass-fronted frame so the hand is in view, and then covers the top part of the hand, that is, just the ends of the fingers and the finger-nails, by draping a handkerchief

over the top of the frame. The hand is never wholly covered or hidden from sight.

Next he shows some five or six pots, each about two or more inches across and about an inch high. Such pots are obtainable, being made of a white or black porcelain type of material. Each of these pots apparently contains a supply of solidified nail polish of different colours, each pot being showed full of red, yellow, green, blue, and other coloured substance. The lids are screwed on to each jar, mixed together, and then someone chooses one of the pots. When it is opened, the colour is found to be, let us say green. The green pot is waved over the frame and when the handkerchief is removed from the top of the frame, it is found that the finger-nails are now painted in a brilliant green.

If you will trouble to make this effect and try it out before an audience, you will find that it will be very well received. It may not read too well, but I can assure you that often these straightforward, rather ridiculous effects are liked by the audience. I once made up the "Tie It" effect from Booth's "Marvels of Mystery," not thinking much of it but intending to use it casually in compere work. To my surprise it was always received with much amusement and applause, so it has gone into my regular programme. The Nail Polish effect is just such an effect. Work it and you will be convinced.

Modus Operandi.

This resolves itself into two portions: the forcing of the nail-polish and the appearance of the forced colour on the nails of the examined hand. As the force is easiest to describe, that will first be dealt with.

Several pots of opaque glass or porcelain with screw-type caps are required. These jars must be exact duplicates. They appear to be filled with coloured substance. To do this I simply cut cardboard discs of a size to wedge firmly inside the mouth, and then glued them into position. Each jar then had this cardboard painted a brilliant green so each appeared to be full of green "polish."

As I used six jars, five further discs of cardboard were cut, but these were of a size to rest on top of the jar and to wedge tightly inside the screw caps. Thus if one of these discs were to be placed on top of the jar, and the cap screwed on, when the cap was removed, the disc would be taken away with it. These five discs were painted around the edge to imitate the rim of the jar, and the inside in five distinct colours, red, yellow, black, purple and blue. These were lightly fixed to the top of the jars by means of wax and gave the appearance of jars filled with various colours.

The frame is arranged for a switch of the hand for a specially prepared one, and is an adaptation of a well-known principle. Two hands are required, and these are cut from thin plywood and carefully painted, one with natural nails and the other with vivid green nails. In designing the hand it is well to exaggerate the size of the nails slightly to give better visibility.

The frame itself is illustrated in Fig. 2. The back is hinged at the bottom, and consists of two flaps. No. 1 flap is recessed to hold one of the hands, and No. 2 flap is a plain cardboard rectangle to cover this, thus making a kind of shallow box. A cloth tab is fixed to each one, so if tab B (Fig. 2) is pulled, the rear flap only is lifted, and if tab A is pulled, both flaps are lifted. The top of the frame is cut away flush with the glass to allow the egress of anything contained between the glass and the flap. The inside of the flap is covered with black cloth, for preference, velveteen.

A sheet of glass is cut to fit into the front of the frame in exactly the same manner as the flap on a "spirit slate," and then the back of the cloth covered with cloth the same colour as the table top. Or if you wish to have a newspaper spread over the table, the back may be covered with newspaper. Thus one side of the glass looks like the table top while the other shows glass backed with black cloth.

A cardboard nail fake is required as illustrated in Fig. 3. This is a boomerang-shaped strip of cardboard on which have been painted five "nails" in flesh colour and the remainder covered in black cloth. From this comes a short length of thread terminating in a bead. What is not shown in the drawing is a couple of light clips, one behind each of the end "nails," so that the fake may be clipped lightly over the finger tips. The position of the painted nails must, of course, coincide with the nails on the green-nailed hand.

One final addition could be made to the frame, although not absolutely necessary. This is a square U-shaped piece of wood glued to the glass at the bottom inside the frame. This serves to hold the hand in the correct position without it sliding about too much.

To prepare, first have the pots ready with the discs in place, waxed on top of the jars and the caps resting loose on top of each. Clip the fake over the finger-tips of the green-nailed hand and place this into the frame under the glass so the bead hangs out of the top of the frame. (See Fig. 4.) Place the glass flap on the front, and the frame looks as though it is empty.

When working the effect, first show the hand and have

it examined. Then holding it in one hand, show the frame and apparently place the hand in the frame. To do this, lay the frame down on the table, pull up tab B and lay the examined hand inside the recess, closing the flap again and immediately pick up the frame revealing the faked hand. Owing to the nail fake being in position, no change is visible.

The frame is then placed on an easel or chair-back and a handkerchief placed over the top, so all five nails are just covered. Force the colour of the "polish" by showing the various colours, screwing on the caps and after mixing them together, letting someone select a jar and open it.

The green being selected, it is waved over the frame and then the handkerchief taken away, gripping the bead and pulling out the fake at the same time under cover of the handkerchief. The green nails are revealed, and by pulling tab A, both parts of the back are opened and the hand removed for a final examination.

Everywhere & Nowhere

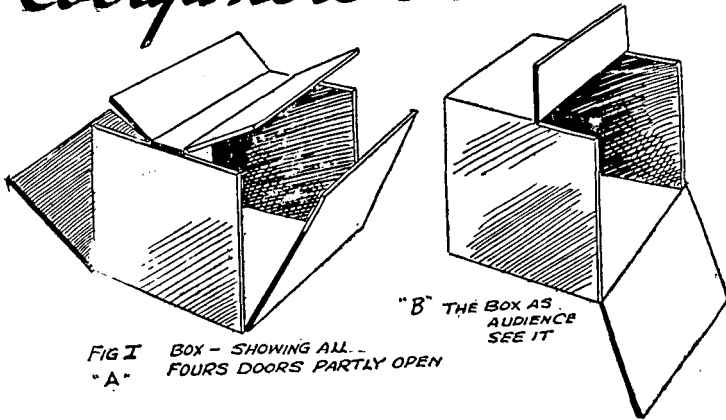


FIG I BOX - SHOWING ALL -
"A" FOURS DOORS PARTLY OPEN

"B" THE BOX AS
AUDIENCE
SEE IT

EVERYWHERE AND NOWHERE—WITH BILLIARD BALLS.

Sometimes I am asked how I keep thinking up new effects, or new angles on effects. That is a long story, and which is largely described in one of my earlier efforts "Magical Mentality," but there is one method I often recommend. Take an old well-tried successful effect, and see if it cannot be performed with objects other than usually used. You want a new stage illusion; think about a few good pocket tricks. You require a new item for platform use; think of a few big illusions. The latter is how I evolved "He Go, He Come Back" described in Chapter Two of this book. Take a card effect and see if it can be done with silks, or a silk effect and do it with cards. The item I am about to describe is one of the finest card tricks ever devised, but made into a showy platform trick by doing it with coloured billiard balls. But in case this develops into an essay on magical invention, let me get right on with this effect.

A large bag is introduced and a number of various coloured billiard balls are dropped into it. While the conjurer's back is turned, someone reaches into the bag, removes one of the balls, notes its colour, and after showing it to the audience, places it back into the bag and mixes it well among the others.

A small cardboard cone, similar in shape to a dunce's cap is shown empty and placed on the table on one side. Then the performer says he will reach into the bag, and discover

the chosen billiard ball. Let us suppose the chosen ball was a green one. He reaches into the bag and brings out a red billiard ball, claiming this to be the chosen one. When he is informed that he is wrong, he takes up a small wooden box, just large enough to contain the ball, and places the ball inside, closing the door upon it and placing the box aside.

Apologising for the mistake he tries again and produces a yellow ball from the bag. Upon being informed this is also wrong, he places this inside another small box similar to the first one, and places this aside. On the third attempt he produces a blue one, and as this also proves to be wrong places this in a third box.

"Let us try another way," he says. "Suppose I make the correct ball appear in any one of the three boxes; that would be a good trick, wouldn't it?" The spectator agrees, so he is given a choice of one of the boxes, and this is opened to show it now contains a green ball, which is removed, shown freely, and replaced in the box.

"You may wonder what would happen had you chosen one of the other boxes," the performer continues. "Just choose one and let us see." One of the remaining two is chosen, and when opened, this also contains a green ball, which is removed, shown, and replaced. "And, of course, if you had chosen this box, the green ball is also in that." The last box is taken, and a green ball removed and replaced. The lids are closed after each replacement.

"Perhaps you imagine I am using all green balls. Really it is only an optical illusion, because here is the red ball, here is the yellow, and here is the green." (The three boxes are opened and the balls removed as they are named.) "The whole thing is an illusion," he continues, "because there is no green ball. (The bag is emptied of the remaining balls and there is not a green one among them.) It has been here all the time." (The cone is lifted and underneath is found the green ball.)

Modus Operandi.

You will require a large-size changing bag, one such as is used to produce pigeons or other livestock. I do not favour these ungainly pieces of apparatus usually, but one fits into this routine without being too much out of place.

A number of balls and three shells are required. Do not make the "chosen" ball a red one, as this seems to be an obvious choice. How many performers do we see give "free" choice of a playing card, and it turns out to be the Ace of Spades or the Queen of Hearts! Make it less obvious. Suppose the force is to be a green ball. In this case you will need

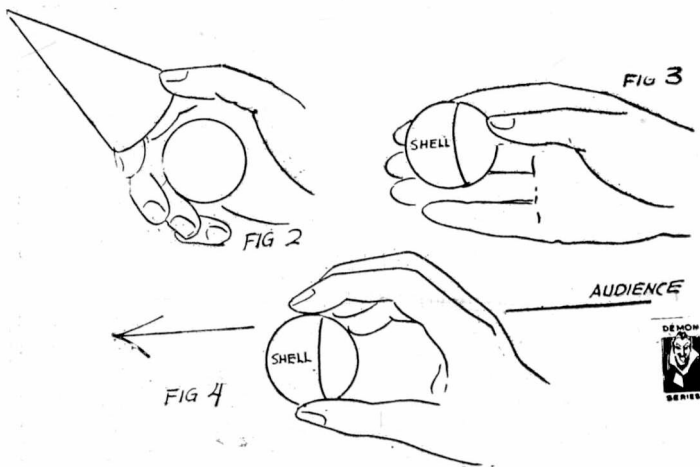
three green billiard ball shells, eight green billiard balls and six other balls of different colours. I recommend that the $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch celluloid billiard balls be used, together with the shells of celluloid. I find these are more satisfactory for this particular effect owing to the thin nature of the celluloid shell.

The inside of the three shells must be lined with thin black cloth, preferably using thin velveteen. Any good matt black cloth will do, however.

The three boxes need a little explanation. They must be lined with black velvet and the sides should preferably be slightly padded by putting about two thicknesses of velvet. The **inside** of these boxes must be of such a size to just hold a ball with the shell, but only wide enough to take the shell with a friction grip. If made the correct size, a shell can be placed into the box so its edges press against the sides, and it will stay in whatever position you put it, in this case, in an upright position so it will look as though the box contains a billiard ball. Yet one must be able to remove the shell without a struggle. Make the box a loose fit at first and add a layer or two of cloth to the sides until you get the correct friction fit.

Fig. 1 shows that the box has four doors. A drop-down flap at both the front and back and two half-lids at the top. The drawing shows all the lids open, a state which the audience will never witness. In practice there is apparently only the front drop-down flap and a half-lid at the front which is to facilitate the removal of the ball. Use cloth hinges so it will not be obvious that there are other flaps. Simple catches for the front and back drop-down flaps must also be added.

A small cardboard cone must be made, and this is of a



size to easily take a billiard ball and so the ball can be pushed about an inch higher into the cone than the level of the mouth.

To set the apparatus ready for performance, first place the three shells inside the three boxes, so that from one side it would appear that each contains a billiard ball. If the doors are closed, the box reversed and then the opposite doors opened, the boxes appear to be empty owing to the black-art effect of the lined shell against the lined box. Put these three boxes out of sight so the audience will not anticipate how many "mistakes" you are going to make.

Place a green billiard ball into the cardboard cone, and lay this on its side so the cone will not roll about, nor the ball roll out of the cone. It could be placed on a bunched silk for this purpose. Into one compartment of the changing bag place green balls, and close the compartment. In the other compartment place the six varied balls together with the final green ball.

The performance follows. First take the bag and tip out the balls, showing them all different and the bag empty. Place the balls back one at a time into the bag, but as the green one is placed in, move over the compartment sufficiently for this to be added to the balls already there (all green). Then put the remainder in the back on the "mixed" side.

Invite someone to choose a ball by reaching into the bag while you hold it behind your back, show it to the audience and replace it into the bag. You have meanwhile switched the compartments so as to "force" a green one from the set of green balls.

This is replaced, and while the bag is being shaken up to mix the balls, switch the compartments again, and then lay the bag aside. Next show the cone empty and place it aside, with the green ball secretly under it. This is done as follows:

Pick up the cone so the ball rolls out into the finger-palm position (Fig. 2). This is done with the right hand. The left hand immediately grips the cone by the apex and turns it mouth to the audience to show it empty. The moves are then reversed as the cone is set aside mouth down. There is no need to hold the ball in place while setting the cone down as if this is done with a slight swing, centrifugal force will keep the ball inside the cone. This is a regular move with the Cups and Balls and will readily be understood by anyone experimenting with ball and cone in hand.

Next attempt to discover the chosen ball, simply bringing out any one of the coloured ones. When told this is the wrong one, take one of the boxes, open it so the black-lined inside of the shell is forward, and place the ball inside the apparently

empty box, inside the shell, and close the box. Transfer it to the opposite hand to set the box on the table, and in doing so reverse the box, bringing the shell to the front. Repeat this with two other balls. Then give the choice of one of the three boxes.

Open the chosen box, showing that it contains a green ball (really the shell over the coloured ball) and remove the ball to casually show it. A very simple sleight is necessary to show the ball apparently on both sides. Remove shell, with ball inside it and show it to the audience as in Fig. 3, palm of hand facing audience, fingers underneath and thumb on top. Then turn the hand over as though to show the opposite side of the ball and as you do this, extend the thumb forward and retract the fingers, and the ball will roll keeping the shell to the front. The position is then as shown in Fig. 4. Performed casually and without any particular attention being called to it, this is a most convincing move.

Replace the ball into the box, shell still to the fore, close box, and repeat the moves twice with two more balls and boxes. Each time the box is replaced after showing the "green" ball, it is reversed again to bring the actual ball to the front.

To conclude, open all boxes, removing the three balls of various colours, tip the three coloured ones left in the changing bag on to the table to show no green balls among them, and finally reveal the green ball under the cone.

HYPNOTISING A RABBIT

This is something that is not very well known—in fact, not one to whom I have demonstrated the effect has ever seen it before, and the ludicrous effect of the hypnotised rabbit together with its surprising awakening to vigorous life has caused much comment and amusement. The experiment (if something that is certain in action can be so called) can be performed impromptu with any rabbit, or an amusing routine can be performed on the stage when using live rabbits in an effect. My first introduction to this principle was given to me very many years ago by Mr. Harry Lewis (not a relation of mine!) who is a well-known Belgian conjurer, and he gave me permission to publish or use the routine as I think fit. I have kept it up my sleeve for a long time, and think it time it had a wider publicity.

The effect is that a rabbit lays on its back with its four feet in the air and its eyes closed. While in this condition blank cartridges can be fired over its head, or a toy trumpet noisily sounded close to its ears, yet it will not move even a

fraction. By merely snapping the fingers lightly several inches away from its nose, the animal suddenly awakens, twists its body over like lightning and becomes a normal rabbit full of life and vigour.

Try the experiment now, if you have a rabbit. Hold the rabbit to your chest so its head lies on your shoulders, placing your left hand behind its shoulders so the thumb and fingers hold the legs from kicking too much, and the right hand over the lower part of the spine, the thumb and fingers holding the rear legs gently. Sit on a chair and place your knees together making sure that the legs slope down a little away from the body. This is very important.

Now bend your body forward and let the rabbit fall away from your chest until its weight rests upon your two hands and lower its spine down into your lap with its head furthest from your body. Its spine lies along the groove formed by the two legs which are pressed together. The rabbit will sometimes kick and try to twist itself upright while you are doing this, but hold the legs firmly while placing it into position and you can easily control it.

With the rabbit in position, ease your hand from its hind-quarters and place it against the head where both hands gently smooth its head backwards, spreading out the ears. Owing to the slope of the knees, the head will be lower than the body, and as stated, this is important. You will be surprised then to find that if you completely remove your hands, the rabbit will lie absolutely quiet and docile with the four legs pointing into the air. The eyes will remain open. By stroking the fingers gently around the eyes, they can be made to close and remain closed, giving the rabbit the appearance of being in a complete trance. In this position nothing will disturb the rabbit until you snap your fingers over its nose. The snapping, however, is only showmanship, because what you actually do is to nudge your right knee upwards slightly, which has the effect of pushing the rabbit off its balance, whereupon it twists its body over rapidly of its own accord and regains full life. It is a fascinating experiment to try, and is quite harmless to the rabbit. Do not force it into position, just handle it gently and ease it into the "hypnotic state." I have tried this on dozens of rabbits from fully grown, strong rabbits, to baby ones and have never failed.

Performed as described, the effect gives a performer a reputation for remarkable powers when visiting friends or other people who breed rabbits and have one handy. For the stage a more showy set-up is required.

For the stage, construct a wedge-shaped tray about 6-inches square so that when it is stood upon a table, the top

of the tray slopes towards the audience. There is no need to conceal this slope from the audience, as they will imagine it is merely to enable a fuller view of the rabbit to be obtained.

On this tray is placed a cushion, but this cushion has been prepared by pushing the stuffing to each side and leaving a ridge along the middle similar to that caused by the two legs pressing together. To keep this ridge in position, a few threads sewn through the cushion along the groove will help.

To perform, the rabbit is lowered on to the cushion, head towards the audience in the manner already described and various hypnotic passes made to build up the effect. When the rabbit is well and truly "asleep," blow a toy bugle over its head, rattle a tambourine near it and finally fire a blank cartridge pistol over its head, which will make the audience jump but not disturb the rabbit. To revive the rabbit snap the fingers as before, but as the opposite hand is resting on the rear corner of the tray, it gently pulls on the side of the cushion which overbalances the rabbit and makes it do its resuscitation act.

Do not ask me why this effect works; it is apparently one of the natural characteristics of a rabbit. Suffice it that it does and in this single item, the performer who works with livestock will have had his money's worth from this book.

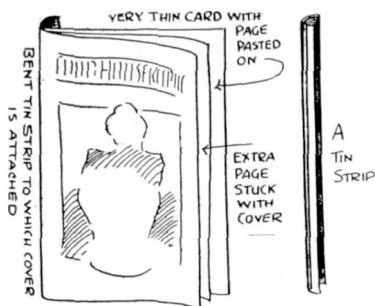
a Magazine Restored

SHOWING THE
FAKE FITTED
ON MAGAZINE



A MAGAZINE RESTORED

This is an effect of a fairly quick nature and which is easy to prepare and perform. A large magazine with a brightly coloured distinctive cover is best used. "Esquire" the American magazine is ideal, or in England one could use such magazines as "Homes and Gardens," "Good Housekeeping" or the "Punch Annuals."



What the conjurer does is to show the magazine, idly riffling **through** the pages, and then carelessly tear off the front cover and perhaps another page or a couple of pages with it. Then he places the mutilated envelope, mutilated side away from the audience, in a large manilla envelope which has a window cut in one side, leaving most of the magazine in view.

Now he can proceed to enjoy himself with the cover by tearing it up and vanishing the pieces, or tearing it and burning to ashes, the ashes being scattered over the envelope, or in any way destroying the cover and odd pages.

Then taking the envelope, he tips it and slides out the magazine which has never left sight and it is whole and restored to its pristine beauty. It may be given to a spectator as a souvenir if the performer is feeling particularly generous—or at least, it could be examined. That is all there is to it, but it is a smart, neat effect that will register well with an average audience.

Modus Operandi.

The secret is merely that you use a spirit slate. Perhaps I had better say that again—you use a spirit slate. But when I say spirit slate, I do not mean you use a slate nor do you do spirit writing; it is just the principle which you use. Use a flap on a magazine and you can do all sorts of effects, just as you can do all sorts of effects with a flap on a slate. Let me describe how to set about this particular effect.

Get two copies of a magazine, both being of the same issue. Put one aside as this will not be tampered with and will be the complete magazine that will be handed out at the conclusion of the effect.

Carefully remove the cover and the first two pages from the other magazine, and place aside ready for preparing the effect. Cut a rectangle of **very thin** cardboard, just stiff enough to give keep flat and yet be quite flexible. This should be the exact size of the pages of the magazine. Cut a strip of

tin about $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch wide (according to thickness of the magazine) and bend this to form a kind of long clip which can be pushed over the spine of the magazine (see Fig. 1A) and glue this to the long edge of the cardboard rectangle. With this done, you have a flap of cardboard which can be lightly clipped over the top of a normal magazine by means of the bent tin along the spine.

Before I proceed, a timely tip will be useful here. It is mentioned that the cardboard is glued to the tin strip, but anyone who has tried to glue cloth, paper, card, or anything else to tin will find it just does not hold. Now here is the tip, and one which has been extremely useful to me. Coat the tin generously with Friar's Balsam where it is to be glued. Let this dry, which does not take long, and then using ordinary tube glue such as Seccotine, glue the card into position. You will then find that it really sticks and does not come apart when the glue dries as is usual. This works with cloth or other materials. Don't thank me. Thank a friendly chemist who first gave me this tip.

The next job is to make the fake look something like that shown in Fig. 1. The second page of the two torn off with the cover, is neatly pasted all over the sheet of cardboard. Then the first page and the cover is pasted on top, just pasting this along the spine so the cover and page can be opened normally. To finish off, turn the whole fake over and paste on the back of the sheet of cardboard, a sheet cut from another manilla envelope to match the envelope you are using in the effect. This envelope paper is usually smooth on the outside and rough on the inside. You must naturally paste the sheet on to the fake with the rough side outside, so it will later look like the inside of the window envelope.

The window envelope is a large catalogue envelope with a window cut in to expose magazine. The envelope just holds the magazine loosely. It is easier to work if a large lump of soft wax is fixed to the inside of the envelope near the bottom. This is just below the level of the "window" and on the opposite side. Take care not to let the two sides stick together, however. Normal conjurer's wax, or perhaps I should say normal wax as used by conjurers, will do the job as well as anything, and will not stick until pressed upon.

When performing, the magazine is displayed with the fake clipped on to the front as shown in Fig. 2. If one hand grasps the spine, the other hand can casually riffle through the pages, but care must be taken not to show the duplicate covers near the front, or the manilla-backed sheet near the front.

The fingers then grip the side of the book opposite from

the spine, but separating first the top sheet and the cover, so the cardboard fake is gripped tightly with the magazine while top sheet and cover can be ripped off. Lay the cover and sheet aside and pick up the envelope. Turn the magazine over so its back is towards the audience and slide it into the envelope, where it is still in full view through the "window." In doing this, slip the magazine free from the tin clip on the fake, and when placing the envelope aside on a stand or against a chair-back, press the bottom where the wax is so as to retain the fake inside the envelope.

When you have wrought ample vengeance upon the cover and odd sheet, and it is no more, pick up the envelope, tip it up and a complete magazine slides into the hand—the fake being retained by the wax and invisible owing to its manilla covering.

Now you understand all that, I have one minor addition to make which was not mentioned before to avoid confusion. Instead of having a duplicate cover and one duplicate sheet pasted on the fake, have the cover and **two** duplicate sheets. Then when you tear off the top cover and one sheet, the odd loose sheet that is left looks more natural at close quarters than the pasted sheet on the fake. A small point, but a good one. And if you do this, move that dab of wax away from the centre part of the envelope towards the side where the spine of the magazine will be, or you may find that as the fake is only held by a single sheet of paper waxed in the middle, it may tend to come out when tipping the envelope. Waxed near the spine this will not be so.

Need I explain that once the fake is made, it can be used repeatedly by merely pasting on another cover and top sheet each time. Anyway, that is so.

END OF PART ONE.

A "MAGICAL" TIP

"Now with regard to the er—what's er name, the er—you know, the De—de—"

"Decanter?—I don't mind if I do."

"No, no—the er Demon er, thing me jig."

"Demon Series?"

"No, no, the er Demon Tele-what's er name."

"Telegraph?"

"THAT'S RIGHT!"

A certain member of Tommy Handley's versatile company in er—, it's got me doing it now.

("ITMA?"—Editor.)

Thank you! As I was saying, this certain gentleman might well have endeavoured to give readers the "magical tip" as suggested by the title, but there is not sufficient room to continue the manuscript in this way. Briefly, with regard to the Demon Telegraph Magazine, we are wondering if you have hesitated in ordering your issues for 1944? Regular contributors have had their numbers reserved in advance, but unless we receive your application at once we cannot be responsible for the arrival of the "Telegraph" at your address. We give you this Tip in all sincerity. The Demon Telegraph Magazine is in keen demand. We add to our list of subscribers each day and our numbers are limited.

Better re-order for 1944 whilst you are again reminded, lest you put it off till to-morrow and be too late.

We like to keep old friends' names before us and, because of that, a first number of the new 1944 Series is reserved and waiting for you. Readers will understand that this is no quack top. The sales of the Telegraph are certain but we don't want any regular reader disappointed.

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AND NOW—PART—TWO

“MODUS OPERANDI”

(STUDIED, TESTED AND MASTERED MAGIC) BY ERIC C. LEWIS
PART TWO

Those who have Part One will not need persuading to buy this part. Four more chapters of practical, tested and detailed routines along the same lines as part one.

Magicians who have seen the manuscript have said it seems a pity to put so much fine material, and the result of so much work and thought into one book. Be that as it may, ERIC C. LEWIS has freely given of his best, and does not regret it.

NOTES ON THE CONTENTS OF PART TWO

CHAPTER FIVE. Card Magic for the Platform.

Not for close quarters only, but showy and fully routined enough for the concert platform or the stage. THE PERFECT TORN AND RISING CARD lives up to its name. Flash and colour in a card trick is not usual, you have it here. TICKETS PLEASE is a novelty in rising cards which is self-contained and is ideal for children's shows. STOP, a clever effect which will puzzle the know-all. THE IMAGINARY ACES, a crazy jumbo card effect. JUMBO CARD GUILLOTINE, a piece of apparatus quite unprepared, and a subtle method of handling which gets surprising results.

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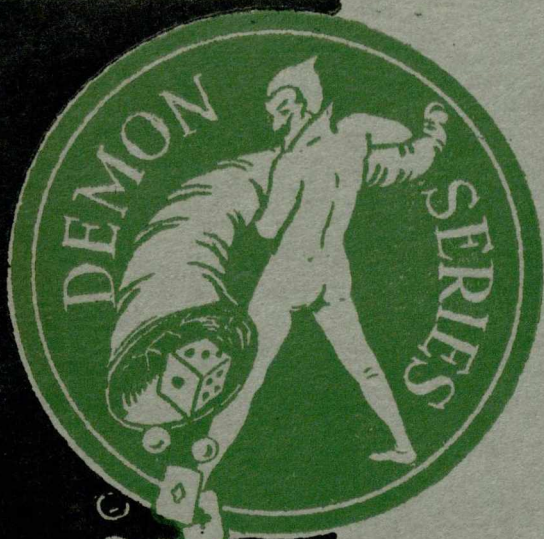
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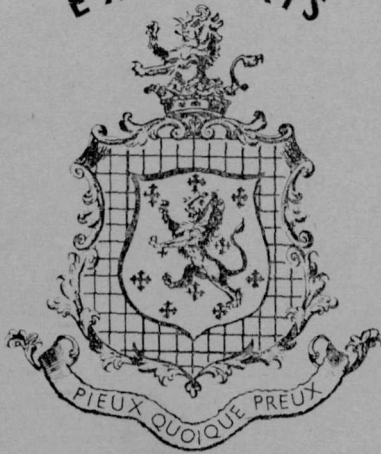
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AUTHOR OF "STUDIES IN MYSTERY" "MORE
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CHAPTER FIVE.

CARD MAGIC FOR THE PLATFORM.

THE "PERFECT" TORN AND RISING CARD.

Not all card tricks are suitable for stage presentation. The one I am about to describe was designed with stage presentation in view, and contains plenty of action and colour. The effect is thoroughly recommended and the reader is asked to peruse this description carefully because he will find several subtle and useful ideas that can be used in other routines besides the one we are describing.

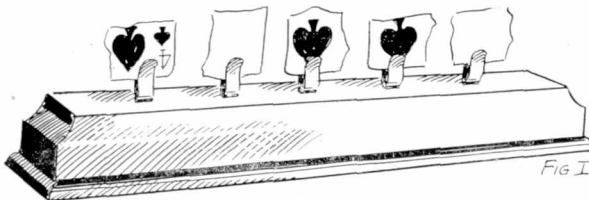
Conjuring for conjurers is not always advocated, because the main purpose of conjuring is to be entertaining. In the following routine, however, certain subtleties enter which make the effect quite baffling to conjurers, and yet there is a directness about it that retains the entertainment value. In the following description, the points which would puzzle conjurers are mentioned, but it should be remembered that these points should not be emphasised too much in performing before a lay audience.

The Routine.

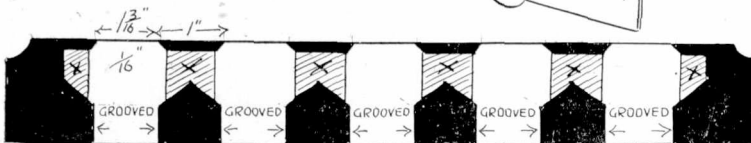
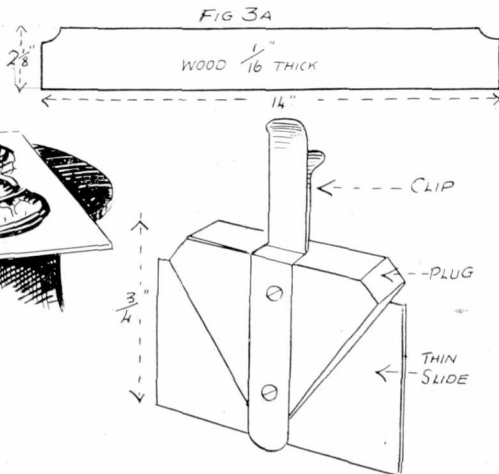
A pack of playing cards is removed from the case and after showing them to be a normal pack, are shuffled and then placed down in full view on top of a tumbler or other apparatus while a folded opera hat is shown. The hat is tossed with a spin into the air, caught, and snapped open, after which it is placed opening up on the table to the right of performer.

The pack of cards is taken and in order to have a card chosen without going down to the audience, a number is requested from a spectator, and then, holding the pack facing the audience, cards are counted one at a time and dropped into the hat until the chosen number is arrived at. This card is displayed, and the remainder of the pack dropped into the hat.

Saying that he will mark the card, the performer advances to front of platform and tears a corner from the card. Conjurers will then notice that the mutilated card is displayed in one hand, and the corner displayed in the other, and it is plain that nothing else is concealed in the hand. The spectator who called the number is asked to step forward. The torn corner is compared with the mutilated card, and the corner given into the custody of the spectator. It is clear to conjurers that no switch takes place.



The "Perfect" Down & Rising CARD



Again, with obviously no switch, the card itself is torn into five other pieces, each piece being placed in a clip on a stand, which rests on a table on the left of platform. Fig. 1 gives a general view of this stand. Next a thin tray is shown upon which rests a model Buddha in front of which is a small antique lamp. The lamp is merely a metal night-light, suitably painted. The lamp is lighted and the tray placed over the mouth of the hat as shown in Fig. 2.

Now one of the pieces of card is deliberately taken from a clip on the stand and touched to the flame in front of the Buddha. The corner vanishes in a red flash. Speeding the action a little, the performer now takes two corners, one in

each hand and touches them to the flame, and they also vanish in like manner. Then the last two corners are also vanished in the flame.

The tray is removed from the hat and placed aside; then the hat placed crown down on the palm of the outstretched right hand. Weird music plays softly, if music is available, and slowly a card, minus the corner, peeps over the top of the hat. Pausing a moment, it continues to rise and is seen to be the chosen card, now restored with the exception of the one corner. A noteworthy point is that the card rises from the **centre** of the hat and not up the side, and that it quivers mysteriously as it rises. When nearly out of the hat, it is removed and handed to the spectator, who checks the corner as being the correct one, and keeps the card and corner as a souvenir of an "impossibility."

Properties Required.

1. **A pack of cards** and a duplicate of one card. For preference the pack should be one with an all-over back design and no border.

2. **The tray, Buddha and small lamp.** These are unprepared and are used only to dress the effect. If desired they could be eliminated and the corners merely vanished in the flame of a candle.

3. **The clip-stand** for the five corners. This is a piece of apparatus of general utility for it switches swiftly and neatly, any small flat objects for other flat objects. Thus coins can be used instead of card corners.

Let us describe the stand in detail. It is well worth making up and will prove a valuable asset. The sizes given are exactly as my own model, which works perfectly. The broad principle of the stand is that the clips on top are hinged to fall back, and as the fingers apparently take the card corner, the clip with the corner is knocked backwards behind stand, and a duplicate clip containing a square of flash-paper rises from inside the stand to take its place. Thus the flash-paper is removed instead of the corner, and the switch is undetected.

The mechanical action of the stand, although simple, is difficult to describe. As the apparatus is so useful, a full description of how to build it will follow step by step, then the mechanism should be quite clear to the reader.

First out of very thin wood (mine is $\frac{1}{16}$ th) cut a shape the size and shape shown in Fig. 3A. Next take some $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch thick wood and cut the shapes indicated by the blackened portions in Fig. 3B and glue them strongly into place. The pointed sections are 1-inch across, $1\frac{1}{8}$ -inches high at the shoulders and $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches high at the apex. **Before** these are

glued in, however, grooves about $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch thick are cut into the vertical edges as indicated, so that when blocks are all glued in place, a thin slip of wood may be slid up and down in these grooves.

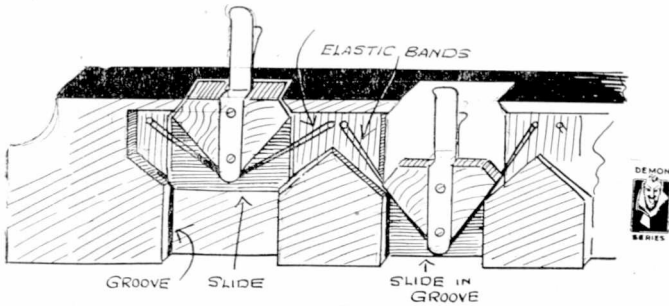


FIG 3D

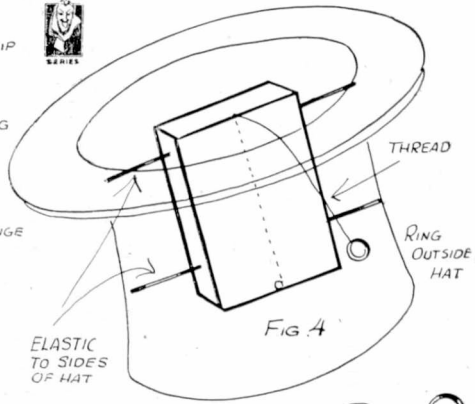
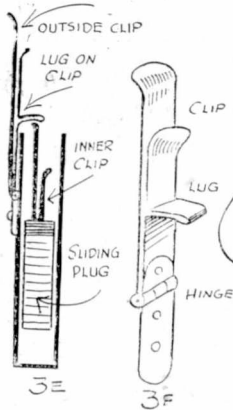


FIG 4

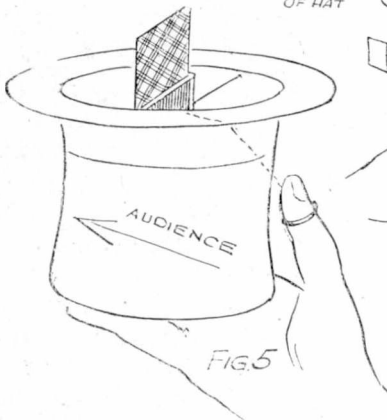


FIG 5

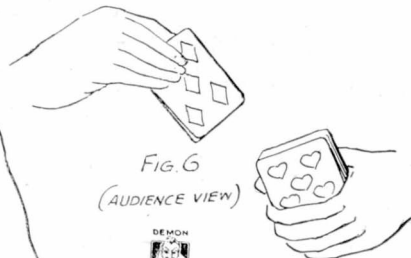


FIG 6
(AUDIENCE VIEW)



Now note the lighter shaded pieces marked "X" in Fig. 3B. Pieces of $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch thick wood are cut to these shapes

and glued into place. It will be noted that these thin strips form a continuation guide from the grooves in the uprights.

Next, five plugs are made to slide freely in these grooves. One of these is illustrated in Fig. 3C. The triangular plug is cut from wood $\frac{5}{16}$ -inch thick and glued to a rectangle of $\frac{7}{16}$ -inch thick wood about $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inches across by 1-inch deep. This makes the total thickness $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch. It is well to stand this down slightly, and also the edges of the thin slide, so the plug will slide freely in the grooves provided. Note in particular how a shoulder is cut at the top ends of the triangular plug so it will fit flush into the shoulders along the top of the stand. This is to prevent the plugs from coming out of the top. On my model, thin felt strip was glued around the edges of the plugs to minimise "talking."

Refer now to Fig. 3D. This shows two of the sliding plugs in place, one in an "up" position and one in a down. It will be seen that hooks are fitted to the inside of the stand and rubber bands are stretched across and under the plug so the normal position is for the plugs to be in the "up" position.

Another piece of thin wood is cut as in Fig. 3A and screwed to the back. Do not glue, so the back is removable for renewing rubber bands when required.

Now about the clips. These are made of clock-spring and shaped as shown in the sketches, one part of the clip being higher than the other. There is a reason for this as will be explained in the Notes at the end of this article. Fig. 3E gives a sectional side view of the stand, showing the shape of the clips. One clip is fixed to the plug as in Fig. 3C, and the other is hinged to the back board (Fig. 3E). Note the peculiar shape of the hinged clip which is shown in Fig. 3F. This has a lug which, when clip is upright, holds the inner clip on the sliding plug down out of sight as shown in Fig. 3E.

When this hinged clip is knocked with the thumb, it drops back out of sight and the inner plug is released and shoots up, putting duplicate clip in its place.

With these details, you should have no difficulty in making this stand or getting your dealer to make it up for you from these instructions. To finish the stand off, it is advisable to fix moulding around the base at the front and sides as in Fig. 1. This not only enables the apparatus to stand steadily, but also helps to disguise depth of stand.

4. The next item to describe is not such hard going. It consists of a simple device whereby a card can be caused to rise from the centre of an opera hat. Fig. 4 shows this apparatus clearly. Make a flat box of a size to loosely hold a playing card. This is open at the top. Cover this with

black cloth and then fix this so it is suspended in the centre near the top of the opera hat by means of lengths of elastic from the sides of the box to the spring-hinged uprights in the sides of the hat.

Get a length of thread and tie a tiny bent slip of card to one end (Fig. 4A) and pass the thread through the back of the hat with a needle about two inches from the brim and tie a small wire ring to the outside. The length of thread should be such that when the bent slip of card is pushed down to the bottom of the card-riser, the ring comes in contact with the side of the hat outside.

If a card is pushed down into the riser, wedging into the bent slip of card, the hat may be folded flat, the elastic allowing the riser to lay flat on the bottom of the hat first. Thus the hat, in folded position, can be shown freely both sides. Open the hat with the ring at the back, and the riser will be pulled into position. If the hat is held on the hand with the thumb behind, the thumb can be inserted into the ring, and by gently pulling down on the ring, the card will be made to rise from the hat (Fig. 5). A slight waving motion of the hat will cause the card to vibrate (on the elastic) as it rises, giving an uncanny effect. What you will like about this method is its simplicity and the fact that it is self-contained.

Two parts of the trick will now be clear; the card rising, and the switch of the corners. When the method of forcing a card and dealing with the "corner" problem is explained, the whole routine will be clear to the reader.

Preparation.

Take you two duplicate cards and place them together, holding them as one card. Now carefully tear off a square of about one-sixth of the area of the card from the top right-hand corner of the two cards. Make the tear away from the back towards the face of the cards so not to leave a white edge around the tear. If you tear the opposite way, you will have a white line on the design at the back, which will injure the effect.

Not mixing the pieces, place the torn cards down and the corners also. Take the top torn card and the top corner of a card (the two parts of the same card) and load the mutilated card into the card-riser, folding the hat as described. Then take the corner which belongs to it and place it face down behind the hat, clipping it in the folded side of the hat from where it can easily be finger-palmed when picking up the hat.

Return to the other torn card and destroy the corner as this is not wanted. Place the mutilated card on top of the pack and put the pack into its case.

Fold small squares of flash-paper and put them into the inner clips of the special stand. If you wish you may paint a suggestion of card pips on these, but that is not essential. Push the clips down so flash-paper is out of sight and bring up the hinged clips to hold them down as already described. With the Buddha and lamp on tray on your table, you are ready to begin.

Modus Operandi.

Remove cards from case and shuffle them, retaining the mutilated card on top of the pack. Owing to the method of tearing, the fact that a corner is missing from the card is never noticed. Place pack down and take up the hat. Finger-palm the concealed corner in the right fingers, show hat, open it and set it on table with wire ring to the rear.

Again take the pack and ask for a number. Count cards off to that number, dropping each card into the hat in front of the riser so they will not foul the thread. Actually this counting is a "seconds count" facilitated by the torn corner. Fig. 6 shows the audience view of the count. Notice how the pack is held partly facing the audience in the left hand, and the right hand takes the cards by the corner one by one from the top of the pack. The thumb of the left hand holds the mutilated card back while the right hand takes the card second from the top each time. Note in particular how each time a card is taken, the right fingers hide the top corner. Do this with every card for the sake of consistency. When you reach the number named, the top mutilated card is taken in the same manner, the fingers now hiding the fact that a corner is missing.

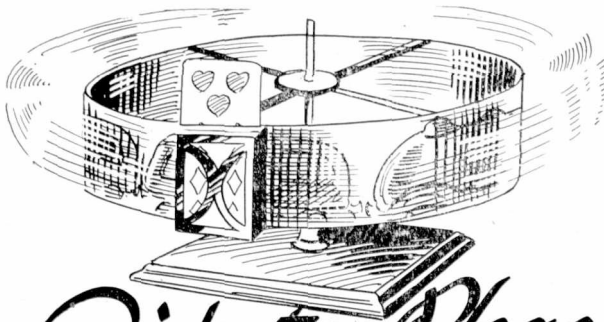
The left hand drops the rest of the pack into the hat among the counted cards while the right is displaying "chosen" card. Remember that the corner is still finger-palmed in the right hand where it was all through the counting. Practice the next move to make it natural. Do it in quite a nonchalant manner taking it for granted yourself that there is nothing to conceal. The left hand comes up and grips the card while the right immediately making a tearing motion with the fingers, scraping down the torn corner of the mutilated card and immediately leaving the card in the left hand with the mutilated corner in view, and exposing the corner from the finger-palm in the fingers of the right hand. The tear is done while walking forward and without looking at the card, quite carelessly.

Now, owing to the fact that both cards were torn together, the corner can actually be handed to spectator and while the performer holds the card, the corners can be compared. This is a subtle point. Actually they would not fit exactly, but owing to the slight unsteadiness of two hands, an exact fit cannot be attempted. Anyway, it is not necessary.

The rest of the effect is plain sailing and is worked as already described. The card torn into five and placed into the clips. The Buddha and lamp placed over hat. The corner switched for flash-paper by means of the stand, and the card caused to rise restored from the hat. This card can be given as a souvenir and will stand the most rigid comparing with the corner as they both belong to one another.

Final Note.

At the time of writing, acid tubes are scarce and that is why the Buddha and lamp was used in the preceding description. My original intention was to prepare each square of flash-paper with an acid tube and potash. This would be loaded into the stand. This is the reason for the clip having one lug at the back higher than the front one. The size of the tube makes it difficult to go into a clip, so it was folded into the top of the square of paper and the square pushed into the clip leaving the end with the tube resting on the open part of the clip. Perhaps when this book is published, or at least very soon after, I hope acid tubes will again be available, so this point is mentioned. One then has the dramatic effect of merely removing the corners or card from the clips, throwing them towards the hat, breaking the tube with the fingers, and the corners vanish in mid-air in a flash of flame.



Tickets Please!

TICKETS, PLEASE.

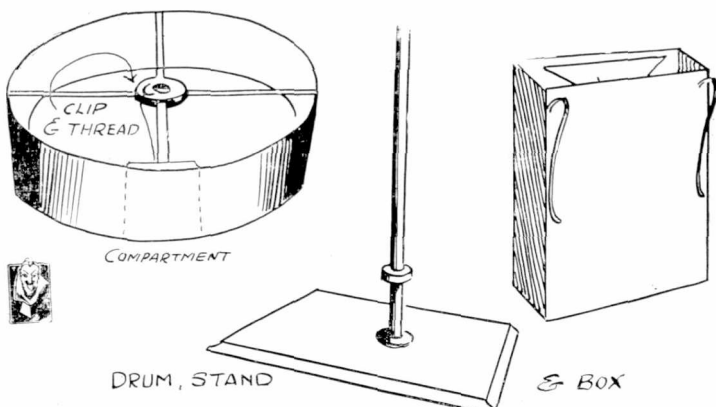
This effect, given to me for publication by Jimmy Flowers, is a really novel presentation of the rising card trick, and is one which we can recommend as having a good degree of entertainment value, a factor I always consider before putting anything into print. It is, incidentally, one of the few card effects which will appeal to the juvenile audience—in fact, the children will probably appreciate it better than adult audiences.

A hollow circular drum is shown, and a clear view is obtained through it. Around the side of the drum is painted a picture of a railway train and carriages as shown in the illustrations. Wires across the top hold a circular disc with a hole in it in the centre top of the drum, and another at the bottom of the drum. Thus the drum can be placed upon an upright spindle which has a stop about an inch from the bottom and spun roundabout fashion. This is done to demonstrate the action. A reference to the drawings will make the whole apparatus clear.

A card is now chosen from the pack and shuffled back. The performer then explains that the chosen card represents the helper's ticket for a train journey. The pack is dropped into a small open box just large enough to hold the pack (something like an ordinary card case without the flap), and this is hung on to the side of the train.

The train is sent upon its journey by giving the drum a spin, and then, as the performer calls, "Tickets, Please," a card is seen to rise from the holder. When the train stops, the card is seen to be the chosen one.

When performing for children, this effect can be dressed up by having a boy and giving him a whistle, flag and so on, according to the resources of the performer and his ability to



build up the fun. Further, for children, there are no complications in the effect. The simple choice and rising of the chosen card can be understood by even the little ones.

The Apparatus.

This is a combination of the rising cards and Urin's spider web. The card rises by means of a thread which winds around the centre spindle as the train revolves. The apparatus is a circular drum of tin. A bottomless cake tin is the ideal thing for making the apparatus. Soldered across the top and bottom are four stiff wire supports in the centre of which is a tin disc with a hole in it.

Inside the drum of tin is soldered a very thin tin compartment of such a size to neatly take a playing card. This is open at the top, and there is also a small hole near the top. As a thread is to be pulled through this hole, it is best to fix a tiny eyelet, or solder a tiny circle of thin wire around the hole so that the sharp edge of the tin will not cut the thread.

The stand is merely a base of wood with an upright metal spindle. In the model this spindle was made from a rod from a Meccano set, and a Meccano collar was fixed about an inch from the bottom. Of course, a more elaborate job with brass rod upright and soldered collar can be made if desired.

The container for the pack is a simple box as described open at the top, cut away at the front so the cards may be in full view, and two wire hooks soldered to the back so it may be hung upon the drum.

A thread is inserted through the tiny hole at the top of the compartment, and fixed firmly to the top of the drum itself. The other end of the thread, the length of which is best found by experiment, terminates in a tiny metal clip which can be

clipped tightly on to the spindle when required. If a Meccano rod is used for the spindle, suitable clips are obtainable ready-made.

To prepare, a duplicate of the card to be forced is pushed into the compartment inside the drum, pushing down the thread with it. Then the clip is stuck on to a small lump of wax on the centre circle and the surplus thread pushed inside the container. Notice how the thread runs along the side of one of the cross-wires, so making it practically invisible even at close quarters.

If the reader is fastidious, or a good mechanic, one could easily use thin copper tubing for the cross-bars and have the one connecting with the compartment fixed directly over the hole. In this case the thread would run up the inside of the rod. This, however, is not necessary as one cannot give the drum for close inspection owing to the false compartment—unless he is clever enough to also make this secret, opening it at the correct moment. But I do not think the trouble would be justified.

Modus Operandi.

First the drum is shown, with fingers holding it over opening of the compartment. It is then placed upon the stand and spun to show how it works. The card is then forced from the pack, returned and shuffled in, after which pack is placed into the holder. The holder is then clipped on to the outside of the drum so it lies level with the secret compartment, and as this is being done, the other hand takes the clip and presses it on to the centre spindle.

When the drum is spun, the performer watches for the thread to be taken up, and then calls "Tickets, Please" just as the card is about to be forced upwards.

If one desired, one could have four thinner card holders, and have the pack of cards split into four packets, one packet going into each holder and representing four passengers. These would be hung on different parts of the drum and would make for better balance, although my model, with one holder works perfectly. The effect may be enhanced with the four holders as it would seem difficult to know in which was the chosen card.

"STOP."

This effect, given to me by Captain J. E. Stone is a straight card effect, but one which should appeal to a good many readers owing to its simplicity and directness of working. The effect itself is not new, but the method of working will make it appear to be almost a miracle to the uninitiated.

A pack of cards is handed out for shuffling. It is returned and the performer asked to take a card, look at it and remember it. The pack is handed to the spectator with the request to return the card to the pack himself and then thoroughly shuffle it in.

The spectator hands back the pack while he, at the bidding of the conjurer, securely blindfolds him. The spectator is reminded that he shuffled the pack, removed a card and shuffled it back himself (a very slight deviation from truth, but true in essence). He is then handed the pack and asked to hand cards one at a time from the top of the pack to the performer.

So the spectator hands cards to the performer one by one until suddenly, while the assistant has just taken a card in his hand from the pack, the performer cries "Stop!" (loud so everyone can hear it), "The card you hold is your chosen card, and it is the Ten of Hearts." This is duly acknowledged to be correct and, as Captain Stone tells us, you bow to tremendous applause and are booked again for a future occasion at double the fee!

Modus Operandi.

You require a pack of cards, large handkerchief or bandage for blindfold and about seven extra cards which are held together in a paper-clip fixed to a safety-pin which is attached to the trousers at the back just far enough back to be invisible from the audience, or if in dress, under the coat tails. The seventh card (if seven cards are used) is a duplicate of a card to be forced which is, let us suppose, the Ten of Hearts. These seven cards have their backs towards the trousers.

A Ten of Hearts is on top of the pack, and this is palmed off while the spectator is shuffling, to be added again to the pack ready for the usual force. The card is returned, shuffled and handed to the performer as described.

The performer takes the pack in his left hand faces to the palm, and then turns to a table, which is on his left, to pick up the blindfold in his right hand, and as he does so his left hand goes beneath his coat and adds the packet of cards to the pack, pulling them out together. He immediately extends the hand a little away from the body so as he turns forward with the blindfold in his hand, the impression is given that his hand has not been near his body.

The pack is returned to the spectator and the situation reviewed. Performer may turn his back while the cards are being handed to him. Six cards are received and then just as the seventh card is about to be passed, the performer cries

“Stop” (loud so everyone may hear it). “You are holding the selected card, and it is the Ten of Hearts.” And there you are.

Need I mention that the fact that the spectator returns the card to the pack and shuffles it in before returning the cards, makes his trick very much more effective. Try it.

THE IMAGINARY ACES.

Do not tell me this is crazy—I know it. But then, there are quite a number of performer's who can get this crazy stuff over quite successfully as witness the various routines with an “invisible pack.” This is along those lines, and depends mainly upon the performer's ability to act the part.

A simple stand consisting of a board with a ledge along the bottom of sufficient size to hold four jumbo cards side by side is on one table, and another special stand of a size to hold a packet of four cards on the other table. The performer introduces the pack of jumbo cards and offers to perform the famous four-ace trick. Then very seriously he runs through the pack and pretends to remove the four aces one by one and place them in a row on the stand. Actually no cards are removed at all, but the performer must act exactly as though removing the four aces, naming them, and placing them face to the audience on the stand.

The imaginary aces are now turned in pantomime so their “backs” are towards the audience. Now says the performer, “We will place three indifferent cards on to each ace.” With this he deals slowly and deliberately, three cards backs out on to each imaginary ace, emphasising that only three cards are dealt on each.

A free choice of one of the four packets is given. This is taken up and fanned to show three indifferent cards, but the performer names them as the “ace” and three cards, drawing attention to the name of the “ace” which is supposed to be there.

These three cards are placed on the small stand while the performer explains that his task is to make the aces leave each of the three packets and arrive on the small stand, while the three indifferent cards return to the others. A few passes are made and the performer shows the three packets one by one to demonstrate that the aces have vanished. The audience are surprised to find that there are now **four** cards in each packet, all indifferent, while the three indifferent cards on the stand turn out to be **four aces**. Thus everything concludes as

it would have done had the real trick been worked. As I said, crazy—but are not all conjurers that way?

Modus Operandi.

I will first describe the simplest way, and then go on to an improvement which I recommend should be added. I describe the simplest form first because at the time of writing Jumbo cards are not easily obtainable, and the method as I work it needs duplicate cards. The first method can be worked by anyone who has nineteen assorted giant cards.

You will require the nineteen jumbo cards, a supply of roughing solution which can easily be purchased from a magical depot and a black-art stand to change a packet of three cards for another packet of four. Four of the nineteen cards must, of course, be aces.

The black-art stand will be well-known to most readers. It is usually a square of wood with three strips of wood fixed on to form a "U" shaped frame to exactly hold a jumbo card. A thin flap is cut to fit inside this shape and painted the same colour as the stand. Thus one can put four cards behind the flap on the stand and it looks empty. Place three visibly on the stand and turn all seven cards round, with the flap sandwiched in the middle, and when the cards above the flap are removed, the four cards are found and the original three concealed behind the flap. Forgive me for explaining this, but some readers may be beginners.

To prepare the cards, simply apply roughing solution to the backs of three cards and also to the faces of three other cards. When dry, stack these cards so the top card of the packet is an odd card, then a pair of cards consisting of first a rough-backed card and then a rough-faced card, these clinging together like one card, follow with two odd cards and another pair of rough, and so on throughout the packet. If you count the packet they will appear as only twelve cards owing to the pairs clinging together.

Place the four aces faces out on the flap-stand and cover them with the flap, and you are ready for the "effect."

Show the packet of cards and go through the pantomime of placing the four aces in a row on the larger stand. Then deal three cards one by one on each "ace." Owing to the fact that the centre card of each packet of three is a "roughed pair," there will actually be four cards in each packet unknown to the audience.

Give a free choice of one of these packets and place it face out on the flap stand. Then turn all the cards including the flap with back to audience. Bring the effect to its conclusion by showing four cards in each packet, each being an indifferent one, and finally revealing the cards in the small stand to be the four aces.

An Improved Version.

This is the version that I use myself and is recommended as the effect is clearer owing to the cards all being carefully named. The cards I use are the four aces, the four twos, the four threes, the four fours, and an extra card each of the two, three and four of spades. The faces of the extra three spade cards are liberally prepared with roughing fluid, and the backs of the three of clubs, the three of diamonds and the three of hearts.

The cards are then stacked as follows: Top card of the packet (face up) two of clubs, then the three of clubs (roughed back) and two of spades (roughed face). Under these the 4C, 2D, 3D (rough back) 3S (rough face), 4D, 2S, 3S, 4S, 2H, 3H (rough back) 4S (rough face) and 4H.

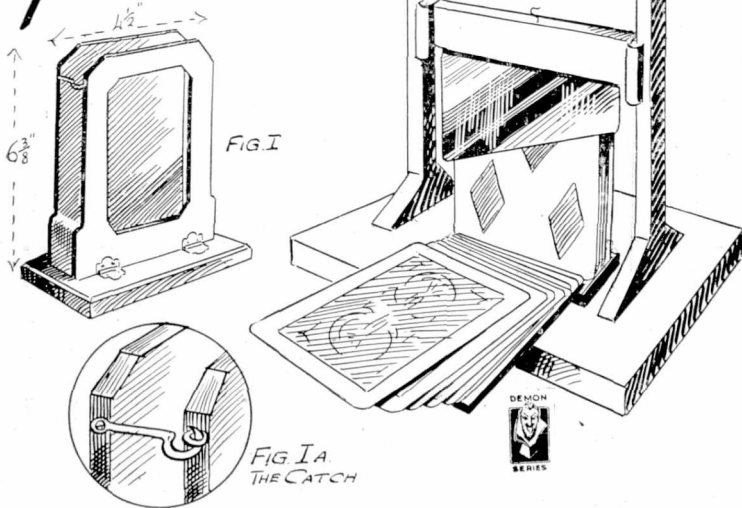
In working this packet of cards is fanned face up and the four imaginary aces removed as previously, the aces purporting to be placed on the stand in the following order, clubs, diamonds, spades, hearts. Then the "three" indifferent cards are dealt upon each "ace." In doing this the two, three and four of clubs are dealt on to the imaginary ace of clubs (the two of spades being concealed behind the three of clubs); the two, three and four of diamonds next (the three of spades being behind the three of diamonds); the two, three and four of spades next; and the two, three and four of hearts last (the four of spades being behind the three of hearts). All cards are dealt face outwards.

The spade packet is then forced in the usual way by having someone call a number between one and four, and as two or three will be called, the count is made from the end convenient to settle the spade packet. This is taken and placed face out on the small stand. Then reversed to bring the cards back out and the aces to the fore.

The club packet is taken and fanned to show the "four" cards, four, three, two and imaginary ace. The packet is turned back to the audience and as the performer says he will place the ace at the face, he removes the actual back card (two of clubs) and places it on the face. This leaves the two of spades at the back. The same is repeated with the other two packets.

To conclude the effect, the performer pretends to pass the aces to the stand and the spades from the stand to the three packets, then taking the packets one by one face out, they are dealt to show that the spades have arrived in the places of the "aces" and the aces have actually arrived on the small stand in the place of the spades.

The Card Guillotine



THE JUMBO CARD GUILLOTINE.

This is one of the neatest Jumbo card effects I have seen for a long time. I consider it more effective and startling than the earlier "gallows" effect, and the method of handling is so beautifully simple. The effect was given to me several years ago by Mr. J. Beattie, a clever magical mechanic who hails from Dundee, and he has given me permission to publish details in this book.

The apparatus I have in my possession was made by Mr. Beattie and I find the sizes are just about right, so in this article I give those sizes for your guidance. I do not recommend that it be built smaller for use with normal size cards because, although I have not actually tried it in this size, I imagine it would be rather clumsy to handle. In Jumbo cards there is no difficulty at all.

The effect can be very briefly stated, and I shall describe the straight working of the main effect. This is good in itself, but it is better worked in combination with something else to make a definite routine. My own routine cannot be described herein because it has been based mainly upon a published

routine which used the old type of gallows. For those interested I refer them to the article by Clayton Rawson, called "A Murder Mystery with Cards," in Volume 40, Number 3, of the "Sphinx." Of course, many will work out routines of their own and this is all to the good.

So then, the effect. A pack of Jumbo cards is shuffled, one is chosen and returned to the centre of the pack, which is then squared up. A wooden houlette which stands upon a base and which also has a drop front, is shown and examined. The pack of Jumbo cards is placed into this houlette, where it remains in view owing to a window having been cut in the front flap of the houlette.

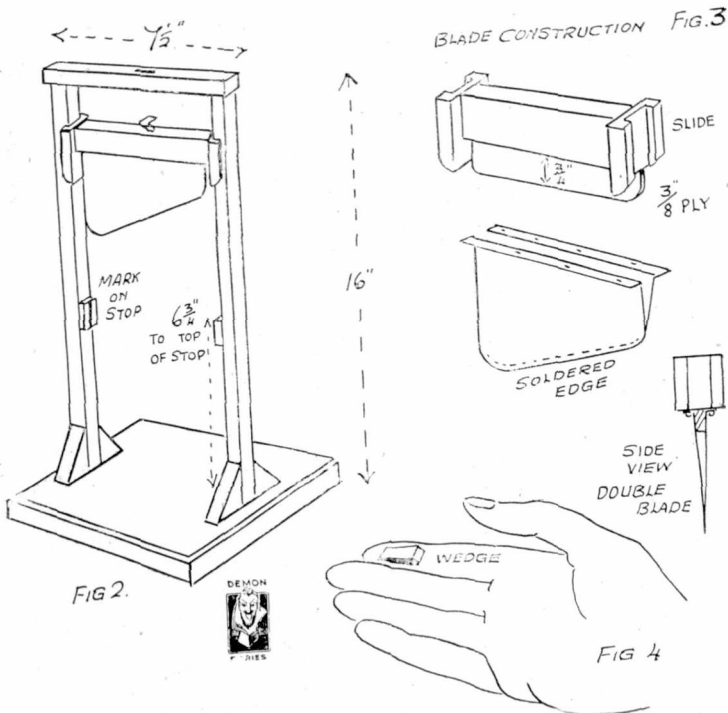
The guillotine is then introduced. A glance at the drawings which accompany this article will give a general idea of this. In essence it is a miniature guillotine with the usual shape of blade, but there are no stocks for the head as on the genuine article. By releasing a catch at the top, the blade drops swiftly and with a satisfying "thud."

Taking the houlette containing the pack of cards, the performer sets this on the guillotine underneath the blade. After suitable patter or by-play, the catch at the top of the guillotine is released, and the blade drops. The rest happens swiftly. The blade cuts into the pack near the centre, the front flap of the houlette drops forward and with it all the cards in front of the blade. It is seen that the blade has cut the pack at the chosen card, as this is now the face card of the cut packet and is immediately behind the blade.

The Apparatus.

There is no faking of the guillotine, but it must be constructed in the correct way to make sure that it will work with accuracy and sureness. First we will describe the houlette. This is illustrated in Fig. 1. The base is a block of wood $5\frac{3}{4}$ -inches long by $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inches wide by about $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch thick. On this is mounted near the back an upright rectangle of $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch plywood $4\frac{1}{2}$ -inches wide by $6\frac{3}{4}$ -inches high. Then space is left to accommodate about 36 Jumbo cards and another rectangle the same size, but with a window cut into it, is hinged in place so it can drop forward. Two wooden blocks mounted at the sides and glued to the base and the back, act as stops so that when the front is closed, the two sides of the houlette remain parallel. The rectangles of ply should have a decorative extension at the side to match this block, so the block will not be in the way of the pack of cards. Fig. 1 shows this clearly. A catch, which is a simple brass hook and eye, is fitted near the top of the houlette at the left side, but it is very important that this catch be upside down as shown in Fig. 1A.

The model of the guillotine I have, and which is illus-



trated in Fig. 2, stands on a base $8\frac{3}{4}$ -inches square, but for ease in packing this could very well be $8\frac{3}{4}$ -inches long but about 6-inches wide. The uprights are $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch square strip-wood and are steadied by triangles of wood glued and screwed to the base and uprights. Two wooden stops are fixed to the insides of the uprights so the top of the stops are $6\frac{3}{4}$ -inches from the surface of the base.

The blade needs special description. A block of wood $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inches deep by $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch thick forms the cross bar and wooden slides are fitted to the end so this bar may slide up and down the uprights freely. (See Fig. 3.) This block, instead of being solid wood, is best hollowed out and filled with lead. This gives extra weight and will make the working of the effect snappier by rapidly forcing open the houlette. If the blade is too light, the blade will merely wedge into the pack and you will have to open the houlette to exhibit chosen card, a contingency which weakens the effect considerably.

The blade itself is made from two sheets of tin-plate cut to the correct shape and sweated together along the blades' "edge." When this is done the edge should be lightly filed

and rubbed with emery cloth to make it quite smooth. Under the sliding bar is a strip of $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch ply, and when the blade is fixed to the block, this strip comes between the two sections of the blade, so making the blade wedge-shaped in action. Notice how the tops of the sections are flanged, so the blade may be screwed to the cross-bar. If you have the facilities to shape this blade out of solid steel, so much the better. In this case it will probably be unnecessary to fill the block with lead as a steel blade should give sufficient weight. A simple catch device to hold the blade to the top of the guillotine until it is required to drop should be fitted. This can be left to the constructor and will create no difficulty.

When the guillotine is complete, drop the blade, and then lift it slightly until the pointed corner lies level with the side of the stop-blocks, and mark plainly in pencil on this block a line which is exactly level with the edge of the blade. The effect of this line is such as if the blade were a trifle too wide and scored the block every time it dropped. You can, of course, actually score the block with a knife if you wish. That is all you will want to know about the apparatus, but we have two further confessions to make.

The pack of cards, which should contain only about 36 cards, is trimmed to form a stripper pack so any cards reversed can be stripped out lengthwise. The other confession is a tiny gadget which has not yet been mentioned, as no-one is supposed to know it exists. It is simply a tiny wedge of wood. The wedge I use is $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch long, $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch wide, and $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thick at the thickest part. This will rest easily on the forefinger as in Fig. 4 and can be concealed by placing the thumb over it.

Modus Operandi.

The only preparation necessary is to place the wedge where you can easily obtain it. The best place probably, and the position I use, is to rest it on the base of the houlette at the back. In describing the routine, we shall use this position.

First have a card freely chosen from the pack, and while it is being shown to the rest of the audience, reverse the pack so when the card is returned it goes in the opposite way. You may cut or shuffle once or twice if you wish, but you must make sure that the chosen card is near the centre of the pack. As you return to the platform, a vital move is made. The chosen card is stripped out of the pack for about half-an-inch, not more. The pack is placed **face up** on the table, with the stripped card protruding from the rear and unseen by the audience.

Pick up the houlette and steal off the wedge between the thumb and forefinger with the point of the wedge towards the tips, and hand the houlette for examination.

While this is being examined, pick up the pack of cards in this special manner. The right hand goes to the back and the left to the front, lifting the pack. As it is lifted, the wedge is slid on to the face of the protruding card and then, pressing slightly downwards on the protruding card, it is pushed back into the pack **together with the wedge**, and all is squared up. The wedge now holds a substantial "break" in front of the chosen card. The pack is then held by the top (to conceal this break) while the other hand takes back the houlette with its front now open, places the pack into it and then closes the front flap, which is fastened by the catch.

The houlette may now be handled quite freely, but the top of the cards should not be unduly exposed. Show now the guillotine and demonstrate its action. With the blade in the "up" position, place the houlette underneath the blade, and as you do so, see that the break in the pack is exactly level with the pencil line. This is very easy to do and it makes sure that when the blade drops, it will drop cleanly into the "break." Thus the trick is finished. With the "break" correctly aligned, release the blade. It falls heavily into the break, strikes the catch that holds the houlette flap in position and knocks it open (this being the reason for putting the catch on upside down). The wedged nature of the blade forces the cards forward and the houlette drops open, the cards in front of the blade being shot forward, the chosen card appearing in view against the blade, and the wedge, very conveniently dropping to the bottom of the houlette where it remains invisible.

There is nothing to prevent you having two or three cards chosen, and stripping them one at a time, stealing the wedge from the bottom of the houlette while the cards are being gathered up, but I think the one card is sufficient as the surprise is then gone and any others will be an anti-climax.

Worked in combination with such an effect as described at the beginning of this article, this item can be made quite startling and very entertaining.

CHAPTER SIX.

THE "LEWIS" UTILITY LIFT TRAY.

In this chapter I am proud to introduce something which I believe will be widely used by conjurers in many different ways. The possibilities are almost limitless according to the ingenuity of the individual. After describing the construction of this special tray, some widely different uses, each being a complete effect, will be described. These effects will give the thoughtful reader some insight into the many possible uses of the apparatus.

Inasmuch a private manufacturer has already used a "lift tray" in two of his effects, albeit a different method is used which could not be applied to the effects to be described later, and another dealer is, I believe, working on his own idea for a lift tray, a brief description of the origin of my tray may be in order.

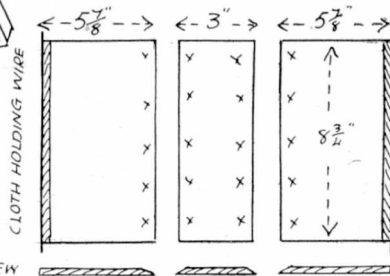
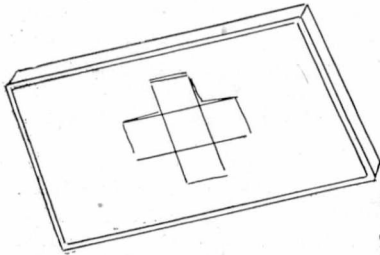
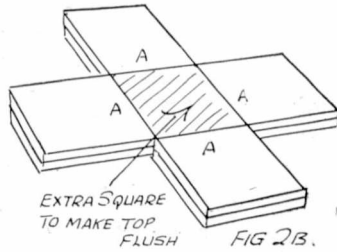
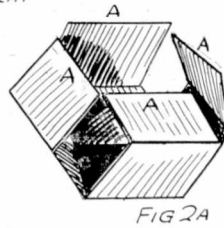
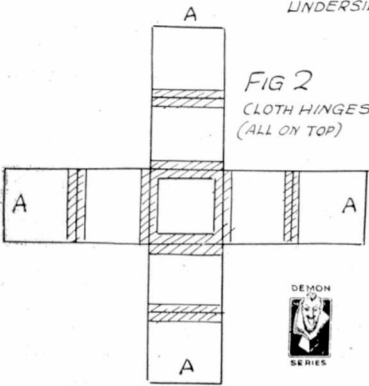
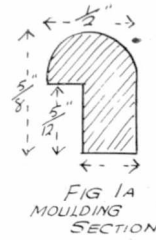
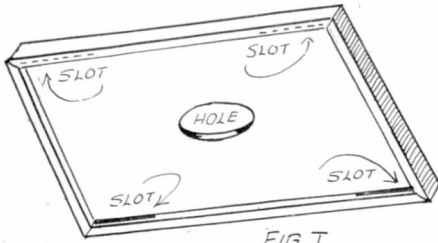
It began when I desired to perform the "Slam-Thru Glass Penetration" (described in these pages) and found that a tray with a "lift" which would lower and raise a glass of milk steadily, would answer the problem. First I approached a well-known mechanic, but for reasons concerned with War conditions, he could not help me. Therefore I experimented with several different trays. They began to get too elaborate, so I let them rest awhile. Then suddenly a simple idea struck me, and I quickly made one up in cardboard. It worked like a charm and even in the rough cardboard stage, the model would lower and lift a glass of milk without spilling a drop. The final model, made of plywood and enamelled included a refinement whereby the tray could be shown top and bottom with impunity, and even handed to someone to hold during the performance. Furthermore it was less than half-an-inch thick.

Later I discovered that Jack Hughes had a special tray and so I contacted him and we compared notes. His tray, built for one particular purpose, and later adapted for another effect, was quite useless for my purpose. So then, I feel quite justified in describing my tray in detail, particularly as the effects performed with it are in no wise akin with the others.

HOW TO BUILD THE "LEWIS" LIFT TRAY.

The following description gives the dimensions of my own tray as used for the "Slam-Thru" glass effect. This is for ease in description, but the sizes can be altered to suit whatever purpose you have in mind. Later effects show different sizes of tray and "lift."

First a rectangle of plywood $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thick and $14\frac{3}{4}$ -inches long by $8\frac{1}{2}$ -inches wide had a disc $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inches in diameter cut from the centre and a piece of tray-moulding $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch deep glued around it. The moulding was specially grooved to get

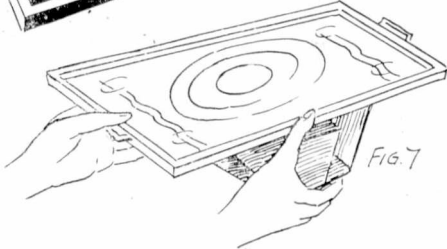
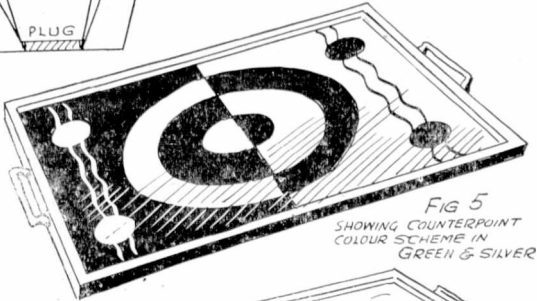
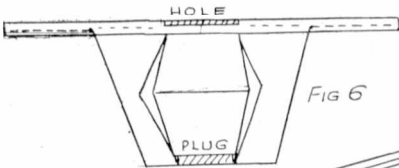


the correct size which is shown in the section in Fig. 1A. It will be noted that before fixing the moulding, four slots were cut about half-way into the moulding on both sides at each end

of the tray (Fig. 1). The purpose of these will shortly be clear. The length of these slots was $2\frac{3}{4}$ -inches.

Next the lift was constructed. This can be made of metal, very thin wood, or even stiff cardboard, cloth-hinged will work perfectly. It was made by cutting two pieces 3-inches square and eight pieces 3-inches by $2\frac{3}{4}$ -inches. These were strongly cloth-hinged as shown in Fig. 2. The extra 3-inch square was then glued to the centre on the inside of the folded "lift" so that when the "lift" was folded flat it would be quite flush along the top. Figures 2, 2A and 2B will make this clear. Fig. 2 shows the lift opened flat and minus the extra square on the centre; Fig 2 shows the lift half open and Fig 3 shows the lift folded flat as it will be in the "collapsed" position in the finished tray.

The next step is to cloth-hinge the loose ends marked "A" in the diagrams to the underside of the tray so that they form a square around the hole and so that the whole thing can be collapsed flat against the tray as shown in Fig. 3. When dry, it will be found that this will act as the required "lift" and can be raised and lowered easily with the fingers resting under the tray, and owing to the compensating value of the four hinged, "walls," the floor of the lift will remain steady and level. If the underside of the tray was now painted black, this would be a useful and practical tray which could be used in the various effects, but we follow now with a feature which



not only prevents finger-stretching needlessly, but also allows the tray to be shown both sides with impunity.

Another square of thin ply is cut to drop easily into the recess underneath the tray. Across the **extreme ends** of this board are fixed two stiff wires, one each end, which protrude about $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch. These are pressed into grooves cut along the edge and then held by gluing a strip of cloth around the edges. This piece of wood is then cut into three parts as shown in Fig. 4 and the edges marked x x x are filed to a thin knife-like edge.

These three pieces are then placed together with the knife-edges touching and a rectangle of felt is glued over the whole lot, trimming it neatly after it has dried. The felt is glued on the opposite side from the one which contains the bevels made by the filing of the edges. It will be seen that the felt-covered side looks perfectly flat, but owing to the bevels, it will fold easily into a kind of square "U" shape.

Manoeuvre the four protruding wires into the four slots so the felt side of the board is outside and press the whole thing flat. The flattened board nests into the recess under the tray and the felt forms a smooth flat bottom. Next take the disc which remained after cutting the hole in the tray, or better, cut a new one which will be a perfect fit, and glue this into place in the hole, but only gluing it to the bottom of the "lift" and not to the tray itself. This leaves the top of the tray flat. Enamel the tray nicely in a design to conceal the presence of the circular plug, something like the design shown in Fig. 5, and fix metal handles to the side.

Fig. 6 shows a side view of the tray when the lift is down and Fig. 7 shows how the fingers can control the lowering and rising of the lift. Note how the wire slide in the slots inside the moulding to allow the false bottom to drop.

Just one final point for the conscientious performer. By fitting a simple locking device to the sides of the tray, and by cutting and painting the plug expertly, the tray would stand handling by the audience without any suspicion that it was anything but a normal tray. This locking device is not necessary, however, so I leave it to those who need it to work out their own method—a not very difficult task.

METHODS OF CONCEALING THE LIFT.

In using the "Lift Tray," it is obvious that the action of the lift would be seen by the audience unless some kind of cover is afforded. There are various ways of doing this, according to the type of effect you are performing and the facilities at your disposal. I have no doubt but what many

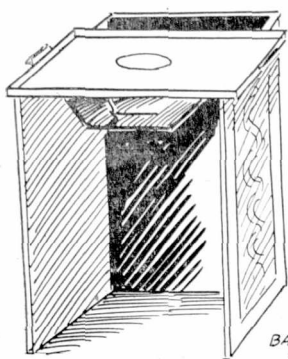


FIG 1
BACK VIEW OF
3 FOLD SCREEN

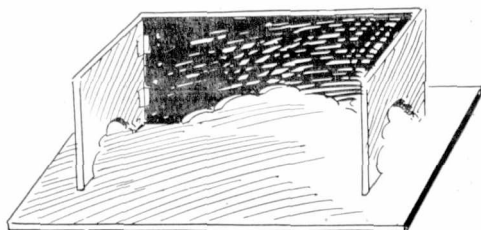


FIG 2 BACK VIEW
OF TABLE TOP

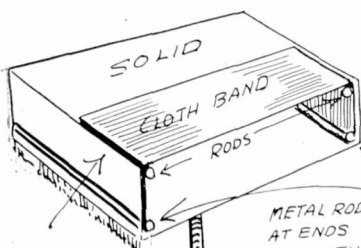


FIG 4
BACK VIEW

METAL RODS
AT ENDS
OF CLOTH
BAND

SOLID
SIDE



THE USE OF A
CLOTH TO CONCEAL "LIFT"



METHODS OF CONCEALING THE "LIFT"

readers, if they construct this tray, will devise methods to suit their own peculiar requirements, but here are described several ways which have been found to be suitable.

Method One. If you use a three-fold screen about the height of a table, this can be set square on the stage with the open part away from the audience and the tray rested across the top. If rested so tray is on the front section of the screen, the tray will remain closed, but if placed on so the tray is supported only by the ends resting on the two sides of the screen, the lift can be dropped. (See Fig. 1.) Readers of "More Studies in Mystery" will remember "Penelease" which uses a special stand. I have found this of particular use for the tray.

Method Two. This is similar to above method, but here you use a specially constructed base with an open back as shown in Fig. 2. This is apparently to isolate and lift the tray into full view, and is used exactly as above but resting on a table-top.

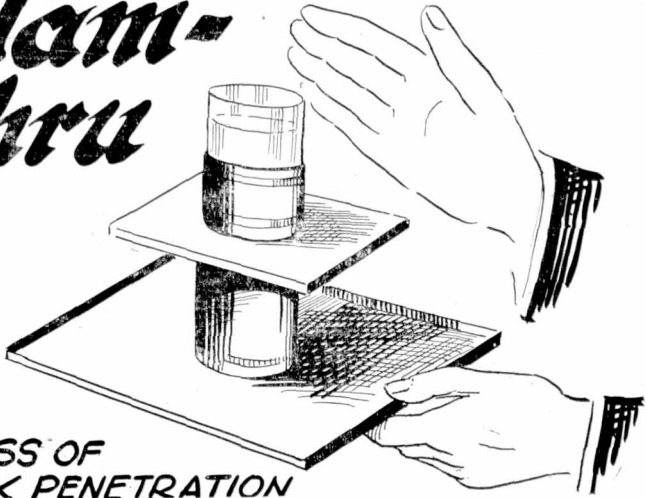
Method Three. In some effects a cloth or handkerchief can either be draped over the front of the tray, or over an article resting on the tray so that the cloth hangs down in front of the tray and covers the action of the "lift." This is useful when an assistant holds the tray.

Method Four. Again an assistant is used. A cloth must be used in some part of the effect, and the assistant has this draped over her arm. The tray is held by her as shown in Fig. 3, the cloth again covering the dropped "lift."

Method Five. Fig. 4 shows a specially constructed table to use with the tray. This is quite simple to make. It is a box-like top with only the front half of the top solid, the rear half being a band of cloth of the same material as is used to cover the rest of the table lightly stretched across the back. This cloth band "gives" as the well in the tray is lowered. The diagram should make further explanation superfluous. Again tray remains flat while resting partly on the front half of the table, but the "lift" drops when tray is placed at the rear. It should be unnecessary to point out that the tray is an inch or so wider than the table-top so the tray itself is supported by the sides of the table.

Other ways can easily be devised, and we will not use up valuable space by giving further methods, but get right on with some effects possible with this type of tray.

Slam- Thru



GLASS OF MILK PENETRATION

THE "SLAM-THRU" GLASS OF MILK PENETRATION.

In my book "Further Magical Studies" I described an effective "visible" vanish of a glass of milk. This was a slick offshoot of the effect about to be described, which is a more elaborate way of using the same apparatus in conjunction with the Lift Tray.

The effect is as follows. A glass is examined and marked by a small initialled gummed label. The glass is nearly filled with milk and then covered by a cardboard tube which is only half the height of the tumbler; thus the marked tumbler never leaves the sight of the audience. Another tube, a little larger in diameter than the first one, and about an inch higher than the tumbler used, is shown empty and placed on a tray. Then a square of thick solid wood, or a sheet of plate-glass about six-inches square is rested on top of this larger tube. The glass of milk, still encircled by the smaller tube is stood on top of the glass.

Shown thus, the hand is then brought down on top of the glass, slapping it down, and it is seen to be pushed down visibly as though pushed through the glass or block of wood. The small tube is shown empty, the sheet of glass or block removed, the larger tube lifted, and there is the original glass of milk, still with the initialled label. The penetration can be made slowly if desired. The sketch at the heading of this article shows the general set-up just as the glass is about to be "slammed through."

Required.

1. A straight-sided tumbler, half-pint size.
2. A Lift Tray with the "lift" adjusted so that when the glass is lowered as far as it will go, the mouth is just inside the hole, but not below it. This ensures the easy return of the glass.
3. An unprepared block of wood or sheet of plate glass.
4. A stiff cardboard tube, suitably decorated, to take the glass easily and about an inch higher.
5. The half-size tube as used in the Slam Thru Glass Vanish. The exact construction of this is described in detail in "Further Magical Studies" and I refer the reader to that book if he wishes to construct this effect. But to make this description clear, I will briefly describe the working of this tube.

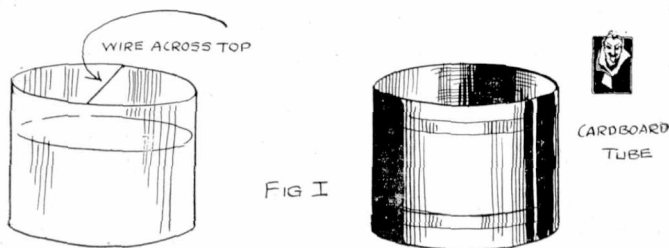


Fig. 1 shows how a celluloid tube is made to nest inside the cardboard tube and how the celluloid has "milk" painted inside to within about an inch of the top. The inside of the "milk" is then painted black same as inside of tube, so when both are nested, the tube may be shown empty. Lift the celluloid tube almost out of the cardboard one, and it looks like a glass of milk standing inside the cardboard tube. The principle which is utilized is that the celluloid fake is nested, a glass filled to within an inch of the top with milk, and then covered by the small cardboard tube. The wire catches across the glass, and the tube slides down leaving the celluloid fake over the glass. Now one can remove the glass of milk without anyone being any wiser, as the fake remains in place looking like the glass.

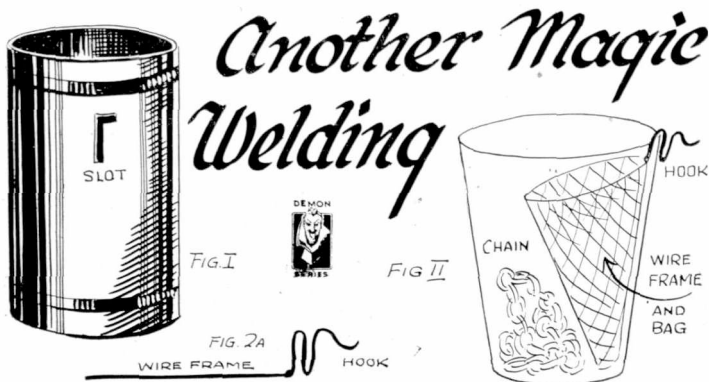
Modus Operandi.

All the apparatus (fake tube with celluloid one nested) rests on the tray, clear of the central plug. The glass is examined and marked by a sticker as already explained, but the sticker must be placed on the lower part of the side of the glass. The tray is held in the left hand while this is being done.

Place the glass on the central plug of the tray and fill to about an inch from the top with milk from a jug, which also rests on the tray. Place the jug aside after filling glass. Show the small tube and place it over the glass of milk as previously described.

Now take the large tube in the right hand and at the same time set the tray down on the screen, stand or whatever method you are using to conceal the "lift" and allow the "lift" to be lowered. The fingers steady the lowering to prevent a bump, and as attention is being called to the larger tube, the rim of the real glass is never noticed as it quickly slides down inside the celluloid fake and out of sight. A reason must be given for setting the tray down if you try to be at all consistent in your performance, so your left hand, now free, takes up the block of wood or sheet of glass, and both block and tube are exhibited.

Now place the block on top of the larger tube and hold this in the right hand. Turn to the tray, and with the left hand pick up very carefully (as though afraid of spilling the milk) the fake glass in half-tube and simultaneously place the large tube in its place on the centre of the tray. Without pausing, place the fake glass on top of the block. These moves prevent anyone high up (if working in a theatre or similar place) from glimpsing the top of the genuine glass of milk. You are then set for the finale: pick up the tray again, closing the lift and so loading the genuine glass into the lower tube, hold tray in left hand, and slam the fake glass down as described. If desired a "bump" as the glass apparently drops through the block can be arranged by a simple gadget such as a plunger on elastic, which could be built into the tray. This should give no-one a headache.



ANOTHER "MAGIC" WELDING.

Magic Welding is an old effect that has recently become more popular owing to simplified methods put on the market which use a specially designed tray for switching the links. If you have a Utility Lift Tray, you have almost a new ready-made version of this effect.

However, although describing the Welding effect in this article, there is a further purpose; the description opens the way to many possible effects inasmuch as the welding effects consists simply of switching one set of articles (the links) for another (the chain). Thus the description resolves itself into a description of how to use the Lift Tray for switching certain types of articles.

In addition to the tray, you will need a tumbler with a celluloid lining, a cardboard tube to cover the tumbler and about two inches higher and a hair-net bag to hang inside the lining and tumbler. The tube has a slot cut into the side in the shape of an inverted "L," so that the top of the slot will be level with the top of the glass. Fig. 1 shows this slot.

A hair-net is made into a bag which is fixed to a wire frame smaller in diameter than the inside of the tumbler and to this wire frame is fixed a specially shaped double hook, shown in detail in Fig. 2A. The purpose of the double nature of the hook is that the wire frame may be hung inside the lining of the glass without sagging too much, and yet a hook also protrudes so that the net may easily be hooked out of the lining.

Place the complete chain in the celluloid lining, heaping it towards the front. Then hang the net inside with the hook to the rear. (Fig. 2.) The reason for heaping the chain at the front will be manifest later. Place this prepared lining on the Lift Tray over the central plug and cover it with the tube, slot to the back. On the tray have the loose links and the tumbler.

Modus Operandi.

Enter carrying the tray, and set it down as described earlier so that the lining goes down out of sight on the "lift." Then exhibit glass in one hand and tube in the other (reason for setting the tray down). Replace the tube over the "lift" opening and set the tumbler on the tray. Pick up the tray again, raising the "lift" and so loading lining back into the tube.

Standing near the front of the stage, call attention to the loose links by picking them up and letting them trickle back on to the tray. Then cover the tumbler with the tube picking up the celluloid lining with it and dropping it into the tumbler. Drop the links into the glass through the top of the tube a few at a time until they are all in. If the net hangs right to the bottom, and the chain was pushed well to the front, the links will "talk" correctly as they are dropped in, as, needless to say, the links were dropped into the net and not the tumbler.

Now to lead the keen spectator off the track. Make a few passes and remove the tube a moment. The hair-net and wire frame is invisible from a short distance and it looks merely like a tumbler full of links, which it is supposed to be. Insert fingers into the tumbler and remove a few links, letting them drop back one by one, and remark that they are not quite "done."

Replace the tube (slot to back) and then push the tube forward so it touches the tumbler and the hook from the bag protrudes through the horizontal part of the slit. It is sometimes easier to let the hook come through the upright slit, and then lift it into the horizontal one; it depends on the height of the slot. Make more passes with the free hand and again lift the tube, this time taking the bag and links with it. In doing this the thumb rests on the hook to steady it, and when the tube is set down again, it is set over the "lift" plug and the thumb pushes the hook along the slot and lowers it down the vertical one, finally pushing the hook through so it drops down with the ring to the bottom of the tube. This takes but a second. The method of the vertical slot is used so that the bag of links may be "eased" down to rest on the tray, or

there would be considerable " talking " among the links.

One hand takes the tumbler while the other sets the tray down (and incidentally lowers the lift with the bag). The free hand takes the tube, shows it empty and lays it on its side over the hole in the tray, then the chain from the tumbler is tossed into the air and caught, showing the links now joined in a chain.

The purpose of heaping the chain is mainly so that there will be no visible difference in the height of the heap of " links " before and after the stealing of the bag.

Having described this effect, I wish to make clear that it is not described as an " improvement " on existing methods, indeed, it would hardly be worth the trouble to build the lift tray specially for this effect, but as a medium for describing how a switch can be performed and as a useful effect to anyone who has built the tray for other purposes.



'Vanibowl'

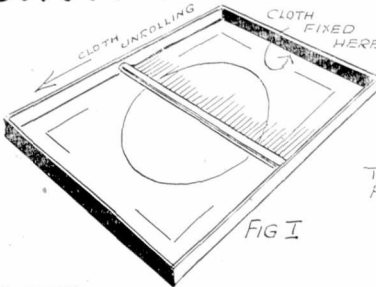


FIG 1

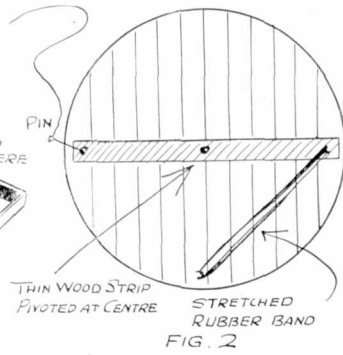


FIG. 2

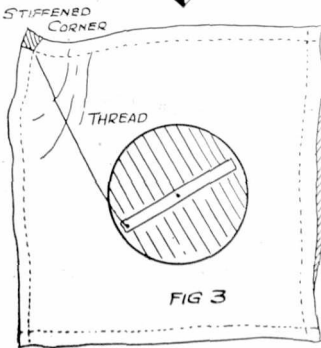


FIG 3

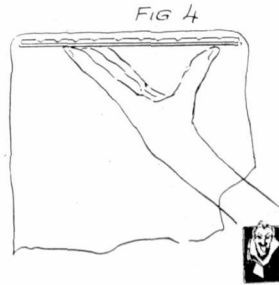


FIG 4



"VANIBOWL."

A Perfected Bowl of Water Vanish.

There are two weaknesses with the old method of vanishing a bowl of water from under a cloth. First the tray is tipped bottom towards the audience as it is carried off the stage, and secondly that the cloth must be handled to avoid showing the "shape." The method I am about to describe eliminates both of these faults and makes the vanish cleaner and more deceptive: using my design of "shape," the bowl appears to melt away as the cloth is pulled away and after the vanish, the cloth may be twirled into a compact "rope" which is most convincing.

For this illusion, you need a special Lift Tray which is a little different in size and shape to the one already described. It is made to take a large diameter, low bowl. Mine is a bowl turned from light wood, waterproofed and brightly decorated. They can still be purchased at certain places, and are a product of Siberian prisoners. Any other suitable bowl could, of course, be used, and the tray built to suit it.

My bowl is ten inches across the top and three inches

deep. Thus the tray I use for it is 15-inches square which is large enough to give good cover without being too large, and the side folding flaps of the "lift" are three inches high overall. As they are only $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inches wide when folded, there is plenty of room for the folded "lift" in the tray. In this tray, for a special reason, the top is covered with coloured cloth, and a large circle and design of a differently coloured cloth glued on to conceal the trap. Also there is a further addition which it is important to notice. The tray has a deeper rim so that a roll of thin cloth may be concealed.

This roll of cloth just covers the top surface of the tray, and has an appliqued design to match the top of the tray. To one end is fixed a weighted rod, and the other end is fixed along the inside rim of one side of the tray. Thus the square can be rolled up on the rod and concealed behind the rim, and if the tray is tilted, the cloth rapidly unrolls and covers the surface of the tray. Fig. 1 shows the roll half-way down.

Now let me describe the faked cloth. This has a disc in it similar to the old method, but in this instance the disc is collapsible. Mine was made from cardboard and a strip of thin wood in half-an-hour, and has been in use for years. Fig. 2 shows the disc. A disc of very stiff cardboard was cut into inch-wide strips and a piece of cloth glued over the whole disc, so when dry each section was cloth hinged to the other and folded down easily to a long narrow strip or bundle. An inch-wide strip of thin wood the same length as the diameter of the disc was loosely pivoted to the centre of the disc. An elastic band fixed to one end of the wooden strip and to one end of the longest cardboard strip, kept the wooden strip normally parallel with the cardboard segments. A hole was bored through one end of the wooden strip and a wire loop fixed to the centre of the end segment of cardboard. As a result of this, the cross-bar could be pulled at right-angles to the segments and held in place by pushing the loop through the hole and inserting a pin through the loop. Now if the disc is reversed, the segments lie flat along the cross-bar, but if the pin is removed the cross-bar is pulled back by the elastic band and the disc will collapse. Care should be taken when making the disc to pivot the cross-bar to the same side of the disc upon which the cloth was glued, or it will not collapse properly.

This gadget was then sewn diagonally inside a double cloth about 30-inches square, sewing only the longest cardboard strip to the cloth. The disc is sewn with the cloth and cross-bar side at the back, of course, so the bar would work easily. The corner shown in Fig. 3 was strengthened so it could easily be felt with the fingers, and a thread, on the end of which was a pin, sewn to the corner, **inside** the double cloth. **It is important** to notice that the thread is a little short so that when the disc is set and the pin inserted, the stiffened corner of the cloth is pulled in a few inches. One side of the

double cloth is left unsewn so that the hands may be inserted for resetting the disc.

Now if this cloth, with the disc set, is placed on the fingers as shown in Fig. 4, it will look as though a bowl is being held underneath. Grip the stiffened corner of the cloth with the free hand and whip the cloth away, and it will be found that the pin will be pulled away from the disc, the disc will collapse, and apparently the bowl just melts away. Immediately grasping the stiffened corner and the opposite diagonal corner, the cloth may be satisfactorily twirled into a "rope."

The bowl has the usual fake to prevent water from spilling when bowl is tipped on its side. That is, about an inch down in the bowl a watertight cover is glued in totally enclosing the bowl all but about three inches on one side where water is to be poured in. I use celluloid in my bowl, because as the inside is brightly painted, one can, under good conditions, show the inside of the bowl with a sweep without the fake being discernible. Under the bowl was fixed a metal "eye" to fit a corresponding "hook" in the centre of the "lift tray."

Modus Operandi.

The cloth, with disc set, is placed handy. Assistant brings on the bowl resting on the tray; the concealed roll of cloth being to the front and so hidden from view by the rim.

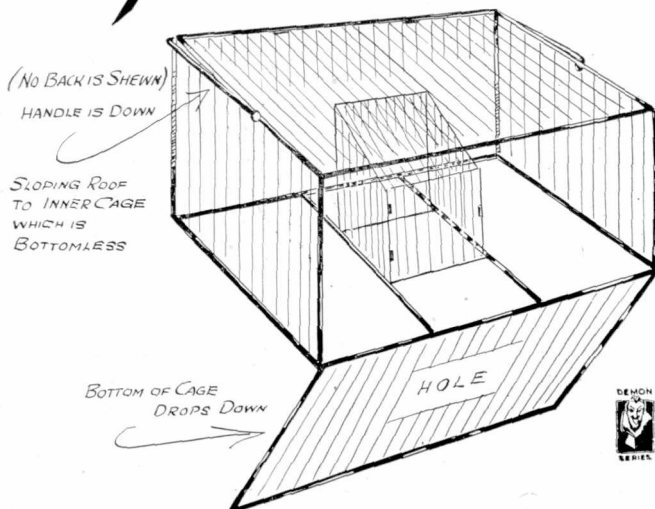
Performer takes bowl and spins it in the air. Catching it, he places it on tray, hooking base into place. Note that the opening of the fake should be towards the audience. Water is then poured into the bowl (through the opening in the fake) and then the performer takes the cloth and drapes it over the bowl so the concealed disc rests on top of the bowl.

Now the assistant must reverse the tray, but this must not be done obviously. If working in pantomime, as such effects usually are, assistant can half turn the tray in giving it to the performer. Performer holds it a moment as though wondering what to do, and gives the tray back to assistant (giving another half turn to reverse the tray) and decides to take just the covered bowl. The action is typical of the movement and rhythm necessary for silent presentation, and helps to build up the presentation.

Now the performer inserts one hand under the cloth, slides the disc slightly to one side so hand can be inserted between disc and bowl and the disc and cloth lifted as shown in Fig. 4. Before the cloth is clear of the tray, the assistant lowers bowl on the "lift" and tilts tray forward so the cloth roll (now at the back) rolls down and covers the surface of the tray.

Performer walks forward with the "bowl" under the cloth while assistant retires with the tray on its side, the top still towards the audience. Then the performer vanishes the bowl in the startling manner already explained.

'He go-He come back'



“HE GO—HE COME BACK.”

A Startling Effect with a Live Canary.

This effect, using the lift tray in conjunction with other specially designed apparatus, was inspired by Horace Goldin's "Potato Jones" illusion. Here is what the audience witness. A wire cage about 14-inches square and 12-inches high is on view. An assistant brings on a small cage about $4\frac{1}{2}$ -inches square and 5-inches high in which is a live canary. The performer removes the canary from the small cage, and puts it into the large one.

A basket full of ping-pong balls is shown, the lid of the large cage opened, and the balls tipped into the cage apparently burying the canary and filling the cage. Picking up the cage, the performer hands it to the assistant, and taking the small cage from him, sets it down and covers it with a handkerchief.

At the word of command, or a shot from a pistol, the bottom of the large cage drops open and the ping-pong balls shower back into the basket which has been placed beneath for this purpose. The canary has completely vanished. Upon uncovering the small cage, there is the canary, and the same one, incidentally, none the worse for its adventure. Please note that no harm can happen to the bird and there is no discomfort.

Required.

1. A "Lift Tray" with a specially shaped trap to take

a square cage $4\frac{1}{2}$ -inches square and $4\frac{3}{4}$ -inches high.

2. A small carrying cage. This is simply a square of wires fitted together with angle-metal about $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch wide. The cage is bottomless and with no angle-metal under it so that an inner cage lining can slip out easily. There is a spring-hinged wire door at the back like that used in regular bird-cages. The inner lining to this cage is a cube made of angle-metal and a spring door to open at the back like the one on the outer cage, but instead of wires covering the framework, they are covered on all sides by hair-net. Across the bottom of this inner cage are fitted wires and a perch for the canary. The lining fits easily into the outer cage and the whole thing looks quite innocent.

3. The large cage which is of special design and should not prove too difficult for the average workman to build, using cage-wire and metal strips soldered together. Refer to Fig. 1 for details of this cage. To make it less confusing, most of the wire bars have been omitted from the drawing.

The cage has four barred sides with a door in the bottom centre at the back. The top and bottom of the cage are simply rectangular frameworks of wire hinged in place, the top being hinged at the front and the bottom hinged at the back. A simple catch is fitted at the front edge of the bottom which can be released by pulling a thread. A pivoted wire handle is fitted across the top. This is slightly larger than the top and square in shape so it can be laid flat to allow the top lid to be fully opened. The thread from the catch on the bottom is fixed to the handle.

Across the bottom of this cage is soldered two wires and on to this a bottomless inner cage which is the same size as the small carrying cage and will take the small inner lining comfortably. The only difference is that the top of this cage is sloping towards the back: this is to prevent balls lodging on top while working the effect.

There is a door at the back of this framework which is made the same as that in the carrying cage. The principle of this cage is like that of Goldin's "Potato Jones" cabinet. Owing to the confusion of upright wires, the inner cage is quite invisible at a short distance.

To prepare the cage for the effect, the inner lining of the carrying cage should be placed inside the inner cage of the large cage via the open bottom. (NOTE: it should be mentioned that a square hole is left in the rectangular hinged bottom to give free passage to this lining when the bottom is closed.) The cage is rested on the Lift Tray so the lining is directly over the trap. When this is done, tie an endless loop of thread around the bars of the door on the big cage and the door on the inner cage so that when the door at the back is opened, the sprung inner door also opens with it. Rest this tray on stand or table with the lift "up" and lining in place.

A basket of ping-pong balls and a live canary are also required.

Modus Operandi.

Assistant enters with small cage containing a bird. This cage, being bottomless, must rest on a small ordinary tray. Performer removes bird and opening the back door of the large cage (inner door also being opened), puts the bird into the inner cage, apparently only putting bird in the centre of the large cage. When fixing the hair-net to the lining, a slit should be left for the ingress of the bird.

Assistant sets down the small cage and takes up the basket of ping-pong balls, while performer takes up the large cage still resting on the tray, and opens the top lid. Assistant pours all the ping-pong balls into the cage so it is filled, the bird being untouched by reason of being in the inner cage. Performer sets tray down again, allowing the "lift" to descend together with the inner lining and bird. The performer meanwhile has taken up the small cage (without the small tray) and brings it across to the performer. The performer picks up the large cage and gives it to the assistant to hold by the handle, receiving the small cage in return, which he shows empty, places on the Lift Tray exactly over the trap, and covers with a handkerchief.

Then the performer picks up the tray (raising lift and loading bird into cage) and holds it in his left hand, while his right takes a pistol. Performer fires pistol at assistant who pulls thread on his cage. The bottom drops open and deposits the balls into the basket underneath, the bottom being immediately closed by the assistant so the hole is not noticed, and the performer removes the handkerchief from the cage on his tray, revealing the original bird safe and sound.

* * *

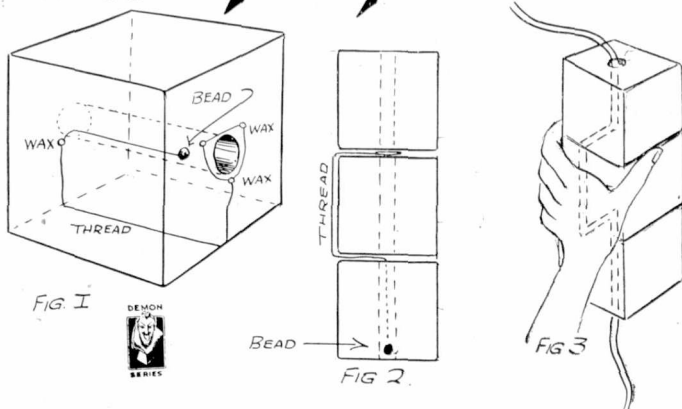
Final Notes on the Lift Tray.

With this, we leave you to devise other uses, simple and elaborate as you think fit. For example you can use the ordinary tumbler size tray for a production. Paint the inside of a tumbler to represent milk or beer and load with silks or other articles. This rests on tray covered by a tube when brought on. Tray set down, load goes down with lift while tube is shown empty and wand rattled through it. Set down on tray, pick up the tray and carry forward, thus loading glass back again, and make the production. Finally lift tube and reveal glass of milk.

Or you can use the above method to reproduce a genuine glass of milk after the usual "Milk-O" effect. For a larger production a bottomless box may be used with a sliding inner lining that goes down with the lift, the lift being larger and square for this purpose. Live-stock could be produced with this.

Think of the possibilities with nests of boxes, vanishes, switches, etc., and you will see a large field of effects open to the owner of one of these trays.

The Escaping Cube



CHAPTER SEVEN.

CONJURING WITH CUBES.

In this chapter we present a number of effects using wooden cubes. These are usually rather popular as the unwieldy nature of a cube makes it appear to be something difficult to conjure with. Actually it is no more difficult to use cubes than anything else, but the impression on the audience is what matters. For children, in particular, cubes are useful, as they give something for the children to see and can be made nice and showy.

* * *

THE ESCAPING CUBE.

This effect, and the one which follows, was given to me for publication a few years ago by Mr. Tan Hock Chuan, of far-distant Singapore. Where he is at the time of writing, after the fall of Singapore to the Japs, I cannot say, but I hope that it will not be long before we again hear from him.

The effect is a close relation to the popular escaping die from frame, but there is a difference in the main effect which makes it worthy of setting before you, and which, I imagine, will cause the effect to appear in the programme of many readers.

Three solid cubes, each with a hole through the centre, and each a different colour, are knocked together to prove their solidity. Let us suppose the colours are red, blue and orange. A length of ribbon is passed through the holes in the three cubes and then the cubes are placed into a hat so that

the ends of the ribbon remain in full view hanging over the sides of the hat.

A choice is given of one of the three colours, and then, when the ends of the ribbon are taken and lifted up, only two cubes are seen to be threaded on the ribbon, the cube of the chosen colour having freed itself and so remains behind in the hat.

Modus Operandi.

The colour of the cube which frees itself must be forced and you can use any of the methods of forcing you prefer, but when I come to the description of the handling of the cubes, a method will be described for the sake of completeness.

The cubes should be of a size best suited to your hands, making them as large as possible. About three inches square is an average size but you must experiment with your own hands. They are solid cubes with a hole bored through the centre, and are quite unprepared.

A length of thread must be prepared by tying a loop at one end and a tiny black bead at the other. The length of this thread overall will be determined by the size of the cubes you use, but as a guide the length for a three-inch cube is about nine inches.

This length of thread is attached to the cube which is to make its escape. Figure 1 shows the method of fixing the thread. The loop is first secured lightly around one of the holes by means of three dabs of wax: then it is passed down under the cube and up to the other hole where it is fixed lightly with another dab of wax. The odd length of thread which terminates with the bead is dropped into the hole.

The presentation is as follows. Show the three cubes and knock them together to prove their solidity, making sure that the bead does not fall out of the hole of the prepared cube while doing so. Then stack the cubes together so that the holes coincide and form a continuous hole through the three cubes, the prepared cube being placed in the centre of the stack. Lift up the stack so the looped end of the thread is uppermost and this will result in the bead dropping down to just within the hole at the bottom of the stack as shown in Figure 2.

Grip the bottom two cubes and ease them very slightly apart, not obviously, of course. Do this while the free hand is picking up a length of ribbon, which should be about three or four feet long.

Push the ribbon down through the hole in the top of the stack of cubes until it is nearly at the bottom of the stack.

The next move will require practice to do really well. Apparently, you insert the fingers into the hole at the bottom of the stack, grip the end of the ribbon and sharply pull it down until the cubes are about on the centre of the ribbon. What you really do is quite different. You grip the **bead**, not the ribbon, and pull that down sharply. The result is that the ribbon is whipped around the centre cube, through the hole in the lower cube and out at the bottom. Immediately the hand grasps the ribbon and continues the downward movement in an unbroken sweep. Cover the whole movement with a slight sweep of both hands as you turn to the hat on the table, and the fact that you do not at first grasp the ribbon will be covered. The effect is perfectly illusive after a little practice.

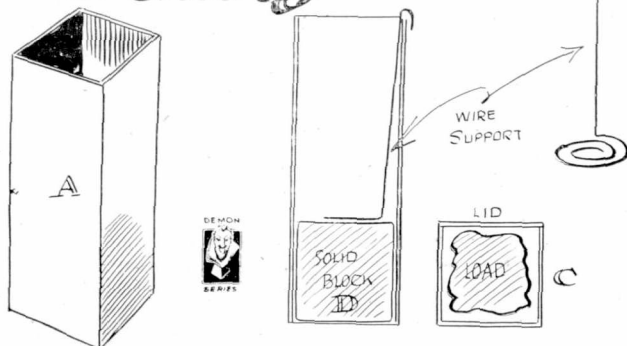
Your hand is now holding the cubes as in Figure 3, with the ribbon which passes around the centre cube hidden by the hand, and the ribbon may be slowly pulled backwards and forwards to show how it is threaded through the cubes.

Now hold the cubes sideways and approach an "easy-looking" spectator. Ask him to extend his fingers and touch one of the cubes. You will find it is the easiest thing in the world to force the centre one as his natural inclination will be to touch the centre one. Do not hurry this too much and watch his finger as it comes up. If it tends towards the centre cube, let him have his fling, but if it appears as though it might go towards one of the end ones, gently move the stack along so he cannot avoid touching the centre one. This may sound "cheeky" but it is practical and I have used it many times with various objects. It is similar to the method employed in forcing a card from a fan.

Should, however, your victim chance to be not quite so "easy" as you imagined, you must fall back on the subterfuge of asking a second person to choose one, and get a lady this time, forcing the one at the opposite end by the "movement" force. Then you can cause the two "chosen" ones to stay on the ribbon.

If you are so deplorable as to fail again you must sink to the final depths of depravity by getting a third person to choose between the two (for the sake of making an absolutely free choice). If he chooses the centre one, you say you remove it. If not let it stay on. But why go into all this? If you cannot force it first time, you should not be on the platform at all, anyway. Finish the trick in the manner described.

The Tantalising Tubes



THE TANTALISING TUBES.

This is not so much a trick with a block as a trick in which a block is used—two different things. The effect is simply a production from a square chimney, but I include it here because the block is used to “prove” the emptiness of a chimney, and also because the production can be used as a liaison effect between a cube effect and one with silks. For example, one has just performed the die-box and has reproduced the die at the finish from a hat. The die is then dropped through two square tubes to show that nothing is concealed in the tube, then one tube is placed as a platform mouth facing the audience for the other to stand upon, and silks for the next trick are then brought from the tube.

Modus Operandi.

Although the cube seems only a side issue, it is with this that the production is made. Two cubes are required which look exactly alike and are the same size. One of these is solid and unprepared; the other is really a hollow box with a lid at the top. The load is concealed inside this box-cube.

Two square chimneys will be required, A and B. The chimney A is large enough to allow chimney B to slide through it easily like the well-known organ-pipes. Tube B is of a size that the cubes will slide through quite easily. A wire fake is also required which is clearly shown in the diagrams, the purpose of which is to retain the box-cube when dropped through the top of the tube.

To work the production: chimney A is empty, chimney B has the solid cube D at the bottom and the wire fake hanging inside, the coiled base resting on top of the cube, and the box-cube is ready loaded.

Having produced the box-cube, chimney B is taken up and the solid block taken with it by pressure on the sides of the chimney. The box-cube is dropped into the top and the solid one comes from the bottom and drops with a bang on to the table.

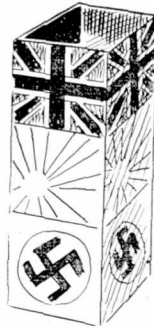
Chimney B is set down and the cube really dropped through chimney A. Chimney A is then shown to be empty, Chimney B dropped through it (which action transfers the load to Chimney A) and then Chimney B is shown empty and placed on its side, mouth towards the audience.

Chimney A, with the box-cube inside is then placed on the side of the other chimney and the production made.

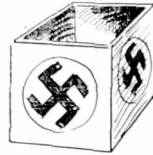
This effect is hardly strong enough to work by itself, but worked as a liaison effect in an off-hand manner quite quickly, it is a very useful item.



THE BLOCKS



THE SHELL



HOLLOW CUBE

British always on Top

BRITISH—ALWAYS ON TOP.

Simplicity seems the forte of cube effects, but that does not detract from their usefulness, particularly when entertaining children. The following does not contain any very puzzling magic, but shown to children you have something which will entertain them. It is designed as a war-time effect and when first given to me by Mr. Jimmy Flowers for publication, four cubes were used, including one for Italy. That is no longer applicable, so only three cubes are used. However, like "Commandos" in another part of this book, the trick can quite well be used in Peace and most particularly during the immediate post-war period.

Three blocks are shown. These are each black on the top and bottom, but around the sides are painted flags: the Union Jack around one, Swastikas around another and the Rising Sun around the other.

The blocks are stacked with the British Flag at the bottom, and a cover, previously shown empty, placed over them. When the cover is removed the British Flag is seen to have risen to the top. The cover is replaced and the whole apparatus turned upside down, again apparently bringing the British Flag to the bottom, but upon uncovering the cubes, the British Cube is on top again.

Finally the covered blocks are reversed for the third time and the spectators asked where the British Flag is. With children there is usually a chorus of "On top" and the performer reaches into the cover and says, "Even when things

seem all upside down, remember the British are always on top" and produces from the tube a very large silken Union Jack.

Modus Operandi.

Two large solid blocks are required and also a third block which is a hollow box without a lid made of wood about three-quarters of an inch thick. The Union Jack and the Rising Sun flags are painted on the solid cubes and the Swastikas on the hollow cube. In addition you need a shell which fits over the stack of three cubes. This may be constructed from thin wood, cardboard or tin. The shell is scored or marked to look like a stack of three cubes and the flags painted on them so the Union Jack is on top, the Rising Sun in the middle and the Swastika at the bottom.

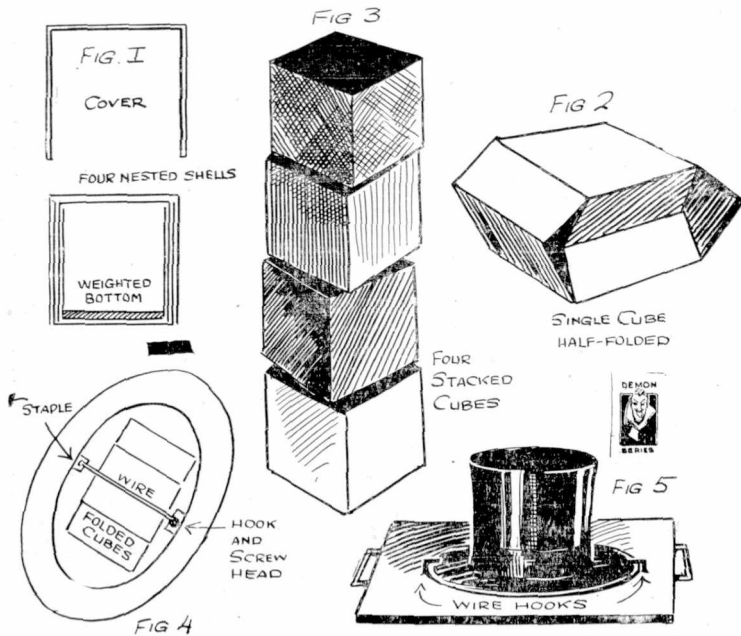
Finally a cardboard cover to fit neatly over the shell and a large Union Jack are required. The shell and cover are both painted black on the inside. Prepare for the effect by loading the flag into the hollow cube, leaving the two corners at the top so the flag may be spread as it is produced. Two small beads will facilitate this. Then cover the hole in the top of the hollow cube by pasting a square of thin black paper over it, giving the cube the appearance of a solid one.

The presentation is as follows. The cubes are stacked with the Union Jack at the bottom, the Jap in the centre and the Nazi at the top. The tissue side of the Nazi block is on top of the stack. Patter to the effect that the weight of the two enemy countries rest upon Britain. Place the cover over the blocks, and then remove it, leaving the shell behind showing the British now on top, and pattering to the effect that by the industry of every man and woman, Britain was able to rise to the top.

Now cover the cubes again and turn the stack over, saying that we have had, or can expect reverses in the fortunes of war, but always the British will eventually come out on top. Remove the cover with the shell, showing the British flag on top. Again reverse the stack visibly telling the audience that other reverses might even yet come (if performed during wartime; history will give you a guide for patter after the war), but where will the British be? At the cry "On top" plunge into the top of the tube with the fingers, burst the paper and produce the flag spread out.

I can assure you that this goes over; a little "flag waving" usually does.

The Repeating Die thro' Hat



THE REPEATING DIE THROUGH HAT.

This chapter on Cubes appears to have become a section of contributed items, so I think it time one of my own ideas was described. There are many old effects which, with a little thought, can be modernised and made into something quite new. This is one of them. I took the old die through hat trick such as I had in my first box of tricks, and built from it an entertaining routine with a surprise finish.

The entertainer tells a story of the "repeat" nature, something along the following lines. "When I was a small boy, my parents noticed signs of lunacy in me and decided I must grow up to be a conjurer. They therefore bought me a box of conjuring tricks. In this box I found a red cube (the performer picks up a large red cube) and a cover to go over the cube (cover is shown).

"The idea was to show a hat empty (does so) and then place the cube inside as you asked the audience whether they wanted you to pass the cube in the hat visibly or invisibly. (Cube placed in hat.) As they always preferred it to go

invisibly, the cube was to be removed and placed on top of the hat. (This is done.) Then the hat was set upon a tray and the cover placed over the cube. (This is done.) Then you tapped the cover, showed the thing empty (do so) and there under the hat was the cube!" (The hat is lifted and a green cube is seen under the hat resting on the tray. No remark is made about the changed colour.)

"However, perhaps I was not old enough, but I could never do it. One day when I was about fourteen I met a real live conjurer for the first time so I thought I would get him to tell me how to do the trick. Out came my apparatus and I asked him if he knew the trick where you took a green cube, asked whether the audience wanted it passing visibly or invisibly, placing it visibly in the hat, and when they said invisibly, you took it out, placed it on the crown of the hat, set the hat on the tray, covered the cube with the cover, tapped it and the cube vanished to appear under the hat." (Here you repeat the effect quickly saying all the above almost in one breath. But the die which appears under the hat is a blue one.)

"The conjurer knew the trick and he carefully showed me how to ask the audience if they wanted the die passed visibly or invisibly, placing the blue die in the hat . . ." (and so on. I need not repeat the patter. This time a yellow die appears under the hat.)

"So here I am, ladies and gentlemen. We have here a yellow cube. Shall I pass it visibly or invisibly? (quickly). Invisibly? Very good. We place the cube on the crown of the hat, place the hat on the tray, cover the cube with the cover, tap the cover and the die vanishes to appear under the hat!"

The hat is quickly lifted, and to everyone's surprise there is now a stack of four cubes, red, green, blue and yellow, a stack about twice the height of the hat. The performer looks at it and with a shrug says "I'm a pro' now, and simply must do things in a big way."

Is that not something new with such an oldie? Try it out and you will get a lot of fun with it. You can make it up nearly all in cardboard if you wish, although sheet metal lined with black sateen to prevent "talking" is best.

Modus Operandi.

You require a set of four shell cubes made of thin cardboard or tin. They all fit easily inside one another. The shells are the usual type consisting of five sides joined together to form a box-like cube without a lid. The largest shell should be about four-inches square, which I find to be a suitable size. If they are smaller the variation in size of the inner shells will be noticed. The shells are painted black inside and black on the top. The four sides are painted in colours or covered

with coloured paper, so one shell (the outer) is red, and the others green, blue and yellow respectively.

The inner shell of the four (the smallest) should have the bottom weighted. A square of sheet lead wedged in and painted black does this nicely.

The cover is another shell painted black inside and covered outside with fancy paper, and is a sliding fit over the outer shell.

Four duplicate "cubes" are required and these are made of cardboard in such a manner that they are collapsible. They are actually "spring cubes." Fig. 2 shows how they are constructed. The sides are hinged half-way so that two sides fold outwards and two fold inwards, allowing the cube to be pressed flat. Not shown in the drawing is a coiled spring such as used in spring snakes which will keep the cube open. These are painted black on top and bottom and coloured on the sides to duplicate the shell cubes. It is well to have some kind of design on both the shells and the folding cubes to conceal the folds, but if working on a stage this is not essential.

The opera hat is prepared to hold the load of four folded cubes. Here is my arrangement. Two small blocks of wood are glued to the bottom of the hat, one at each side. A staple is driven into one of these, and a long wire hook to reach across the hat is loosely fixed to this staple. On the opposite block is a screw with a round head under which the end of the wire hook may be engaged. Thus the cubes may be flattened in the bottom of the hat and held down by the wire cross-bar which is engaged under the screw-head. The whole thing is covered with a square of black material lain over and tucked under the edges of the folded cubes to prevent it from falling out in the earlier stages of the effect. I also have mine lightly tacked to the inside of the hat so that when the cubes are expanded as later described, the cloth is automatically pushed to the side and remains in the hat.

It is a help to have two wire hooks on the tray to hold the hat down as shown in Fig. 5, although this is not absolutely essential as the hat may very well be held down with the thumb of the hand holding the tray. I leave that to you.

To prepare for the effect, the hat is loaded as described above and the four shells are nested together. Notice how this nesting is done. They are not placed with their mouths facing the same way, but each one with its mouth the opposite way from the other so that it looks like a solid cube, and each time a shell is removed, an apparently solid cube remains. The sectional drawing Fig. 1 will make this set-up clear.

Now to the working instructions. Refer to the patter and outline of the effect for the main working, helped by the following details.

Place the cube in the hat opening downwards and remove the shell only, the other three shells remaining nested in the hat. While doing this, the hat is held by the rear brim in the left hand with the palm of the hand downwards, the thumb under the brim and the four fingers curled over the top of the brim and the tips resting just inside the hat. As soon as the shell is removed, the hat is turned upside down, mouth downwards, and the forefinger of the hand holding the hat is extended and pressed against the nested cubes to prevent them from dropping out.

The shell is placed on the crown of the hat and the hat set mouth down on the tray, the shell cubes being allowed to rest on the tray. The cover is placed over the shell, tapped and removed, taking the shell with it in the usual manner. Lift the hat and show the cube of a different colour.

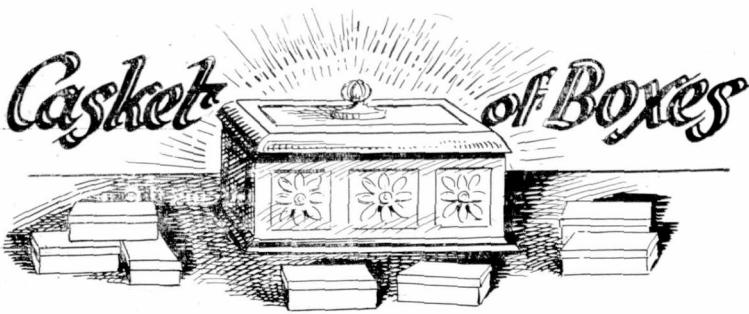
The effect can now be repeated in exactly the same manner until the last shell, the yellow one, appears under the hat. This shell cannot be shown on all sides as the previous ones were, so a little care must be taken. The move which then follows is important as it unsuspectingly releases the spring cubes ready for the final production.

When performing the "visibly or invisibly" gag, the last shell is placed into the hat exactly as before, and in doing so, the corner of the shell is pushed against the wire cross-bar to release it from the screw-head. The cubes now tend to open, but are held down by the yellow shell being pressed against them. As the yellow shell is removed deliberately, the folded cubes expand and the covering cloth, being tacked to the hat, is forced aside.

As the shell is about to come clear of the hat, the hat is reversed again as before and the forefinger of the left hand holding the brim extends and stops the cubes expanding any further. The cube (shell) is placed on the hat and the hat set on the tray, engaging brim under the hooks. Or one can pick up the tray if this has been done all through the routine and hold the hat down with the thumb. If one of the two is not done, the hat will be lifted up as the cubes expand fully.

To conclude the last shell is vanished inside the cover, the hat pulled away from the tray with a slight flourish of both hat and tray, and the cubes expand fully, stacked on top of one another. The flourish helps to cover the last bit of expansion of the cubes.

I suppose it is clear to every reader that the shells are always placed mouth down on the hat when they are to be vanished from under the cover, so the inside of the cover may be shown. At the finish all four cubes are mouth outwards and the cover still appears empty. Thought it had better be mentioned just in case.



CHAPTER EIGHT.

MORE MISCELLANEOUS MAGIC.

THE CASKET OF BOXES.

There should be a moral in this trick for many readers. I refer to any readers who may despise the works of Professor Hoffman and others of his ilk as being *passee* and not worth deeply studying. Frankly, the effect has been lifted from one of Hoffman's books, but a little extra thought and experiment in the light of modern conditions has made a new effect of it. In my version the trick is self-contained and requires no assistants. Also it is more convincing in action.

The practicability of this piece of apparatus is assured as a year or two ago I constructed a very limited number and sold them to some well-known performers, who have worked it successfully in their shows. My caskets were hand-polished natural woods with moulded lids, and were very nice-looking. Make the casket to look like a good-class jewel cabinet and you will have the ideal piece of apparatus.

The effect is that a watch is borrowed and "accidentally" damaged or destroyed while attempting to work a trick with it. Apologising to the audience, the performer explains that he has performed this trick before many notable people and it has never failed. In fact, he has been presented with various honours and emblems as tokens of his skill in handling this watch trick.

So saying, he apparently forgets the damaged watch and proudly brings forward a jewel casket which he sets on a thin tray or table-top. Opening the casket he removes a small white cardboard box which he also opens and shows a "jewel" or "insignia" inside. This is removed and placed aside, the empty box being placed on the table. He removes another small cardboard box, shows another emblem inside, removes this emblem and places the empty box on the table.

This is repeated with several boxes, a medal or some other item being removed from each, box shown empty and placed on the table. There is plenty of scope for good comedy here. The "jewels" could very well be burlesques, the inscriptions from some being read aloud and much fun obtained according to the ingenuity of the performer.

Finally the casket and jewels are removed, leaving a number of empty cardboard boxes on the table. One of these boxes is chosen and this is isolated. Then remembering the damaged watch, the performer retrieves his honour by vanishing the watch and causing it to reappear quite restored inside the chosen cardboard box, which, incidentally, is only just about large enough to hold the watch.

One could very well conclude by having a "stooge" present the performer with a further "insignia" and on reading the inscription, find it was presented by a body such as the Lord's Day Observance Society.

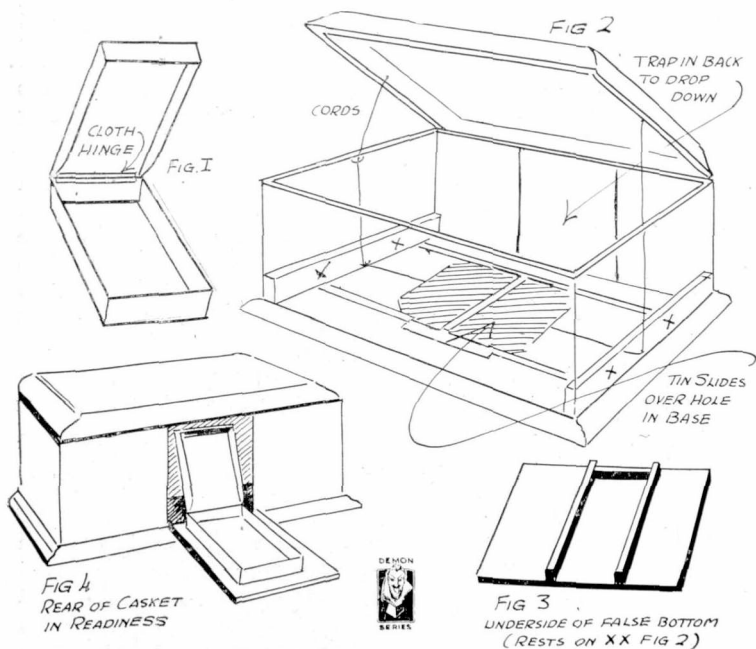
Modus Operandi.

The damaging, and the subsequent vanish of the watch should present no problem to the average reader of this book, so I do not intend to go into any very great detail. Almost every reader will have his own ideas on this, and in any case, many methods are on the market all ready made for immediate use. The main point of this particular effect is in the reproduction of the watch from a chosen one of a number that have each been shown empty.

The secret lies in the casket which is specially designed to do two things: to assist the performer to place a palmed watch into an **extra** small cardboard box (not an extra-small one), and then to subtly add this extra loaded box among those which have been shown empty. I can assure you that the casket is very easy to construct and should afford no difficulties even to an unskilled worker. In the drawing which accompany this article, the casket is shown as a plain box so that the issue may not be confused. In making, the box should really be made very decorative, using cut-out frets or moulded designs glued around, or some other mode of decoration.

First make about eight small cardboard boxes with a hinged lid as shown in Fig. 1. These should be of a size to comfortably hold an average pocket watch (a wrist watch should not be used as the strap interferes with the working). Notice how the lid is cloth-hinged along one of the narrow ends of the box.

Fig. 2 shows the main construction of the casket. The drawing is made as though everything were transparent so the



mechanics will be clear. There is a hole in the bottom which is large enough to easily pass one of the cardboard boxes through without any fear of it wedging. This is covered by two metal slides which meet in the centre and close the hole. Thin cords pass from the ends of these slides to the ends of the box, through wire hooks, up the side of the box and are fixed to the lid. The length of these cords is adjusted so that when the lid of the casket is opened, the two slides are pulled right apart, leaving the hole in the bottom of the casket quite free.

At the back of the casket a section of the side is cut away and hinged to drop down. This is best seen in Fig. 4 which shows the casket set ready for working the effect. The casket should be decorated in such a manner that this trap is effectively concealed.

A false bottom must be fixed into the casket. The two wooden strips XX in Fig. 2 act as rests for this false bottom and are such a size that when the false bottom is placed into the box and screwed down, there is a hollow space under the bottom which is a quarter-inch deeper than the depth of one of the small cardboard boxes.

Before the false bottom was fitted in, however, two strips of wood were fixed along as shown in Fig. 3. These are spaced

to be level with the trap at the back of the casket and so that one of the cardboard boxes will slide freely along it. The strips should not be deep enough to interfere with the working of the two tin flaps, but must simply act as guides to keep the box over the hole in the bottom. A third strip placed crosswise will prevent the box from sliding past the hole.

When this false bottom is in place the apparatus is finished apart from decorating. The working of the box is as follows: Open the flap at the back so it lies flat on the table. Then take a cardboard box, open the lid, and place this on the flap as shown in Fig. 4. Notice how the open lid rests against the edge of the false bottom through the hole in the side. The trap in the bottom of the box is, of course, closed.

Now suppose this box, so prepared, is at the back of the platform on a table, and a watch is palmed in the right hand. The performer goes to box, picks it up with right hand at rear and left at front. The watch is gently deposited into the cardboard box, and then the casket tilted slightly forward. The result is that the weight of the watch causes the cardboard box to slide inside the double bottom of the casket, and as the edge of the false bottom catches the lid, it automatically closes. The right fingers immediately close the trap and the casket can be shown on all sides. All this is the work of a second.

The casket is then set upon the tray or thin-topped table and the lid opened. Until now the cardboard box with the watch has been resting upon the two tin slides. Now the slides are pulled away from under the box, so that if the casket is closed and taken away, the loaded cardboard box remains in view upon the table. Understand this action, and the working of the whole effect should be plain.

In practice, the box is prepared as described above, and in addition the inside of the box proper contains the seven boxes each containing a trinket of some kind.

The borrowed watch is wrapped into a square of paper, and the usual "coin fold" made so that the watch can easily be slipped from the paper packet into the palm when required.

My own plan is very simple and may be of use to anyone who does not know of a method at the moment. I simply use a cloth bag with two compartments. One of these compartments is open at the top and the other at the bottom. (Fig. 5.) Into compartment A (Fig. 5) is placed an old broken watch wrapped in paper, and this is placed on the table.

A boy is invited to help in the effect. The watch is borrowed and wrapped in paper, using the coin-fold method. Then the packet is held in the right fingers ready to slide the watch out of the packet into the palm, while the left picks up

the bag, the fingers preventing the dummy packet from falling through the reversed compartment to the floor by gripping it through the cloth of the bag. The hand with the watch is now carefully placed into compartment "B," and as soon as out of sight, the watch is slipped from the paper into the palm. The boy is asked to take the bag by the top (X Fig. 5) and immediately he does so, the hand is withdrawn from the back with the palmed watch, and the dummy packet drops through the bottom of the bag to the floor. The palming is thus perfectly covered as all eyes are on the packet and the comedy situation thus caused by blaming the boy for the "accident."

The packet is picked up and shaken (loose pieces are heard to rattle) and given to the boy. Pattering as already suggested, the casket is taken, brought forward and placed on the forward table loaded with the watch.

The casket is opened and the seven boxes removed one by one, each trinket removed and the empty box set down **in front of the casket**. Then the casket is taken up and shown empty, the loaded cardboard box being left on the table with the other seven. Care should be taken, obviously, that the number of boxes is not noted. In showing the trinkets, they are done casually with no attention to numbers.

One of the eight boxes is now forced by any means you wish. A simple way is the equivocal method. Divide the heap into two, giving a choice of one and always retaining the one amongst which is the loaded box. Divide this into two and repeat. This leaves the performer with two boxes. Choice of one is given to the boy. If he chooses the loaded one, place it on a chair beside him. If he chooses the empty one, toss it with the other seven, and place the one that remains in full view.

There follows business with the broken watch and its envanishment and the climax of finding it intact in the chosen box. The effect works smoothly and like a charm, and will cause great amusement if well presented.

Candid Camera Study



A CANDID CAMERA STUDY.

While paying a visit to that young, but very live organisation, the Cotswold Magical Society, Mr. Wilfred Tyler, the founder, showed me several of his own very useful effects. The following, though not brilliantly mystifying, appealed to me greatly because of its excellent entertainment value. He was good enough to grant me the right to publish this, and also let me have his own apparatus. Thus I can say from personal experience that here we have an effect that will definitely get the laughs and establish the performer as a real entertainer. You get laughs all through the routine and another big laugh at the unexpected conclusion. The gratitude of many readers will be yours, Mr. Tyler.

Effect.

A gentleman is on the stage, either having helped the performer in an effect, or invited to help in one, and the performer says that he likes to collect photographs of people who have been kind enough to help him, and before the spectator returns to his seat (or the effect is commenced, as the case may be) he will take his photograph, "while he waits."

The camera is introduced, and this travesty of a camera will get the first laugh. The drawing at the heading illustrates

the general appearance of the camera. It stands upon an ordinary folding tripod as used with pocket cameras. To the top of this tripod is fixed a strip of wood which has been recessed to hold the camera proper (see other sketches) and the camera itself is a flat box of wood about 10-inches wide by 12-inches high by $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch thick, open at the top. On the front is a "lens" with a cap. Draped over it is a focussing cloth or a square of opaque cloth about 30-inches or so square.

The subject is posed on one side of the stage, and here more fun enters. An opera hat is placed upon his head, and a bottle of beer (or a beer bottle) placed in his hand. Funny business is introduced by getting the subject to hold the bottle out as though making a "toast," but every time the performer turns to the camera, the subject begins to put the bottle to his mouth as though anxious to drink. This is played upon, not overdoing it, and finally the performer puts his head under the cloth and focusses. Then he removes the cap from the lens and a snake jumps out.

Hastily replacing the cap, the performer apologises, says the picture will be clearer now, and anyway, he forgot to put a plate in the camera. So he picks up a black blank card which he shows both sides and drops into the camera. Again he focuses, having the subject stand with his profile to the camera. The "exposure" is made as before and the cloth removed. Removing the camera from the stand, the performer advances to the front and tips the camera so that the card slides out, the box being seen otherwise empty. Showing the black card, a caricature in white paint of a man with top hat and holding a bottle is now seen on the card, which is good for more laughs. As the performer holds the card, the arm in the drawing is seen to bend up and place the bottle to the mouth in exact imitation of the subject in the earlier stages of the effect when the subject tried to drink. This makes a really funny "hit" conclusion.

The Apparatus.

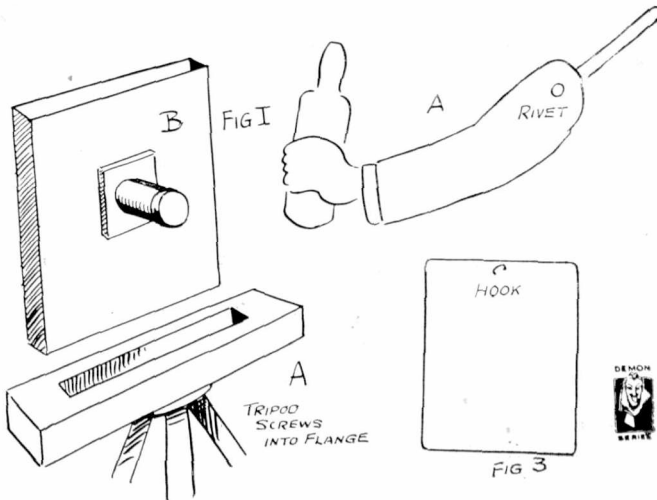
This can be made in any size as desired. A block of wood is recessed to hold the "camera" as in Fig. 1, A. The camera is a flat box open at the mouth as described (Fig. 1, B) and has a tin with a lid fixed in the centre to represent a "lens."

The "plate" needs careful making. Take a sheet of black cardboard as shown in Fig. 2 and draw upon it the caricature, but not painting the arm nor the bottle. An "arm" is cut from a sheet of thin tin (Fig. 2, A), painted black and edged with white to represent the drawing of the arm. This is pivoted through the card so the thin strip of tin (also painted black) lies at the back of the card. By pushing the tin strip up or down behind the card with the thumb, the arm on the front apparently rises or lowers accordingly.

Another sheet of black cardboard is cut to exactly cover

the faked card, and a wire hook, painted black, fixed to the top. (Fig. 3.)

A spring snake of a size to fit inside the "lens" is also required, the opaque cloth, hat and bottle. To prepare, simply set the camera on the tripod, load the snake into the lens and drape the cloth over the camera. Then place the blank black card squarely over the card with the caricature so that when shown this looks like one black card, blank on both sides.



Modus Operandi.

Very little remains to be described as the average performer will know just what to do. The "effect" gives most of the details. When posing the subject, a quiet word will cause him to play up the drinking part, or one can use the old "shaking hand" gag by gripping his right shoulder in a friendly attitude and pressing the fingers hard under the muscles of the arm to cause him to make the bottle rise. Personally I prefer the whispering method as he will then "lift the elbow" as the performer walks away.

After the business with the spring snake, the "plate" is shown both sides, dropped into the camera (making sure that the hook hangs over the front) and the focussing cloth draped over.

The final focussing is completed and the focussing cloth taken off and carelessly dropped aside. However, during the focussing the hook was engaged into the cloth, so that when the cloth is removed the blank card is taken with it.

Remove the "camera" from the recess in the base and tip the card out, showing the drawing and the camera otherwise empty. Hold the drawing and work the arm at the back, and the drawing appears to "tip the elbow" in a most realistic manner.

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY MENTALITY.

This effect, contributed by Mr. W. A. Gripper will no doubt prove of interest to anyone fond of working mental effects. Its usefulness has been proved in my own shows, where it is usually well received.

A current copy of a telephone directory is handed to a spectator with the request that he kindly help with the effect. A pack of cards is then taken and shown to be well mixed, and is still further mixed. A knife is then handed to the spectator with the directory and he is asked to insert the blade anywhere in the pack as the latter is riffled.

He is then asked to remove the two cards below the blade, then remove a third card and place this one aside for a moment. It is then explained that the first card represents tens (or hundreds if the card is a ten, jack, or queen—that is eleven and twelve); the second card represents the units; the resultant figure to be a pointer for a page in the directory. Suppose he chose a Queen and an Ace. He would turn to page 121 in the directory.

It is now explained that the pages are divided into three columns. The total of the digits is added and the performer gives an example. "If you have page 64, the total will be 6 plus 4 which equals 10." The spectator totals his figure in this way. "Then if the total can be divided by three use the third column; if it can be divided by two, then take the second column; but if it can only be divided by 1, then take the first column." As his page is 121, and the digits add to 4, the second column is taken.

Now the third card which was lain aside is taken, and the spectator is requested to count down to the name and number indicated by the value of that card. If the third card is a seven, he counts to the seventh address in the second column of page 121. After due "telepathic concentration," the performer writes the name and number on a slate, or otherwise reveals it.

Contrary to how the above reads, this method of choosing page, column and line is not at all involved, and takes but a few seconds to accomplish.

Modus Operandi.

Take a pack of cards and discard the Kings and the Joker. Then arrange the pack from top to bottom in the following order, taking no notice of the suits: 3, 6, 4, 9, 2, 5, Q, A, 7, J, 8, 10, and so on throughout the pack. The order of the

values should be memorised, and this is easy if it is done rhythmically, emphasising every third card. A fraction is then trimmed from the edge of all the cards **except** the fours, fives, sevens and tens.

Next take the telephone directory and memorise the four addresses as given below, not too arduous a task:—

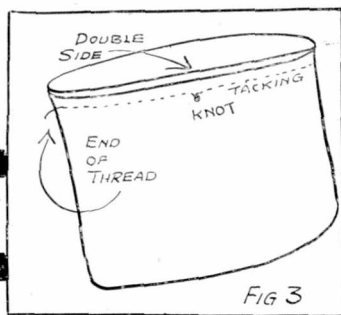
Page	Column	Word Down
36	3	4
92	1	5
121	2	7
118	2	10

In riffling the pack for the knife to be inserted, it is easy to let a few cards slip by so that the knife goes immediately below any one of the long cards. Glimpse the card above the knife when the pack is cut for the removal of the cards below the blade and you will know which three values of cards follow, and thus which of the four memorised addresses will be settled upon.

To mix the cards before inserting the knife, one can give a quick series of cuts which does not disturb the order, or give what appears to be an overhand shuffle, but what again is really a series of simple cuts, not disturbing the order of the cards.

Finally I might point out that a subtle "glimpse" of the card above the knife can be made so that you never appear to see the faces of the cards. If the knife is a polished stainless steel one, hold the knife in position where the spectator has inserted it, then cut off the cards above and the index of the card above the knife can be seen reflected in the polished blade for a moment.

Old Rags



OLD RAGS.

This is an effect of the "novelty" type and one which has proved to be very effective. Seen displayed on the stage is an easel upon which stands a framed board covered with black velvet or felt. A tray full of odd bits of various coloured pieces of cloth is shown and given to someone to mix up thoroughly, while someone else examines a cloth bag. Then the spectator with the "rags" fills the cloth bag and gives it to the performer.

The bag is placed in a prominent position to make sure there is no exchange of bags, while a number of cards are shown to bear the names of various people and articles. Three of these are taken by someone in the audience, and then, while they are in their possession, they merely think of one of the three objects named on the cards.

This done, the performer places his hand into the bag of rags, and brings out a bunch of pieces at random and drops them on to the tray. Taking the tray in the left hand, the performer asks the spectator to tell the audience what object he thought of, and the performer then builds up a quick "rag picture" on the board, using the rags which were haphazardly selected, depicting the article named. All the pieces are used exactly, and none left over.

Performed before children, this will be found a very useful effect, as there is little to think about on the part of the audience, and the effect is easily understood and quite showy.

Modus Operandi.

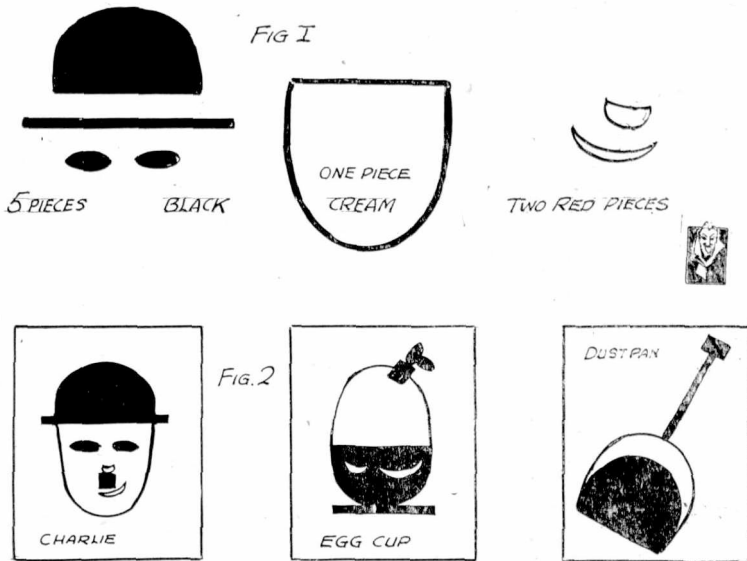
The main subtlety is that the pieces of cloth, eight in number, which are apparently selected at random, will make up three distinctive "pictures." These pictures are of a very simple nature, but none the less effective for that. Quite possibly some clever reader may design a better set of pictures,

probably making the same set of cloth do five or six pictures. Personally I find the three simple ones quite good and have not troubled to develop them any further.

The eight pieces are shown in Fig. 1 and should be cut from coloured felts so they will cling together and cling to the felt-covered display board. Make them as large as possible consistent with the size of your display board. There are five black pieces, one cream piece and two small red pieces. The layout of the cloths to form three separate pictures is shown in Fig. 2. The first is Charlie Chaplin; the second an egg-cup with an egg, the eyes and moustache of Charlie forming what purports to be a black chicken coming from the egg; and a dustpan made by placing the black piece over the cream for the pan, the moustache and strip for the handle and the four odd bits as rubbish being swept into the pan. For the third picture the display frame must be placed on its side.

The cloth bag has a double side which contains the eight pieces, and so the bag may be freely handled, the double side is fitted with a draw thread loosely tacked along the top edge and with a large knot tied in the centre so the thread may easily be removed when required.

Three cards must be forced on to the spectator, and then he thinks of one of the three. My method of doing this force is to have eight cards each printed with the words CHARLIE, CHAPLIN, EGG AND EGG CUP, DUSTPAN respectively.

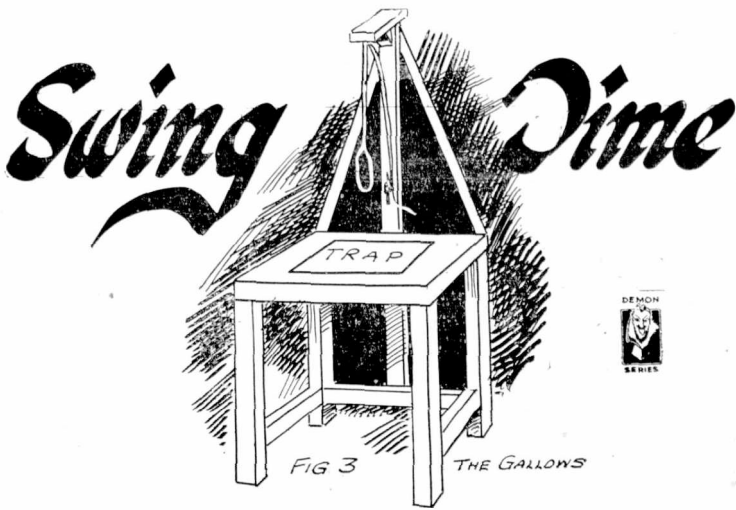


Then another six or seven cards with other entirely different names upon them. The eight sets of three are set in running order, Chaplin, Egg, Dustpan, Chaplin, Egg, Dustpan, etc. The top card face down is trimmed short and the odd cards are place on the face.

To work the effect have the odd pieces of cloth on a small tray. Give the bag for examination and have the pieces dropped in a few at a time and thoroughly mixed together. In returning to the stage with the bag, grip the knot and pull out the draw-thread.

Show the packet of cards and pass them one by one from the front to the back giving the names thereon, until you come to the first Dustpan card, then stop, fan the rest of the cards, and say "and so on," casually inferring that they are all different. Square up the cards, break them at the short card and palm all those above it, that is, all the odd cards, and as the hand which has these palmed picks up the tray again, the cards are left on the table. The stacked cards which remain are then placed on the tray and someone asked to cut the packet at any point and remove the top three cards from wherever they cut. Thus they must get the three cards required.

They mentally choose one of the three cards, and the performer places his hand into the bag, going into the double side, and produces the handful of pieces which have previously been concealed in that side. These are dropped on to the tray, the selected card named, and whichever it is, the correct picture can be built up.



SWING TIME.

This is the one item in this book that I have not personally tried out, but George Brighting, the originator, has done so and assures me that he can recommend it as sensational and completely practical. In any case, it is not for the majority of the readers of this book for it is a full-blown stage illusion and will make little appeal to those who tear around from one dinner show to another complete with props in a tiny bag. Now you know why I have not personally built this and tried it out on an audience, but I hope before long to see it on the legitimate stage as the illusion, although looking massive, is not really difficult to build or to transport.

The effect is as follows. The audience see in the centre of the stage a more or less conventional type of gallows. The performer is brought on wearing convict's attire, by two assistants who are also dressed for the part. Despite loud and prolonged protestations of his innocence, the performer is eventually compelled to mount the gallows.

The assistants seem to treat the matter as a joke, and point out that the performer does not look very pleased considering that he is the focus of so much attention. But the performer scowls more than ever, whereupon one of the assistants says he hasn't the heart to hang a man who does not look as though he is enjoying it, so he departs and returns a moment later with one of those large head masks bearing an inane but cheerful grin.

This is placed over the performer's head and then the

old dancing pumps and cut away all the back and sides leaving only the sole and toe cap. Attach these to the bottoms of the trousers legs. Next fit two lengths of tape to tie up around the neck at the collar of the jacket and the "body" is complete.

If these tapes are now tied around the neck, the hands slipped through the rings at the bottom of the sleeves and the stockinged feet inserted into the slippers, you will find you are able to walk about quite naturally, mount steps and so on, in what is apparently a convict's uniform, yet in a matter of seconds it is possible to get out of it without apparent movement.

The grotesque head mask is the ordinary article which can be purchased from any theatrical outfitter and the only preparation is to cut away a large portion at the back behind the ears and then to fix three short tapes with loops, one underneath the chin, and the other two on each side at the back of the jaw. These loops attach to buttons on the jacket and fix the mask to the body. In addition a few small hooks are fixed in the position shown in Fig. 2, their purpose being to keep the noose in a special correct position so as not to interfere with the escape.

The gallows has very little special preparation. It must of necessity be of sturdy construction. Also, as the performer stands on the trap for a time, attention must be paid to the construction and mode of release to ensure that it is safe. The trap is about six feet above the stage. The upright on top is supported by two side arms which mask the existence of a triangular black curtain. A further black curtain extends to the floor at the back, and suitable arrangements must be made so that the performer can step through the triangular curtain on to some object and away through the back-drop.

The working should be fairly clear from the foregoing description, but the following moves, based upon Mr. Brighting's practical experience of the illusion may prove useful.

The performer mounts the scaffold from a pair of steps placed at the side, taking care to face the audience. The mask is placed over his head and attached to the jacket by means of the loops. The noose is fitted over the head as follows: it is passed under the hooks round the chin and at the back of jaw; then it passes straight upwards and the noose is drawn tight on top of the mask. From there it passes under one further hook and then up to the gallows. The position of this final hook will be determined by experiment as upon its correct position depends the posture of the framework when it is supported by the rope alone. Too far forward or back-

ward, and the figure will lurch when the performer leaves it. The fitting of the noose may sound a little " phony " but from the front it looks quite normal.

One assistant pulls the rope to just support the figure. The other, at a suitable opportunity, quickly unties the tapes from behind the performer's neck. Now if the two assistants stand on each side of the figure to engage themselves in some trivial attention to its appearance, they will provide adequate cover for the performer's escape through the black curtains at the rear. To do this, he moves his feet carefully from the slippers, raises his hands through the rings and steps backwards. When the performer has escaped, the assistant not holding the rope descends from the platform and releases the trap. Simultaneously the other assistant releases the rope and the " body " crashes to the stage. The way it crumples to nothingness is both arresting and magical, and I can guarantee many a gasp of thrilled astonishment for anyone who cares to make and present this spectacular illusion. For such, it is perhaps needless to mention that it should be worked on a stage with a black back-drop, so the presence of the masking curtains on the gallows is concealed.





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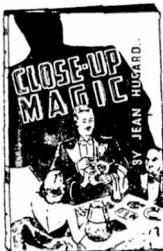
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