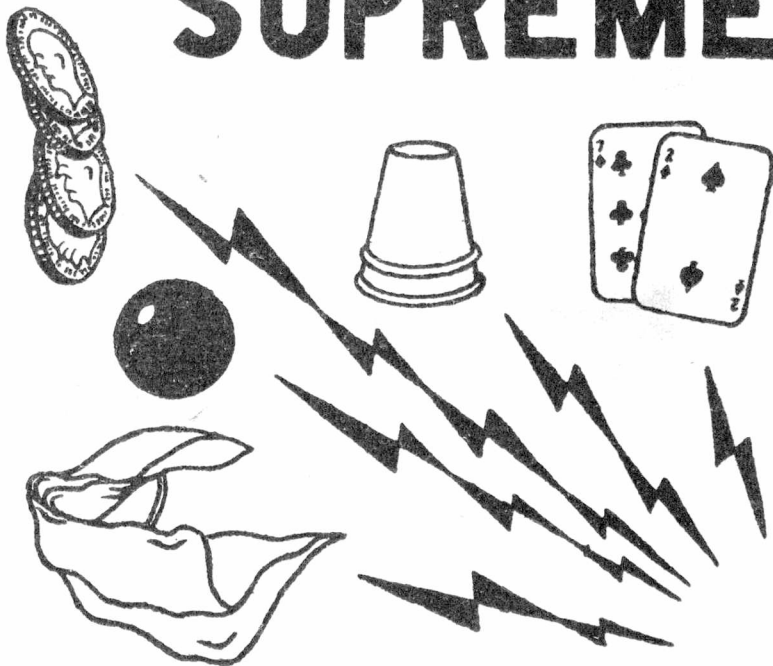
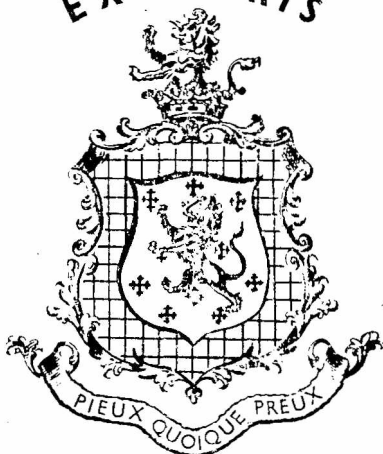

SLEIGHTS SUPREME



BY
E. BRIAN MAC CARTHY

GEORGE JOHNSON MAGICAL PUBLICATIONS

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SLEIGHTS SUPREME

Made and Printed in Great Britain
By MACLEAN'S PRINTING WORKS,
137. Mile End Road,
London - E.1.

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BY

E. BRIAN MAC CARTHY

.....
Illustrated by the Author.
.....

WILL ANDRADE
276 COLLIER STREET
MELBOURNE, C.1.



LONDON

GEORGE JOHNSON MAGICAL PUBLICATIONS

24, Buckingham Street, W.C.2.

1948

FOREWORD

For the assertive title of this book I disclaim responsibility. It is that of a magician who delivered his verdict after reading the manuscript—and witnessing the presentations. Further, as publicity must be served I sacrifice my artistic feeling for the nonce.

In the evanishment of four coins, acknowledgment for the standard single-coin vanish is made to Mr. George Armstrong; my version of this appeared in the *Magic Wand*, Volume XXXVI, page 76. To Mr. Jack Hughes, for the presentation in connection with his coin tray—an admirable effect. To Mr. Eric C. Lewis, to whom references are made in the text.

To these gentlemen I express my indebtedness for the courtesy afforded.

E. BRIAN MACCARTHY.

CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| INTRODUCTION | 9 |
| COIN SECTION | |
| Single-handed Vanish of Four Coins | 14 |
| Disappearance by Misdirection | 25 |
| Flying Coins | 27 |
| CARD SECTION | |
| Something New in Top Changes | 32 |
| Leading Them up the Garden Path | 35 |
| Everybody's Card | 42 |
| All Change | 44 |
| Vanishing Faces | 45 |
| Reading Cards in the Crystal (with a real climax) | 49 |
| HANDKERCHIEF SECTION | |
| The Colour-Sensitive Silk Handkerchief | 56 |
| BILLIARD-BALL SECTION | |
| An Opening Acquitment | 80 |
| Another Similar Acquitment | 82 |
| Routine for Colour-changing One of Two Visible Balls | 83 |
| Routine for Colour-changing One of Three Visible Balls | 86 |
| CUPS AND BALLS SECTION | |
| Throwing a Cup into the Air | 90 |
| Acquitment to Precede Production of the First Ball | 90 |
| Acquitment to Show Two Balls as One | 91 |
| A Subtle Method of Vanishing a Ball | 91 |

INTRODUCTION

Much has been written regarding the correct definition of the object of conjuring. The main school of thought claims that "the object of a conjurer is to entertain his audience," and decries any suggestion that his object might be to deceive them. Now this definition implies that a conjurer need not do any tricks. It is true that it is not necessary to do tricks to entertain—a musician delights his audience without deceiving them. But surely, if a man describes himself as "conjurer," "magician," "wizard," or any other synonym for this calling, the spectators will expect to be deceived by him, and will in fact be disappointed if he does not succeed? As is so often remarked, however, it is not much good deceiving an audience unless they are entertained. I would therefore humbly suggest that the correct object of a conjurer should be "to entertain his audience, primarily by deceiving them."

One frequently hears opinions expressed that, if there are several ways of doing an effect, then the easiest should be chosen, even though its deceptiveness may be very poor compared with other methods; the excuse being that the non-conjurer will be deceived just as much by the poor method as by the good one. That may be the case when entertaining people of no particular discernment and poor intelligence, but it is not true for the better class of spectator. From sitting among audiences and listening to the remarks passed, I am convinced that much harm is done to Magic by this belief. I have been truly shocked at the way some performers have been dissected by non-conjurers! These have not guessed wildly; they have told each other correctly, in detail, how tricks were performed, from observation of the act. I have even heard men whom I knew, who had no knowledge of conjuring, pointing out mistakes in very small details of the performance which I had not noticed myself. I have also noticed that, in general, tricks which I, as a conjurer, considered good and deceptive, were also so considered by the spectators, while those I thought poor were often pulled to pieces by them. This leads to the conclusion that audiences have far more intelligence than many conjurers suppose, and that if Magic is to flourish in the future, much

greater attention must be paid to the small details of making the business deceptive.

Of course, these remarks do not apply to "cod" conjurers, who are comedians and not magicians. It is not, however, given to many of us to be comedians; so to follow the Magic Art it seems that most of us must become magicians, and entertain primarily by deception.

Some people contend that as a large proportion of normal mixed audiences are not particularly interested in conjuring it is desirable to introduce other matter, such as funny stories, gags, and comic business, quite unrelated to the tricks being performed, in order to keep them amused. This seems to be illogical. If in a variety show a soprano with a beautiful voice comes on to sing ballads or opera, she does not usually break off in the middle of a song to tell funny stories, although admittedly the proportion of the audience interested in her classical singing is probably no higher than that prepared to be entertained by conjuring. Should she do so, she would spoil the act utterly for admirers of singing; and as she is usually not a comedienne as well as vocalist, she would not entertain the others particularly well either with her ventures into the realm of humour. So that instead of thoroughly satisfying that portion of the audience interested in her type of act, and boring the rest, she would bore both.

Surely, then, a magician whose ability lies in the presentation of marvels, who wastes half his time offering sops to those who do not care for magic, will end up by entertaining nobody particularly well?

It seems, therefore, that efforts aimed at improving the standard of deception cannot be wasted. The items given in this book may appear to some to be unnecessarily difficult. The reader may be assured, however, that if simpler moves can be devised to produce not only the same artistic effect, but also the same degree of deception, as well as being performed under the same conditions, then such moves will be better than those described herein.

Recent correspondence in the *Magical Press* has accused authors of devising useless effects and methods merely for the purpose of getting them into print under the fond delusion that the more they write, however trashy, the more important they become as authors. Having a guilty conscience in this respect, I have endeavoured to avoid such a crime this time by including in this book only those effects and methods which seem to me to be really interesting and thoroughly practical. For example, the following items are all part of my own number one act: "Single-handed Vanish of Four Coins," "Something New in Top Changes," "Leading Them up the Garden Path," "Reading Cards in the Crystal," "The Colour-Sensitive Silk Handkerchief," and all the billiard-ball moves.

This is not a book for the man whose only interest is money, nor for the man whose urge to perform is based on love of limelight. It is for those who love Magic for the sake of the art itself.

COIN SECTION

SINGLE-HANDED VANISH OF FOUR COINS

(one at a time; especially for use with the Hughes' Coin Tray)

The Jack Hughes' Coin Tray should surely be classed as one of the most beautiful effects possible in the realms of sleight-of-hand conjuring. I possess one of the original models (prior to the modifications in design adopted later by the maker) and it is really a perfect trick. I feel that no energy expended on obtaining as perfect a presentation as possible would be wasted; one feels obliged to make every effort to live up to the beauty of the effect.

Now in this trick (as in some others) it is necessary to cause four coins to disappear one at a time, only one hand being available to execute this, since the other is occupied in holding and manipulating the tray. The trick as sold includes (or did, anyway, when I bought my model) a special stand, which aids the necromancer by disposing of the coins for him. Such obviously purpose-made apparatus is expected in an act for which a lot of unusual articles are used: magic boxes, fancy tubes, spring flowers, and the like. For the type of performance in which the magician weaves his spells around a number of perfectly innocent (?) everyday articles, would it not be out of place?

The tray, although specially made, enters into the scheme quite naturally, for on what would one expect to see a couple of glasses standing but on a tray? It is quite common nowadays for small trays to be decorated with a fancy geometrical pattern as is the Hughes' Tray. Of course, it would be inadvisable to call special attention to it. To say: "Here I have an ordinary tray," would be conjuring suicide. Even to show the top, other than accidentally, would be an error. The wonderful thing about the effect as far as the audience is concerned is: How do the coins manage to get through the inverted outer glass? Not: How do they manage to get up through the tray and into the inner glass! The tray is therefore incidental. It is not one of the articles being conjured with, which comprise only the coins and the

two glasses, and interest is directed towards them and not towards the tray. As the tray is in actual fact responsible for the marvels witnessed by the audience, for purposes of misdirection no attention should be called to it, and it will fall into place quite naturally as an everyday article.

This is not true of a special stand. I have not managed to think of any form of trick coin stand that would appear as an ordinary everyday object. Therefore for the type of act in which simple and obviously unprepared (?) articles are used, some other receptacle for the coins should, to my mind, be devised. Merely to lay them on the table would be weak, as they would be difficult to see. Something like champagne-glass or a china saucer is needed. The problem is an interesting one to a serious student of artistic (let us hope not "arty") magic, because to execute a deceptive one-handed vanish of four coins one after the other appears to me to be well-nigh impossible unless one gets rid of each coin before vanishing the next.

Here follow some of the dodges visualised, tested and rejected. An opaque champagne-glass might be used, from which three of the four coins would be abstracted secretly before the actions of vanishing begin. Abstraction by means of a hair-net lining was considered, but the problem of removing the net without arousing suspicion and without causing the coins inside to "talk" was thought insuperable. Then again, a mirror-glass might be used. The four coins would be dropped into the front half to commence with. The first would then be removed and vanished by palming. The palmed coin would be dropped into the rear compartment in the action of picking out the second from the front, and so on. This idea was rejected mainly on account of difficulties in the prevention of "talking" in the rear half—not to mention the suspicious appearance of a mirror-glass at close quarters. Then a small cake-stand might be used, having a trap in the top; but it would be very difficult to devise such a thing and still keep it simple and unprepared in appearance. A close approach to a solution was to have each coin covered on one side to match the table-cloth, to place them in a saucer, and then, as each was picked up, the previously-vanished and palmed coin could be dropped

secretly on to the table-cloth where the coin would be invisible. The disadvantage was, however, that I wished to produce magically the four coins from the air to begin with, and it would seem impossible to handle such coins naturally during this, including spinning them in the air (which is such an aid to visibility and hence showmanship). A still further and almost workable method was to have small pockets made in the table-cloth, on the portion hanging down in front of the table. The mouths of these pockets would form a little row at the top of the drape just in front of a saucer laid near the front edge of the table. Unfortunately, unless black-art were used (a rather well-known secret these days), the pocket-openings are a bit too visible, especially at a slight angle; and besides, it is difficult to drop the coins in safely without any appearance of fumbling.

The solution finally adopted, and described in detail hereafter, was broadly as follows. Use a saucer, and lay down only three coins therein (supposedly four), secretly getting rid of the fourth. The audience should not notice the absence of the fourth if the procedure is perfectly natural. Vanish one of the coins from the saucer; apparently pick up another (really the same one again) and vanish that, getting rid of it on the body; pick up the next and vanish it, again disposing of it on the body; finally take and vanish the fourth, but do not dispose of it at once. This coin is left later inside the silk scarf used to cover the tray in the trick.

General Notes

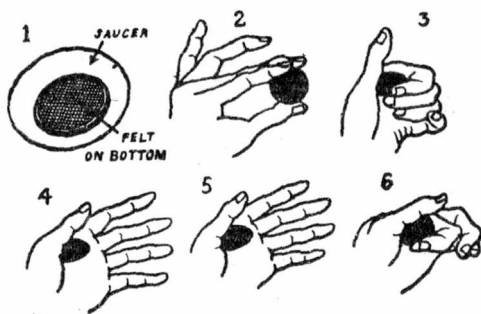
1. It is assumed that during the coin tray trick, the tray is held and manipulated by the right hand. This means that all the sleights must be done by the left hand.
2. The table, with the saucer near the front edge and the tray just behind it, lies to the right of the performer.
3. During the presentation of the trick, the conjurer is facing right all the time. This is only natural, as he is repeatedly picking up coins from the saucer. It also ensures the back of the left hand being towards the audience, unless deliberately turned otherwise.

4. It is assumed that the artist is expert at manipulating the tray, holding and operating it at the same time with the right hand without assistance from the left. Furthermore, that he can make a coin drop into the glass at the exact moment he wishes (a difficult thing to do).

5. The covering used for the tray is a large, plain silk scarf, which looks more convincing than a highly-ornamental conjurer's silk.

6. All drawings of the hands up to Fig. 19 show the performer's view of things. Figs. 22 to 25 show the view as seen from the audience.

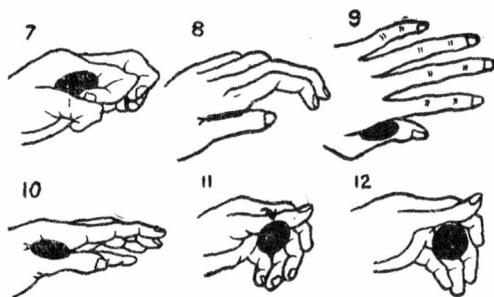
Preparation. An ordinary china saucer is taken, and the recess beneath it covered with felt glued in place, to prevent "talk" when a coin is held against it (Fig. 1). This is placed near the front edge of a table on the artist's right, and the tray complete with glasses and scarf placed just behind it.



Dress. This routine is devised for performance in a dinner-jacket suit, the coat-pockets of which have no flaps, thus permitting a coin to be slipped inside readily. A lounge coat might be adapted for the purpose by tucking the flaps inside the pockets; this would, however, appear odd on the well-dressed man. A sports coat having flapless pockets would be suitable too. I have not tried a tails coat, as I have none handy here in camp. It is possible that the pockets of the white waistcoat might be held open with a piece of whalebone and used for the routine.

Essential sleight for vanishing each coin

The moves are illustrated in Figs. 2, 3, and 4. Each coin, on being picked up, is held as in Fig. 2, the tip of the thumb being behind the coin. A throwing motion is made, under cover of which the first and second fingers, gripping the coin, bend inwards and deposit it in the crotch of the thumb (Fig. 3) and straighten out, leaving the coin gripped at the root of the thumb (Fig. 4). It is essential that the coin be pushed hard into the crotch, and well up under the thumb, so that the edge towards the audience is all but showing beneath the thumb; otherwise the succeeding acquitment will be difficult to execute.

*Essential acquitment to show left hand empty*

As each coin is vanished, it is necessary to provide the spectators with reasonably convincing proof that the hand from which it has just disappeared really is empty. For this purpose, the moves illustrated in Figs. 5 to 9, and 9 to 12, are used. Starting at the position after the vanish (Fig. 5), the hand turns palm towards the audience from the wrist, by twisting the thumb side towards the body and down—not away from the body and down. During this, the first finger bends inwards and presses the coin against the flesh, thus holding it and enabling the thumb to be lifted (Fig. 6). The thumb is then bent into the palm as far as it will go (Fig. 7) and the thumb grips the coin by its edge tightly in the crotch. The fingers are extended, while the thumb is slid outwards again (Fig. 8), keeping the coin tightly pressed

against the edge of the hand and sliding it backwards thereon, so that the hand ends up with all the fingers extended and the thumb reasonably well extended (Fig. 9). The coin is concealed behind the base of the thumb at the back. The hand should now be just above waist-height, forearm horizontal, and the fingers parallel to the floor. The whole move is made very rapidly under cover of only the slightest down-and-up movement of the arm. It is a thoroughly natural movement. Care must be taken of angles, periodic trials in front of a mirror being necessary.

It is also necessary to turn the hand again so that the back will be towards the spectators once more. Starting from the position of Fig. 9, the hand is turned back again rapidly as it drops to waist height, during which the thumb is bent sharply into the palm (Fig. 10), thus flipping the coin over the thumb (Fig. 11) to be caught by the fingers (Fig. 12) and finger-palmed.

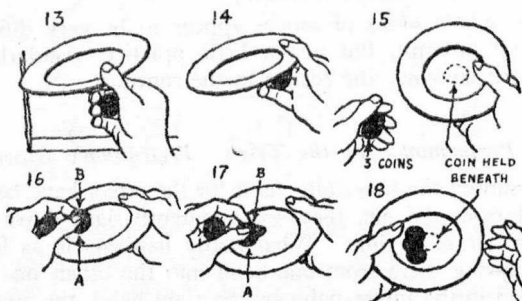
The whole series of moves appear to be very difficult at the first attempt, but just a little practice, regularly every day, will convince the reader to the contrary.

Performance of the Trick. Preliminary Moves

Assuming the four coins used for the effect have been produced from the air, they are apparently laid down on the saucer one at a time. What really happens is as follows: In throwing them from one hand into the other, one coin is retained in the finger-palm by the right hand, the other three going into the left. The artist turns to the table on his right and picks up the saucer with the right hand. To do so, he first grasps it by the edge nearest to him between thumb and forefinger (Fig. 13), being careful of angles for the finger-palm. The saucer is lifted, and jerked back into the crotch of the thumb (Fig. 14). The fingers are extended behind and beneath, and the coin pressed against the padded bottom of the saucer (Fig. 15). This may, on paper, seem to be a peculiar way to lift a saucer, but on trial without any palmed coins, it will be found difficult to pick it up and get it into a firm position in the hand any other way (particularly if the coin tray is just behind it so that it cannot be taken up by

the rear edge). As the fingers press the coin on to the bottom, the top of the saucer should be tilted towards the audience so that they may notice accidentally that it really is an ordinary one.

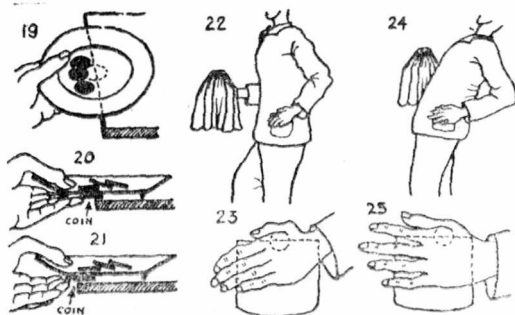
The three (supposedly four) coins in the left hand are now laid one at a time on the saucer with an audible "click-click" each time. To do this, the left hand approaches with the three coins stacked on the fingers (Fig. 15). The top one is pushed off with the thumb and laid on the saucer so that edge "A" strikes it first (Fig. 16); immediately after which the thumb presses edge "B" past the finger-tips so that the coin flicks down flat; this produces a distinctive double "click." The left hand is raised a couple of inches, the second coin pushed off the stack with the thumb, and laid on top of the first (Fig. 17) by the same procedure. Note, however, that it is placed half-way across the first coin, so that edge "A"



hits the saucer half-an-inch towards the performer from the first coin. Edge "A" produces the first click on the saucer; edge "B" the second click on the first coin. But owing to the position half-way across the first, and the pressure of the thumb near edge "A," edge "B" becomes slightly elevated, so that as soon as the double "click" has been heard, the second finger nail can be inserted below edge "B," and as the hand is raised an inch or two, the second coin is levered up again by the thumb against the second finger-tip. Now, although in actual fact the second coin has been lifted again, it appears to an unsuspecting spectator (good phrase, that!)

as if the third coin has been pushed up by the left thumb ready to deposit on the saucer. The procedure is so natural and the double "click" so convincing, that no one would guess otherwise. Moreover, the left hand being between spectators and coins, masks the move to a certain extent (not completely). This "third" coin is laid openly on the saucer with the same double "click," and finally the last is similarly laid down. The effect produced is that of counting four coins openly on a saucer. It is, however, vital that the coins should not actually be counted out aloud, as any emphasis on the idea that four coins are being laid down would sharpen the subconscious wits of the audience.

There are now three coins on the saucer, supposedly four. It is impossible for any portion of an audience except those in the upper circle to see sufficiently well over the rim to count them, especially if the coins are laid well to the front of the saucer. And the dress-circle spectators are too far away to be able to detect the deception. Provided the procedure has been perfectly natural, there is no reason in the world for anyone to doubt that there are four coins on the saucer.



The next step is to lay the saucer on the table so that the fourth coin is hidden beneath it. To accomplish this, it is first transferred to the left hand (Fig. 18), which holds it up underneath by the finger-tips. The saucer is then laid on the front edge of the table (Fig. 19) so that the edge of the coin beneath comes onto the table-top (Fig. 20). The saucer is now slid towards the centre of the table, during which the

coin slides back as far as the underneath rim (Fig. 21), still being supported by the finger-tips. As the rim strikes the coin, it propels the latter along the table-top underneath the saucer towards the centre of the table, where the saucer is left. It is advisable when placing the saucer on the edge of the table to tilt it slightly towards the audience, to ensure that no one may catch a glimpse of the coin beneath (although the fingers in front cover it pretty well). The slight chink caused by the coin striking the rim below will be taken by the audience to come from the coins on top of the saucer, which will be sliding about a bit anyway.

Thus is the first coin disposed of before the trick with the tray starts.

Introduction of the Tray. The tray trick is now commenced. After arranging the glasses on it and covering all with the scarf, it is held in the right hand.

The Vanish of the First Coin. The left hand picks up one coin from the saucer. The essential vanish as explained earlier is executed under cover of a throwing motion towards the glasses on the tray, and a coin is heard to fall inside. The left hand is then shown empty by means of the essential acquitment, the coin ending up in the finger-palm.

The Vanish of the Second Coin. The left hand now apparently takes a second coin from the saucer. In reality, as the fingers are turned down on the coins therein, the palmed coin is slid on top of them and immediately slid out of the saucer again! The essential vanish is once more executed (not murdered, we hope!) under cover of a throwing motion, and a coin heard to fall inside the glasses. The essential acquitment is again performed, leaving the coin finger-palmed. It is now necessary to get rid of it before the third vanish. To accomplish this, the performer makes some remark about the coin having to penetrate the scarf as well as the glasses, and in emphasising his remarks takes a fold of the scarf and shakes it. In so doing, he is enabled to shift the coin from the finger-palm to the crotch-of-the-thumb palm (i.e., the position of the coin after the essential vanish). Leaving go of the scarf, he stands idly for a moment making some remark about the glasses (probably a fatuous one!) and

raises the tray for a moment and gazes at it to give point to his remarks. At the same time he places his left hand casually on the hip (Fig. 22). It will be found an easy matter, as the hand slides down on to the hip, to insert the lower edge of the thumb-palmed coin into the pocket, and let it drop inside (Fig. 23). It goes without saying that this position must be adopted in a free and easy manner, without hurry. In so doing it is natural to advance the right leg, bending it slightly, the weight being taken on the left leg (Fig. 22). The position must also be relaxed slowly and easily.

The Vanish of the Third Coin. The left hand now takes the next coin from the saucer and apparently tosses the coin high into the air, really executing the essential vanish, the hand immediately dropping in a natural manner to waist level. The performer appears to have thrown the coin up too near himself, so that it is going to fall on his head or thereabouts! Because, as he follows the imaginary flight with his eyes, he has to bend backwards in order to get the tray beneath the supposedly falling coin (Fig. 24). This naturally brings the left hand to the pocket again, as seen in Fig. 25. Again, the lower edge of the thumb-palmed coin is pushed inside the pocket and dropped. The drop is timed so as to coincide with the clatter of the coin arriving in the glass on the tray, so as to cover any chinking caused by the second coin falling on top of the first in the pocket. Note the way in which the pocket has been brought to the hand—the hand has not been moved to the pocket! I feel that artists will appreciate this misdirection. The hand should accidentally be shown completely empty during a gesture before picking up the next coin to be vanished.

The Vanish of the Fourth Coin. The left hand picks up the last coin lying on the saucer, makes a throwing motion at the tray, executing the essential vanish. A coin is heard to drop into the glasses on the tray. The essential acquitment is now performed, leaving the coin finger-palmed.

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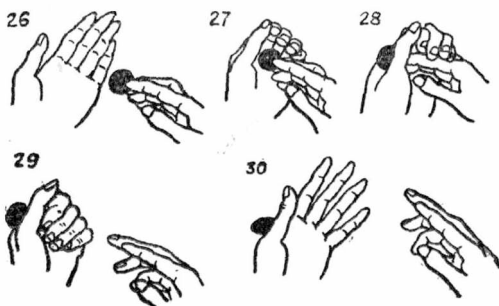
The Climax. The left hand seizes the tray at once, and manipulates it *through* the scarf covering it (still having a coin finger-palmed). The right hand is removed from the tray, and throws the scarf off it *over* the left hand. When the small glass has been uncovered, and the coins poured from it on to the tray, the performer makes his bow, after which the tray is slid on to the table by the left hand. The latter then leaves the tray but still grasps the scarf, which can be bundled up with the palmed coins inside, stuffed into the large tumbler, and left there.

Final Notes. A whole book could be written about the Jack Hughes' Coin Tray effect, so it is hoped that the reader will not complain about the length of the foregoing dissertation! Presumably no one will adopt the complete routine as above, but the author hopes it will be of interest to other students and will stimulate their imagination to produce more perfect moves and, even more important, better misdirection.

DISAPPEARANCE BY MISDIRECTION

In this vanish of a single coin, just when the knowing ones are saying to themselves, "It's in the other hand," they find it is *not*, leaving them baffled and producing the effect of a complete disappearance. The moves are simple, convincing, and quickly learnt. Diagrams 26 to 30 illustrate the essential moves as seen from above. They do not, however, show the misdirection inherent in the routine.

To commence with, the performer faces left, and the coin to be vanished is held between the tips of the first and second fingers of the right hand. The latter then approaches the open palm of the left (Fig. 26). The fingers of the left close over the coin (Fig. 27) while the right fingers secretly



go further into the left hand than would appear to the audience (Fig. 28), and deposit the coin in the crotch of the thumb at the back of the left hand and leave the coin there. The right fingers are withdrawn from the closed left fist (Fig. 29). The left fingers make squeezing motions and eventually open slowly to disclose the hand apparently empty (Fig. 30). Now at this moment the wise ones in the audience will begin to suspect that the coin has been retained in the right hand, which is still held with its back towards them. The left hand is allowed to fall to the side behind the body, and at the same time the right hand is turned towards the spectators to show its emptiness. At this instant, the left

hand behind the body brings the coin from the back-thumb-palm position to the finger-palm. This can be done anyhow, as the action is entirely screened by the body and attention is momentarily directed to the other hand. As this is done, the body is swung slightly right, so that the left hand hanging at the side is brought into view an instant after finger-palming the coin, and while the right is still being shown empty. The effect due to this misdirection is that neither hand has been removed from sight, yet both have been shown quite empty without any suspicious moves.

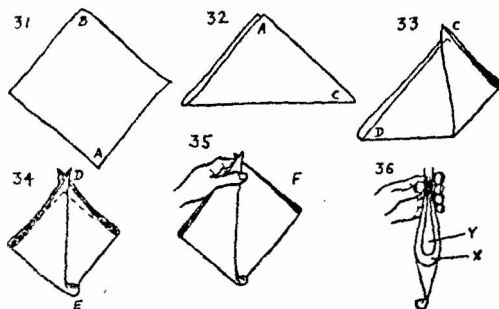
The action of apparently placing the coin in the left hand should be done smartly, as it is necessary to put the coin straight into the back-palm position at once—it is impossible to close the left fingers over the coin and then push the right fingers further through in order to place the coin at the back. It is all a matter of timing—to cover the right fingers just sufficiently with the left as they deposit the coin behind in one movement.

Care must be taken of angles to ensure no one may see the coin in the back-palm position.

FLYING COINS

Effect. A handkerchief is folded into a bag and held up as such by the corners. Four borrowed coins are dropped inside one by one, and seen and heard to drop to the bottom of the bag. A member of the audience then holds the bag, after which two of the coins are found to have left it and may be discovered at the will of the artist.

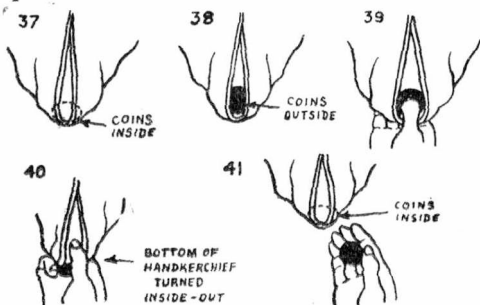
Method. A linen or thick cotton handkerchief must be used; a silk one will not do. It should be clean and ironed; a crumpled one will cause failure. The main secret lies in the method of folding the handkerchief, which follows: Lay it flat on the table (Fig. 31) and fold corner "A" on to corner "B" (Fig. 32). Then fold corner "C" on to corner "A" (Fig. 33), but bring it a little beyond "A," as shown in Fig. 33. Then fold corner "D" over corner "C" (Fig.



34) to overlap "C," exactly as shown in the diagram. Now if the folding has been done correctly, the bottom corner "E" should be curled up a little, exactly as shown. If it is not, try again with a greater overlap of "D" across "C" until the point "E" is caused to curl up considerably.

Next, pick up the whole bag with the left hand, as shown in Fig. 35, the thumb and fingers holding all the overlapping corners together. If looked at endwise, the handkerchief will present the appearance of Fig. 36, with an inner space "Y" (which leads to the sort of "false bag" formed by the curled-up corner at "E"), the space "Y" being really outside the bag proper; and an outer space "X" which leads inside the bag proper.

The four coins are now picked up one by one, each being dropped into the bag. The first two are dropped into space "X," and each can be seen (through the material) to fall to the bottom corner of the bag ("E"), which will now probably present the appearance of Fig. 37. The handkerchief should be shaken slightly to encourage the coins to lie flat on the bottom. The third coin is now dropped inside, but into space "Y," not space "X," whence it will fall into the little false bag formed by the turned-up corner "E" of Fig. 34 (outside the real bag) on top of the coins inside the bag, as in Fig. 38. Finally, the fourth coin is also dropped into space "Y," and falls on top of the third. This may sound horribly dangerous, but provided the bottom corner "E" was given a good curl-up as in Fig. 34, it seems in practice to be safe enough. If, at this point, the weight of the coins has not opened-up the entrance to the false bag slightly so that the third and fourth coins can be seen, as shown in Fig. 38, a very slight (and careful) shaking will open it up.



The next move appears to the audience to be merely a slight jingling of the coins in the bag with the disengaged hand. What really happens is this: The disengaged hand is cupped round the bottom of the bag, while the thumb is secretly and rapidly inserted in the opening (Fig. 39). The cupped hand now shakes the bottom of the bag slightly up and down. Under cover of this the thumb presses the coins against the finger-tips through the cloth. The fingers are bent smartly into the palm, this having the effect of turning

the little false bag at "E" inside-out (Fig. 40), bringing the third and fourth coins into the palm. The shaking is stopped, and the hand drops to the side with these coins palmed (Fig. 41). Thus, two coins have been secretly abstracted, leaving two still inside. The remainder of the effect depends on the individual taste of the performer.

Points to Note. The handkerchief must be linen or cotton, clean and ironed. It must be folded so as to produce a marked turn-up (Fig. 34). The coins, when dropped inside, should be inserted near "F" (Fig. 35) and allowed to roll down the side of the bag to the bottom. If the third and fourth are dropped from higher up the side (near the left hand in Fig. 35), they are liable to fall out of the false bag at the bottom. The first and second coins should have been got flat on the bottom, so that the third and fourth will lie flat on them (Fig. 37), otherwise the actions of Figs. 39, 40 and 41 may not work smoothly.

The work is convincing, because each coin is seen and heard to fall to the centre of the bag, which makes the subsequent removal of two only a really magical feat.

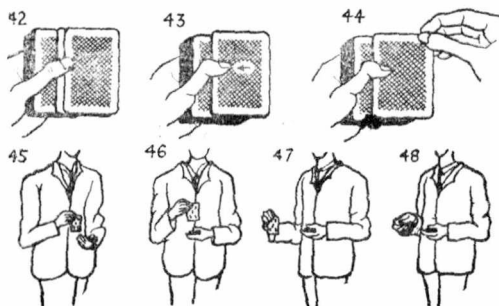
General. The peculiarity of this fold was discovered by accident whilst casually experimenting with a handkerchief. It appears to have value as an impromptu trick or as an item in a drawing-room entertainment. I think the principle is somewhat novel, and someone may possibly find a slightly different application of the same principle to form a stage effect. It seems quite safe in working, provided care is taken. Misdirection must be applied at the precise moment of Fig. 41.

CARD SECTION

SOMETHING NEW IN TOP CHANGES

The advantage of this method over the standard types is that it can be performed slowly and without hurry; no exaggerated swing of the body is necessary to mask the movements.

The reader being presumed to be right-handed, let us assume that the pack is being held in the left hand, as for dealing. The two cards to be interchanged lie on the top of the pack, but in reverse order to that for the usual methods. That is to say, the card to be shown first lies second from the top, and the card into which it is to be "changed" lies on the top. The performer faces left, and holds the cards horizontally in the left hand as for dealing.

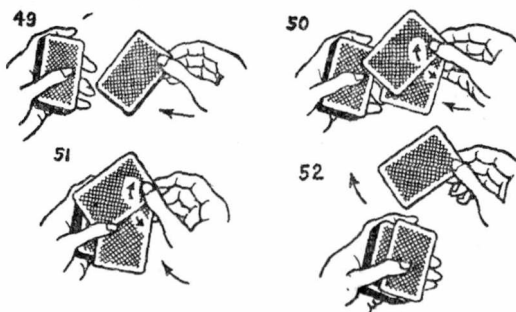


The first action is to double-lift the two top cards as one, as shown in Figs. 42 to 44, showing the performer's view from above. First, the two top cards are pushed off as for dealing by the left thumb (Fig. 42). While pattering, the left thumb unobtrusively slides the top card back (Fig. 43) till it is flush and square with the one underneath it. The right hand then takes the two cards as one, between the thumb on top and the first and second fingers beneath (Fig. 44). As the performer is facing left and holding the cards edgewise to the audience, the spectators cannot notice the very slight action of pulling the top card back and squaring it up with the second. It is important to emphasise that there is no need whatever for hurry. Provided proper patter is used to cover the few seconds required, the performer can take his time about squaring the two cards together with the left

thumb. He may glance once or twice at the left hand during this, and carefully get the cards evenly together. He may even bring the right hand in front (so as to hide the pack), being apparently about to take the top card, and then hesitate for a few seconds in this position as if undecided, while the left thumb carefully twists one card into exact coincidence with the other. As a result, the double-lift becomes dead easy. Moreover, it is a natural way of taking a card off the pack as it follows the normal action of dealing. This is more than can be said for some methods of double-lifting.

The cards must be held firmly between thumb on top and first and second fingers underneath, as already stated (Fig. 44). Remembering that the performer is still facing left, the card(s) is now shown round to the audience by holding it vertical and slowly turning the body round to the right. The appearance to the audience will be as shown in Figs. 45 to 47.

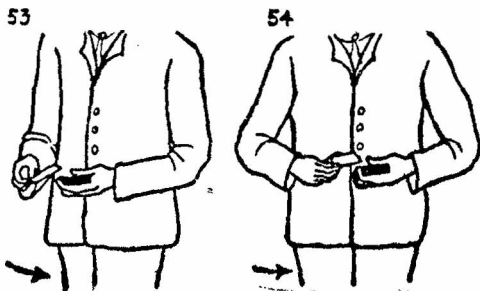
Next, the right hand drops slightly from the wrist in a natural manner, thus bringing the card(s) to a horizontal position (Fig. 48). Note the relative positions of the two hands, and also that the left is still holding the pack horizontal in the "dealing" position.



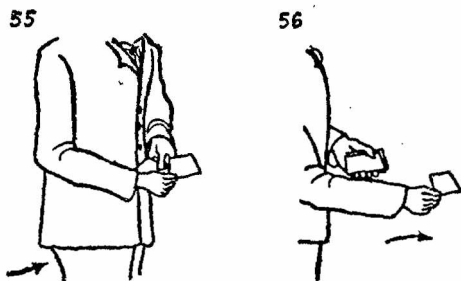
The performer now turns unhurriedly back to the left, and lays the card(s) just shown on a table to his left, the appearance to the audience being much as shown in Figs. 53 to 56. During this, the right hand crosses over the left, and the actions depicted in Figs. 49 to 52 take place. As the right hand approaches the left (Fig. 49) the thumb and the

fingers are twisted in opposite directions—the thumb outwards, the fingers inwards—see Fig. 50. As the right passes over the left, the lower card is slipped under the left thumb (Fig. 51), the right continuing without pause towards the table on the left (Fig. 52). The sleight is fully completed.

As regards angles, experiment with a mirror will answer all problems. It may be noted, however, that at the commencement (Fig. 53) the card(s) are held pretty well edge-



wise to the audience, or if anything, slightly turned up to show the face side. Fig 53 is not correct in this respect, as it shows the card(s) in the right hand as slightly turned down—it was drawn this way for clarity of explanation. Then, as the hands move across with the turn of the body, the cards in both hands are turned slightly forwards (not as much as in Figs. 54 and 55) so that on completion they are just about at the angles shown in Fig. 56.



It is absolutely essential to perform the whole series of moves quite slowly and deliberately. The illusiveness has to be seen to be believed. It does not seem to matter that the card left on the top of the pack is not square with it (Figs. 52 and 56). The audience can apparently see the card they have just been shown the whole time quite clearly, and any chance of change is discounted. Moreover, their eyes are following the card they can see (glued to it, probably!), while proper timing brings the lower pivoting card stationary relative to the pack in the left hand beneath it; so that although towards the end of the movement the spectators can actually see the lower card pivoting below the upper, it looks as if it is the top card of the pack in the left hand directly underneath.

This sleight is physically very easy. The reader will probably astonish himself the first time he tries it in front of a mirror! But to obtain a hundred per cent. deception, perfect smoothness and timing are required, which can only come from much practice.

Last, but not least, there must be no sign of hurry from start to finish!

LEADING THEM UP THE GARDEN PATH

This is an effect depending almost entirely upon a first-class top-change that can be repeated thrice. The method just given is suitable for this trick.

In a book published several years ago by that inventive magician Eric C. Lewis, there was an effect in which a card was chosen by the audience and placed upon a stand without anyone (the performer included) being aware of its identity. The conjurer then offered to find the three other cards of the same value as the chosen one, which he duly appeared to do, showing the face of each, and placing them all, backs out, on the stand. On the first (chosen) card being turned round, the magician appeared to have "put his foot in it," as it was different to the three cards just shown and placed beside the card turned round. But the performer turned these three face out again, when they were found to have changed to the three of the same value as the chosen card, to match it. The base deceiver!

The effect tickled me immensely. If presented seriously, and provided no attempt was made to "work up" the audience over the apparent mistake (which I think gives away completely to an adult audience that something fishy is afoot and utterly spoils the dénouement) it appeared to be a perfect "twister" effect with a really smashing climax! I did not, however, want to use the methods given by Mr. Lewis, so set about devising my own routine, which is given below.

I wish to give full credit to the originator for the idea of the effect. After all, it is the effect that matters most, not the method.

Effect. The magician patters loud (but we hope not long!) about the usual card-table routine of shuffling and cutting, designed to prevent a sharp player from, say, dealing himself all the four aces just whenever he wishes. He proposes to show, however, that a clever player can defeat this routine. Meanwhile, he has shuffled and cut the pack. A card is now chosen by requesting a spectator to cut the pack, and this card is placed back out against a stand without either audience or conjurer seeing the face. The performer offers to find the other three cards to match the unseen

chosen one by cutting directly to them. Suiting actions to words, he cuts the pack three times, removing (say) three jacks, and after showing the faces places them, backs out, against the stand, in line with the first (chosen) card. Although showing the faces of these three cards to the audience, he does not see them himself. He then turns round the chosen card, which is seen (say) to be the two of hearts. After a word or two to remind the audience that he has done just what he set out to do, and with no hint whatever that he is aware of anything wrong, he solemnly turns round the three "jacks," which are now found to be the two of clubs, diamonds, and spades, matching the two of hearts. A moment's dead silence of incredulity while it dawns on the audience that they have been "had," and then that most satisfying of rewards, a real hearty roar of laughter! Whether one gets the full reward or not depends on one's ability to keep a straight face at the crucial moment.

Requirements. One ordinary pack of cards. One card stand. My stand is fashioned rather like a wire pen-rack, to obviate any suggestion of the stand being responsible for the hocus-pocus. These lie on a table to the left of the stage.

Stacking the Pack. The set-up is so very simple. Remove two sets of four cards—for the sake of example, the four "twos" and the four jacks. Holding the rest of the pack backs up, lay on top in the following order: jack, two, jack, two, jack, two, jack, two. Not much memory work! The result is that the twos and jacks are stacked alternately on the top of the pack, with a two as the topmost card.

Presentation. Initial Shuffling and Cutting. Use a false shuffle to retain top stock. I use the top stock overhand shuffle from Erdnase. Then use a false cut which will leave the top stock on top minus the top card (a "two"), which must be got to the bottom of the pack. My own method of doing this is barefaced, to say the least. Holding the pack upright with the backs facing the audience squarely, simply undercut the entire pack below the top card, and put the whole pack on top of the former top card. In other words, openly slip the top card to the bottom. But it must be

remembered that this is done using exactly the same movements as an ordinary end slip-cut; and, moreover, one is apparently only just shuffling and cutting absently while one patters of its necessity—as far as the audience are concerned, the trick has not yet begun. In these circumstances there is no reason in the world for anyone among the spectators to think of false moves being done. Only an exceptional person would notice anything wrong. The action is too natural, and no suspicious “cover” is employed.

Forcing the first “two.” A spectator is asked to cut the pack anywhere he likes, it being offered to him held in the left hand. It is, however, held in position ready for “bottom-dealing.” After the spectator has cut off the top half of the pack (the performer retaining the bottom half in the left hand), the top half is taken from him by the disengaged right hand. The magician returns to the stage, holding both halves openly and separately, and lays the top half on the table on his left. He then apparently deals the top card of the left half into the right hand—actually dealing the “two” lying ready on the bottom—and places it, back out, against the stand. He then picks up the top half of the pack and replaces it on the bottom half, thus keeping the stack (now less one card) on top.

Removing the three other cards from the pack

Explaining that he will now endeavour to cut direct to the other three cards to match the unseen chosen one, the performer apparently cuts the pack by the end slip-cut. In reality, this is what happens. The pack is held in the left hand with the backs square to the audience, the right approaches and seizes the top half of the pack, while the left index-finger presses on the topmost card (which will now be a jack). The right hand slides out the top half of the pack from underneath the topmost jack, which falls on to the lower half. The top half is replaced on top of the jack. This looks for all the world like a genuine cut, but that which has happened is that the jack has been slipped to the middle of the pack. Note, however, that there is no reason whatever for a spectator to suspect a false cut. There is no hurry, no cover, all is open and above board. And it looks

like a genuine cut. This leaves a pair of cards ("two" on top with a jack beneath it) uppermost on the pack.

Using the top-change already described in this book, the two cards are double-lifted, shown as a jack, and apparently placed against the stand—the jack being left on the pack and the "two" being left in view, back out, on the stand.

The whole series of moves—cut, double-lift, and top change—is now repeated twice again; in each case the jack left over from the previous top-change is slipped to the centre by the false cut, the next pair of "two" and jack being double-lifted, top-changed, and the "two" left on the stand.

Climax. The correct lead-up to this is vital. In my humble opinion, too many magicians lose half the value of a "twister" effect by trying to work up the audience to such an extent that every adult must realise that dirty work is afoot. The consequence is that when the climax is reached and the conjurer shows that he was "right after all," everyone is already expecting this to be the case and surprise is completely lost. The effect is ruined. The whole art is to make the audience think that a genuine mistake has been made; then, as the result is finally revealed, the spectators hold their breath in grisly anticipation of the dreadful anticlimax to be brought to view! As this is done, their minds first receive a jolt when they do not see what they anticipated, there is a moment of complete blankness while the mind gropes, then the full duplicity of the conjurer dawns upon them, and the surprise is absolute and complete. The reaction should be inevitable.

A suggested lead-up, from the point of placing the last card on the stand, follows. The patter should be delivered in a straightforward, natural, matter-of-fact way, with no hint of comedy, and with an air of finality as if the trick was already over. An offhand "so that's that" attitude is suggested. No unduly long pauses should occur. And the final turning round of the last three "twos" should be rapid.

"So you see, I've done exactly what I set out to do. The first card chosen" (turning it round) "was the two of hearts. And I have removed from the pack—without looking at any of them—the other three twos, so that we have the two of

hearts" (two-second pause to allow horror of situation to reach its maximum) "the two of clubs, the two of diamonds, and the two of spades."

I believe that in this patter just sufficient time elapses between the turning of the first (chosen) card and the turning of the other three, to allow the situation fully to impress itself on the audience, and no more.

Note on choice of cards. Two sets of cards which are very obviously different, must be used. To the bulk of the audience, queen, king and jack, look alike at a distance; and cannot be told apart. Similarly, it is impossible to distinguish between, say, an eight and a ten, at any distance. Either a set of court cards may be combined with a set of spot cards, or very high spot cards (nines or tens) with very low (twos or threes). It is also desirable that at the conclusion it should be clear to all, not only that the cards have changed, but also that they really do make a set all alike. For this reason, it is suggested that the finale should occur with either twos, threes or fours—not higher. As conjurers nearly always use the four aces for moments such as this, perhaps it is better not to use the aces. Audiences might come to think that all conjurers have special packs with prepared aces!

One further point. It would spoil the effect if the three cards shown at first (three jacks in the foregoing explanation) did not match—that is, it would be wrong to show a jack, a ten, and an ace. The spectators would "smell a rat," spoiling the finale. It is reasonable for the magician to get the three jacks instead of the three "twos." He would then have made one error only: that of guessing what the chosen card was. But to show three different cards as matching each other would display two errors even before the chosen card was turned, by which time the audience would guess that three errors was going too far, and that the magician must have something "up his sleeve."

The fact that the audience do not know what the first (chosen) card is during the time the other three are being taken out of the pack and shown, gives them no reason to expect any hanky-panky with these three after showing. And when the second of the three is seen to match the first, the wits are dulled further, and even further by the third, so that the attention directed to the performer's hands when the top-changes are done tends to get less and less. If the three did not match, the attention would be much more concentrated, and the chance of the top-change being spotted enormously increased.

EVERYBODY'S CARD

A combination of the top change with dealing seconds makes a nice miniature version of this well-known trick. Before commencement, the joker is secretly brought to the top of the pack.

First, a person sitting on the right of the audience chooses a card, shows it around to those sitting near, and replaces it. As the performer cuts the pack for this, he really undercuts so that the chosen card is replaced on the top half, i.e., on top of the joker. The other half is put on top while keeping a break, and the two cards brought to the top of the pack by any convenient method.

Next, a person sitting on the left side selects a card, shows it to those nearby, and replaces it. As the conjurer cuts the pack for this, he undercuts again, so that the chosen card is replaced on the top half above the first chosen card. The other half is put on top while retaining a break, and all three cards (No. 2 on No. 1 on the joker) brought to the top by any convenient method.

The magician then false-shuffles, and offers to turn any card into a selected one. Taking the top card from the pack (really double-lifting both No. 2 and No. 1) he asks the chooser of No. 1 to blow upon the back. The two cards held as one are then shown to the right half of the audience as No. 1 card.

After it has been verified as being the No. 1 chosen card, the performer turns to the left half, executing the top-change in so doing, and requests the chooser of No. 2 card to blow on the back; then it is shown to the left half of the audience as No. 2 card.

Remarking that possibly through some coincidence both parties might have chosen the same card, the performer shows No. 2 card all round, verifies that it is still No. 2, and asks what No. 1 was, thus proving that the card really did change when blown upon. During all this, the top card (No. 1) is secretly slipped to the bottom of the pack under cover of the body.

Placing the card momentarily on top of the pack, the conjurer says that anybody may blow on it and turn it into the card of his choice. Another spectator is asked to think of a card, and then blow on the top of the pack. The top card is then shown. It is the joker. The spectator says it is not his card—but the performer slyly points out that as the joker represents any card at the will of the holder, it does represent the card thought of. This makes a comedy climax.

I have referred several times to spectators blowing on the cards. I hope my meaning will not be misinterpreted.

ALL CHANGE

Effect. A card "A" is taken from the top of the pack and shown to the audience, who are urged to try and remember its name. It is then laid on the table. The next card, "B," is now taken and shown, and once more the onlookers are invited to try and remember it. It is then pushed into the middle of the pack. The conjurer immediately asks which card has been pushed into the middle. On the reply of "B" being given, he says, "Oh no! That's on top," and shows this to be the case. He then asks what card was laid on the table. On the reply of "A," he says, "Oh no—that's the one I pushed into the middle," and running the cards shows "A" in the centre. Finally he picks up the card on the table and shows it to be quite different.

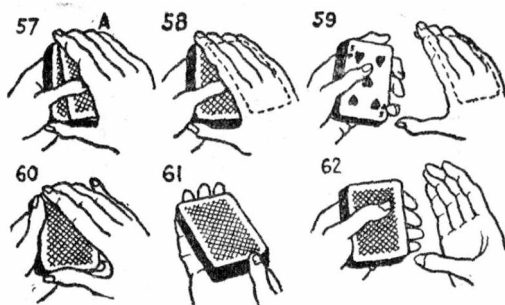
Method. First, the two top cards are double-lifted as one, and the audience requested to remember "it" (the bottom one which they can see, "A"). Turning to the table on the left, the top-change is performed, leaving "A" on the pack and placing the other card on the table. Then the next two top cards (of which the upper is now "A") are double-lifted as one, and the audience are asked to remember it (the bottom one which they can see, "B"). Turning left, the top-change is again executed, leaving "B" on top and sliding "A" into the centre of the pack. In this way, the three cards have been caused to change places in a most inexplicable way. A useful impromptu effect.

VANISHING FACES

Requirements. A pack of cards with white borders on the backs. This may be borrowed.

Effect. After borrowing the pack (or if using his own, after having had it shuffled) the magician remarks that it is rather a peculiar pack. "Look," he says, and runs the whole pack backs towards the audience, so that they can see the back of every card. "Peculiar, isn't it?" he asks, "Don't you see? I've just shown you the faces of the cards!" The audience are puzzled, so he continues, "Oh yes, those are faces. These are the backs," and he deliberately turns the pack over and runs the cards again, showing that the other sides of all the cards are all backs as well! Squaring-up the cards, he blows on them, and then runs them again, showing that all the faces have returned again.

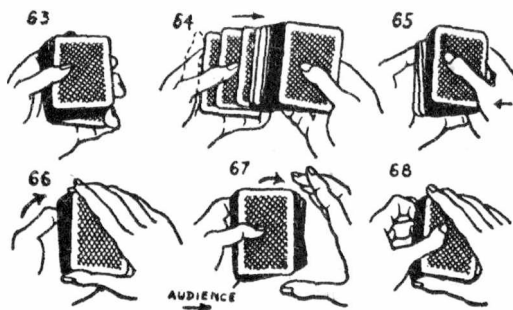
Method. The first move is to reverse a card secretly on the bottom of the pack. This can be done as follows: Facing the audience with the cards in the left hand, the right squares them. The left thumb secretly pushes out the



top card sideways (Fig. 57); the right little finger presses on the projecting corner of this card at "A," levering it into the right palm (Fig. 58). While talking and toying with the pack, it is turned faces up (Fig. 59), and the right hand again squares it, the left fingers hooking the palmed card down on to the pack (Fig. 60). The right now lifts the pack from the left hand (Fig. 60 again) and makes a gesture, during which the wrist is twisted round, bringing the other end (the real

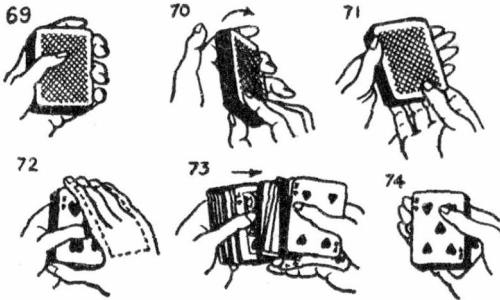
top of the pack) to the front (Fig. 61). The left takes the cards again without the right wrist turning back again (Fig. 62), so that the pack is now backs up once more, but with one card reversed on the bottom.

Next, the cards are run from hand to hand in front of the audience to show all the backs. Just before this, the right thumb counts two cards off the bottom, and the left little finger is inserted in the break above them (Fig. 63), and presses them tightly against the fleshy ball at the base of the thumb. Now, turning left, the performer runs the cards from left hand to right (Fig. 64) so as to show all the backs. Due to the last two cards being held together by the little finger and the ball of the thumb, the pack may be run right up to the (supposedly) last card without the faced one on the bottom showing.



The cards are now squared up. Just before doing so, the left thumb moves out of the way to the dotted position shown in Fig. 64. They are then pushed back roughly square into the left hand by the right (Fig. 65), the left thumb going behind the pack (Fig. 66) and squares it up, under cover of which the left hand immediately turns it over behind the right as the latter starts to square it (Fig. 67 and Fig. 68). This move is difficult to describe. It happens quickly, so that all the movements blend into one of appearing to square the pack up.

By this time the performer has shown the pack, backs up, and remarked that it is a very peculiar one, and the audience are wondering what it is that's so curious about it. So he says, "I have just shown you the faces of the cards!" Disbelief by audience. "Oh yes I have; these are the backs!" upon which the magician turns the pack over quite deliberately, as in Figs. 69, 70 and 71 (thus bringing it backs up again!).



Once more the procedure illustrated in Figs. 63 and 64 is used to show the pack as all backs, secretly reversing it again at the end as in Figs. 65 to 68.

Saying that he can bring the faces back again by blowing on the cards, the conjurer raises the pack to his lips and blows on them. Under cover of this, the now uppermost card (the reversed one) is palmed off (Fig. 72). Lowering the pack to waist height, the cards are now run as in Fig. 73, to show all the faces to the audience, the palmed card being hidden behind the others. At the conclusion of running them, they are pushed into the right hand (Fig. 74) on top of the palmed card, which is squared up with them in finally squaring up the pack.

Misdirection. On the principle of "Never tell your audience what you are going to do until you have done it," the spectators are not told that the faces have disappeared until the pack has safely been secretly turned over for the first time (Figs. 65 to 68). Similarly, they are not told of the impending reappearance of the faces until the secret turnover has been performed the second time.

This is a clean, impromptu effect. Starting with borrowing a pack of cards, all moves can be made under cover of patter, and at the end the pack is left completely right way up, ready for further feats of deception.

READING CARDS IN THE CRYSTAL—WITH A REAL CLIMAX

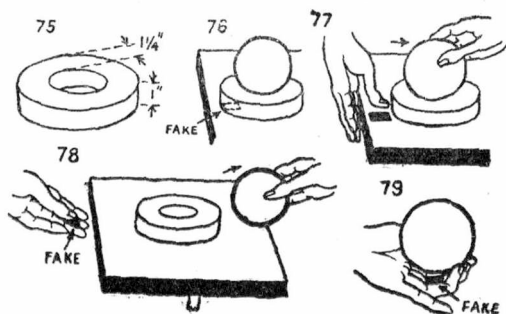
Effect.—The pack is shuffled by a spectator, who then takes off the top six cards. The magician places these straight into an envelope with no chance of glimpsing them, and hands the envelope to the spectator to hold. Talking the usual nonsense about second-sight, etc., the conjurer takes his crystal from a stand on the table, and proceeds to read the names of the cards therein. When he comes to the last card, he suggests that it is so clear that a spectator could probably see it himself, and hands the crystal to a member of the audience to have a look. The latter says he can see nothing. The magician takes back the crystal, looks in it again, and at that moment remembers that he forgot to make a magic pass over it before letting the spectator gaze therein. He makes a suitable pass, and holding it a couple of feet below the person's face, asks him to look into it again. The spectator admits he can now see something—but not clearly. Requesting the spectator to keep gazing steadily into the crystal ("keep his eye on the ball"), the performer proceeds to make magic passes over his head (unknown to the victim, but to the joy of the rest of the audience!). During this, the spectator admits that the "something" in the crystal is getting clearer, and at last says he can see it perfectly clearly, and as large as life at that. He is asked to name the card, and is proved correct. Simultaneously, the performer handles the crystal in such a way as to convince the onlookers that it is unprepared, and that he has nothing concealed in his hands.

Preparation. The set of six cards taken by the spectator and placed in the top envelope of a stack of several by the performer, is switched for another envelope containing six cards in a memorised order, in the act of handing the envelope to the spectator. The preparation of the envelopes and the method of switching are given in one of Mr. Eric Lewis' books, to which the reader is referred. The method is strikingly simple and deceptive.

A fair-sized crystal (say, four-inch) and a special stand, to be described later, are required.

A miniature card, henceforth called "the fake," is prepared. This is a duplicate of the last card in the set of six "switch" cards. It is made of good quality thick paper. It should be of such a size that when held flat against the bottom of the crystal, and viewed through the crystal from a couple of feet above, it will look like a full-sized playing card, due to the magnification of the glass sphere. The dimensions of the fake and of the pips on it can only be found by trial and error, using the actual crystal in the readers' possession. Different sizes of the glass ball produce different magnifications. A four-inch ball requires a fake about seven-eighths of an inch long. The pips should be painted in very carefully with a fine mapping pen, as the slightest irregularity or roughness in outline will be magnified horribly through the crystal.

The stand is merely an annular ring of wood—Fig. 75



gives suitable dimensions for a four-inch crystal. The $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch dimension allows the fake to be completely hidden by the wood ring when lying on the table. It should be smooth, so as to slide easily over the fake.

The table is on the performer's left, covered with a cloth (not shown in diagrams) so that the fake will not slip nearly as easily across the cloth as across the bottom of the crystal stand. The fake is laid close to the rear edge of the table, face up, and is concealed by the rear portion of the wooden stand upon which the crystal is placed, Fig. 76.

Presentation. After shuffling the pack, a spectator takes six cards from the top. The performer approaches, takes

the cards from the spectator, and pushes them openly into the top envelope of the stack of envelopes, immediately openly handing the envelope to the spectator, and thus switching the cards.

Returning to his table and discarding the surplus envelopes, the performer picks up the crystal. In so doing, both hands approach, and the left pushes the stand a couple of inches forward with the thumb, the fingers being behind the table (Fig. 77). This brings the left thumb over the fake. As the right hand moves away with the crystal, the left thumb slides the fake back on to the top joints of the second and third fingers behind the table (Fig. 78), where the fake is finger-palmed as the hand drops to the side behind the table.

The "reading" of the cards in the crystal now proceeds in a straightforward manner, the spectator holding them, taking out the cards as named and showing them around. After five cards have been called thus, there is a change in procedure.

Remarking that there seems to be only one card left, and that it is very clear indeed, the performer suddenly bethinks himself to have a spectator see it in the crystal. He offers it to a member of the audience, who cannot, however, see anything in it. The conjurer, looking worried, takes it back "to have another look." He then realises that he forgot to make a magic pass over it; at the same moment placing the crystal in the left hand over the fake, finger-palmed therein. It is not, however, placed right down on to the fake. By cupping the fingers, it will be found possible to support the glass ball on the first and fourth fingers about half-an-inch or so above the fake finger-palmed in the bent second and third fingers. See Fig. 79, which shows the little finger out of the way for illustration purposes (it would really be supporting the near edge of the ball and would obscure the fake). The cupped position of the fingers hides the fake from all side vision.

Holding the ball in the left hand thus, half to three-quarters of an inch above the fake, the performer invites the same onlooker to gaze once more into the crystal, from about two feet vertically above. He holds it low to facilitate this.

When the spectator looks in, he can see something, but being out of focus, it appears as a blurred mess. Telling the victim to keep on looking, the performer makes magic passes over his head (unseen by him, but visible to the audience). At the same time, the cupped second and third fingers of the left hand are very slowly raised until they bring the fake flat against the bottom of the crystal. This gradually brings the fake into focus for the spectator, and by means of question and answer the magician should bring home to the audience that the vision in the crystal is gradually becoming clearer, then that it is perfectly clear, and finally that it is as large as life. This last point is important, as unless the members of the audience are really thinking for themselves at the time, it will not occur to them that only a tiny object is required to produce a large image, and it makes the effect seem more wonderful.

As the person calls out the denomination of the card he can see, the person holding the envelope checks that it is correct. At the same moment, the performer takes the crystal in the right hand and holds it in such a way that all can see through it, and see the emptiness of the right hand, *and* see the emptiness of the left hand as well!

To accomplish this, the left hand holding the ball lowers the third and fourth fingers clear of it, so that the fake remains held against the crystal by its edge, by the second finger only. The right hand takes the ball away with the fingers (held close together) on top, and the thumb underneath. The thumb comes up under the edge of the fake, next the left second finger, and holds the fake against the crystal by the edge. The right hand is moved away holding the crystal, and immediately turned round to bring the thumb on top and fingers underneath. The fake will not be seen during this if the fingers are held together. On completion of this turn over, all the fingers open, leaving the ball held between the tips of the thumb on top and second finger below. The fake is held beneath and *behind* the thumb-tip, in which position it is impossible for the audience to see the fake through the crystal from the front. Try it and see. The audience can now see the left hand empty, right hand empty, and an empty clear glass crystal.

The crystal is replaced on the stand by the right hand. First, the fingers are held close together again; then the crystal is turned to bring the thumb to the back and fingers to the front (hiding the view of the fake through the glass ball) and the ball is placed down on the stand in such a way that the fake either falls inside the central hole of the stand or is caught between ball and stand at the back. In either case, it will be invisible from the front.

Notes. The spectator may guess the means employed to cause the image to become gradually clearer to him—but what matter? The entertainment of the majority is what counts. All the moves are perfectly simple and natural. This conclusion to the crystal trick gives a strong dramatic build-up to a climax, with the interest growing all the time. This is hardly the case with a straightforward presentation as frequently witnessed.

HANDKERCHIEF SECTION

THE COLOUR-SENSITIVE SILK HANDKERCHIEF

The moves, sleights, and misdirection used in this effect will be found to be of general use in tricks with silk handkerchiefs. Even if the reader does not wish to perform the whole effect given here, as such, it may be worth his while to study all the moves in detail, if only to see what deceptive results can be obtained using the simplest of moves and misdirection, as long as these are performed quite naturally and with no suggestion of being deliberate "sleights." The deception depends on the natural handling of a silk in such a way that the hands are shown empty incidentally, although fakes are, in fact, concealed. A number of different methods of accomplishing this are used to avoid repetition, and to prevent suspicion of sleight-of-hand. I feel sure that the reader who practices these moves will delight himself with their deceptiveness, and will find them useful in other effects.

The description of the moves includes detailed and apparently very elaborate methods of obtaining loads from the body. These include details of angle, movement of legs, bending and swinging of the body, and the timing of these relative to movements of the hands. Some readers may cavil at such elaborate methods for the simple operation of obtaining a body-load. However, the manner and misdirection of obtaining loads is very important. In many cases, an otherwise brilliant sleight-of-hand routine is spoilt because the manipulator has paid more attention to his sleights than to his loads. What use are all the sleights in the world aimed at proving the hands to be empty if the spectators have already spotted the action of obtaining the load? At platform distance, where the audience can often watch both hands at once, it seems that no amount of merely "following the other hand with the eyes" would prevent them noticing a fumble by the hand getting the load, even when hidden behind the body. Obtaining a load when the body and arm are stationary is a risky affair, and the more movement naturally happening to head, body, and arms at the time of loading, the less noticeable will any fumble be.

I do not suffer from the fond delusion that the moves which I have devised are brilliant. They are just an honest attempt to make the best of a difficult problem. I only hope

that these efforts will stimulate others to devise better, and that they will pass on their methods to the conjuring fraternity for the sake of the art.

The Effect. Pulling a white silk from the pocket, the magician gushes thus: "Music hath charms! Just for a change, I'm going to ask our pianist if she wouldn't mind trying to charm—not only you—but this silk handkerchief as well, with the Magic of Melody. Please play a few bars of blue music, and observe the effect on the silk. Blue music. . . ." The pianist thereupon commences to play something "blue," such as "Mood Indigo," during which the conjurer slowly pushes the silk through his fist. As he pushes it in white, so it emerges blue the other side. On conclusion of the colour-change, silk and hands are casually shown to be empty. The wizard next suggests: "I think we'd better have something a bit more cheerful after that, don't you? Could you play a little warm music, please? Warm music. . . ." The blue silk is pushed through the fist to the strains of a "warm" tune, such as "Begin the Beguine," and emerges bright red. While handling the silk to show incidentally the absence of fakes, the conjurer remarks: "It's warm all right. It's red hot!" (or is that one unworthy of a magician?). "Now, what shall we have next? Oh, I know! Could you play a little yellow music, please? You could? Yellow music. . . ." Once more the conjurer commences to push the (now red) silk into his fist; this time to some bright music such as "Narcissus." He appears to find fault with the music, however, for he interrupts the pianist after a few bars, and the following argument takes place:

Conjurer: "No, no. I said 'yellow music'." Pianist: "That is yellow music." Conjurer: "Oh, no; that's pink music!" Pianist: "No it's not. It's yellow!" Conjurer: "No, pink; or at most, a pastel orange!" Pianist (angrily): "It's yellow music!" Conjurer: "Oh, all right, have it your own way—yellow music. . ." (aside) "PINK! . . ."

The pianist re-commences to play "Narcissus," and the red silk is tucked into the fist until almost all is inside, when suddenly a portion of green silk emerges the other side. The

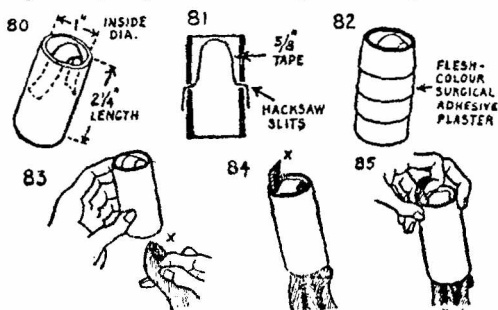
performer appears completely non-plussed, and after a very short bit of comic by-play, pushes the end of the red silk right in, ejecting the whole green one. Incidentally showing both hands and silk apparently empty, he says: "If you're thinking the same as I'm thinking, it ought to be turning a delicate shade of purple!" Turning to a table on his right, he goes on: "I've got a piece of swing music here. Shall we try the effect of that for a change? Let's! It might produce some rather peculiar results, mightn't it?" During this, he picks up a piece of music lying on the table ("In the Mood") and displays the titled cover to the audience, saying: "In the Mood . . ." (to pianist) ". . . do you feel in the mood to play it for us? You do? Have a go . . ." (gives music to pianist) ". . . Make it nice and colourful, won't you! . . ." (During all this the hands have once more been shown incidentally empty.) ". . . One, two, three, four . . ." The pianist plays the music, during which the green silk is pushed through the fist, emerging as a variegated "jazz" silk, which is finally tossed into the air, showing both hands empty, and then pocketed.

Notes. Smartly presented, this trick is still rather long, lasting about five minutes. It is however clean, simple, and effective, and is different to the usual run of tricks. Although the moves are physically easy, it is difficult to perform the whole routine perfectly smoothly, and very considerable rehearsal is required. But I still think the effect to be worth the trouble.

I have given the full patter I use because much of the misdirection depends on the particular wording, *and* pauses, of this patter. Giving it in full at the beginning shows the reader exactly what effect is being aimed at, and also saves repetition later.

Construction of the fakes. These are ordinary changing-tubes suitable for eighteen-inch silks; sizes smaller or larger will make the working more difficult. The tubes are two-and-a-quarter inches long and one inch in internal diameter. The tape should be five-eighths of an inch wide; the correct width is important for the moves used. Fig. 80 shows the

design. The tape should be fitted so that the loop just reaches the end of the tube (see Fig. 81 showing a cross-section). My tubes were made from an old vacuum-cleaner extension tube made of plastic, sawn into two-and-a-quarter inch lengths. Two saw-cuts were made, one each side, at the middle of the tube, long enough to produce five-eighths of an inch slots. The burred edges of the ends of the tube and of the slots, inside and outside, were rounded slightly with emery cloth, to prevent chafing of the tape when in use.

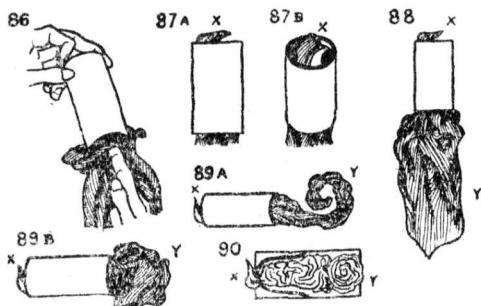


The tape was placed in position (see cross-sectional Fig 81), and the tube was then wound tightly with ordinary flesh-coloured surgical adhesive plaster, so as to fix the tape in position and also provide a flesh-coloured exterior (Fig. 82). The finished product was thoroughly rubbed with French chalk and the surplus brushed off, this to prevent stickiness from the plaster. Finally, the tape was coloured in each fake to match the silk with which it would be loaded for the trick.

Loading the fake with a silk. This is not the normal method used by conjurers. It must be done carefully in exactly the correct way, or the handling to be described will not work. First, the silk is held up by a corner, and the right forefinger pushed into this corner. The thumb and other fingers are held either side so as to produce a sort of hollow in the corner of the silk, the forefinger being inside this hollow (Fig. 83). This is done at one end of the silk to be designated "X" for future reference. Corner "X" is pushed into the tube, right through to the far end,

and just past the tape to the extent shown in Fig. 84. The left hand then holds the tube, and also holds corner "X" (still hollowed) against the edge of the tube (Fig. 85).

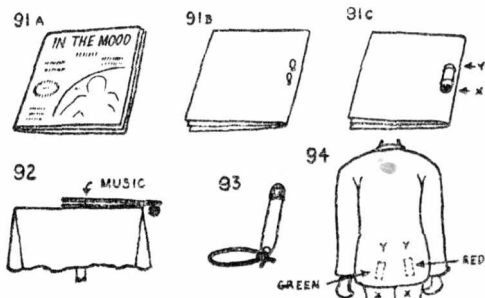
The right fingers now gather up a small bunch of silk next the tube and push it inside (Fig. 86), followed by other



bunches until most of the silk is inside. Corner "X" is now pressed flat on top of the tape (exactly as shown in Figs. 87a and 87b). If everything has been carried out properly as described, corner "X" should lie flat naturally across the tape, obscuring most of it. If it does not, it will be necessary to try again, until success is achieved. The appearance of the whole should now be as Fig. 88.

The bottom corner "Y" is taken and the bottom portion of the silk is in a manner balled-up roughly, but not carefully, as illustrated diagrammatically in Fig. 89a. It should present the appearance of Fig. 89b. This bunch is now shoved inside and pressed down thoroughly to prevent any folds projecting outside the tube. The object of this is to provide a kind of tight-fitting plug for the end of the tube, to prevent any tendency for the silk to spring out again (it has a strong desire to do so). If any folds do spring out, further balling-up of the plug "Y" at the end of the tube, without completely withdrawing it, should prevent this. A diagrammatic cross-section of the fake at this moment is given in Fig. 90.

Special faked music-sheet. Two copies of a jazz composition such as "In the Mood" are obtained. The cover of one is cut away and glued to the top of a stiff white cardboard folder of the same size, after which the music of the second copy is fixed inside the folder (Fig. 91a). A cloth



hinge is advised for the folder for the sake of durability. Two holes about two inches apart are made in the back, three-quarters of an inch from the hinge. Two small rubber bands are fixed with string inside the folder very close to these holes, and the bands pushed through the holes so that most of them lie outside (Fig. 91b). The object of this is that one of the fakes may be inserted beneath the bands, as in Fig. 91c, the bands holding the tube close to the ends of the latter, ready to be slipped off. The sheet so prepared and loaded with a fake may be laid on the table, cover uppermost, with the attached fake hidden behind the back edge of the table (Fig. 92).

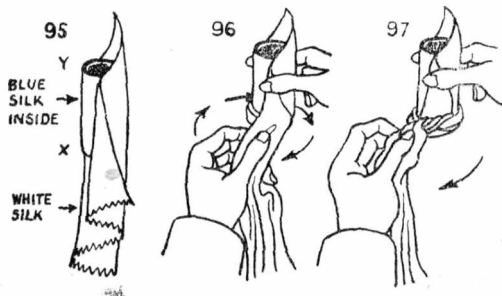
Elastic fake-holders. Two of these are required, made from safety-pins with loops of conjurers' elastic (Fig. 93). They can be pinned inside the coat (coat, not trousers), to hold the fakes in the positions indicated in Fig. 94.

Dress. A dinner-jacket is most suitable, but a sports coat can be used if the pockets have no flaps. The essentials are a breast pocket and side pockets without flaps.

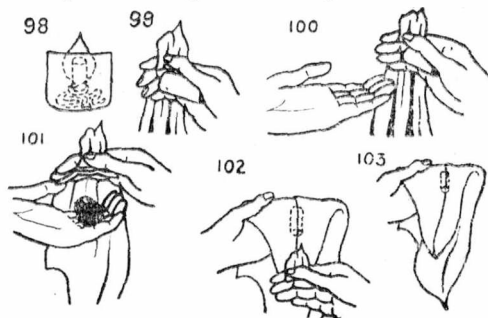
Summary of apparatus required. Five eighteen-inch silks: white, blue, red, green, and jazz pattern. Four fake changing-tubes. Two elastic fake-holders. Faked music-sheet. Table with cloth.

Loading-up

1. Load one fake with the blue silk. Take the white one and hold the tube against one corner, with end "X" downwards, allowing the edges of the white silk to drape backwards across the fake, exactly as in Fig. 95. Holding



the tube and silk in this position with the right fingers, pinch the silk around the bottom of the tube (Fig. 96) and wind it once ropewise around the bottom end (to Fig. 97), following the arrows in the diagrams. Holding all in this position with the right fingers, raise the hand to the breast-pocket, and tuck the hanging portion of silk inside the pocket with the left fingers. Then, very carefully so as not to disarrange the single turn of silk around the bottom of the tube, push the latter down into the pocket, with the top corner of the white silk away from the body (so that if it was raised, it would hide the fake from the audience). Fig. 98 shows this position diagrammatically. The effect of stow-



ing the fake in such a manner is this: that if the projecting corner of the white silk is raised by the right fingers, the tube is dragged up behind it, and as soon as it clears the pocket, the silk unwinds and leaves the fake free. At such a moment, the right fingers can cover the fake and palm it away.

2. Load two fakes with green and red silks respectively, and put them in the elastic fake-holders pinned under the coat, as shown in Fig. 94, green on the left, red on the right, with the "X" ends hanging downwards.

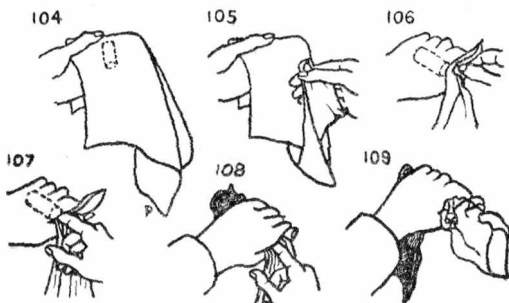
3. Load one fake with the jazz silk, and place in the rubber bands behind the music sheet, as shown in Fig. 91c, with end "X" pointing the same way as in the diagram. Place this on a table to the right, so that the fake is concealed behind the table (Fig. 92).

Presentation. (For patter, see description of the "Effect" *ante*).

1. *Accidentally showing the white silk unprepared.* The performer stands facing his audience, and raises the right hand to the breast-pocket. He withdraws the corner of the white silk a few inches without looking at it (which lifts out the fake behind the white silk). Looking down, he changes his grip, grasping the corner of the silk between first and second fingers, as in Fig. 99 (back view), and at the same time finger-palms the fake (Fig. 99). This appears quite natural and unsuspecting. The whole silk is now pulled out of the pocket.

While talking, the magician lays the white silk across his open and obviously empty left palm, as in Figs. 100 to 104 (back views). During this, the fake is dropped behind the corner of the silk on to the left palm (Figs. 100-101), and the right hand continues over and down behind the left, pulling the silk across the left palm (over the fake therein, Fig. 102), and leaves it hanging centrally (Fig. 103). The right hand finally spreads it so as to leave it hanging by one edge only (Fig. 104). The right hand is now casually shown empty, during a gesture.

All through this procedure, the artist faces squarely to the audience. If he turns slightly either way, the back end of the dropping fake will be visible round the side. Attention must be paid to angle throughout, and care must be exercised that the corner of the white silk really does cover the front end of the fake. If the former is twisted ropewise at all, it will not provide the required screening width; it must be flat to be wide enough. Practice alone will ensure this.



Next, the performer faces left. At the same time the right hand raises the bottom corner "P" (Fig. 105, side view), and at the position illustrated the left hand allows the silk to slide off the palm, at the same time turning its back to the audience (so that the fake is not seen) and forms the hand into a fist. The right inserts corner "P" into the left fist (Fig. 106, side view). The fake, by the way, will now be in the correct position for the colour-change, with end "X" nearest the thumb.

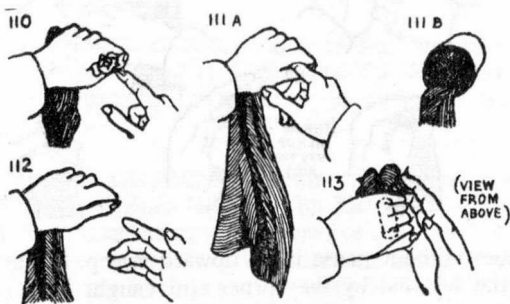
The effect of the foregoing moves is that a white silk is handled so casually and naturally that it is obviously unprepared, and the hands are to all appearances obviously empty. No sleights, as such, have been performed from the spectators' point of view, but the fake has been concealed all the time, and moreover it ends up in the left hand, the right way round for the colour-change.

2. *Change of white silk to blue.* Still facing left, the right index finger proceeds to push the white silk into the left fist (Fig. 107, side view), a little at a time. The white

thus enters the fake and gradually pushes the blue out at the back (Fig. 108); but it is not allowed to expand at once. This is because, in general, there will be a tendency for more blue to be pushed-out than white pushed-in; and to allow the audience to see half a blue silk dangling from the back when only a quarter of the white had been pushed in at the front would be inartistic. Instead, the bunch of the blue pushed out is kept from expanding by the left little finger being curled round it until about half the white has been pushed in. The left hand then allows a little of the blue to expand and hang down behind.

Continuing to push the white silk in until about three-quarters is inside, a little more of the blue is allowed to fall by the little finger (Fig. 109).

After this, the remainder is balled-up by the right fingertips (in the same way as for loading a fake, Figs 89a and 89b), and pushed into the end of the fake (Fig. 110). It

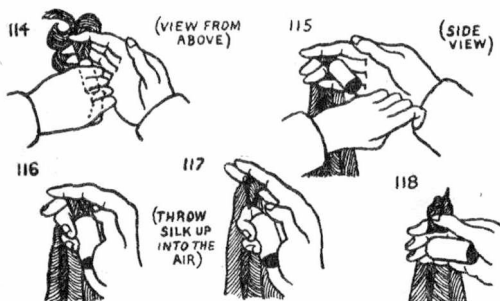


is rammed well home by the index finger, making sure that no portion remains sticking out, and that the "plug" so formed fits tightly enough to prevent it springing out during subsequent handling. (If not tight enough, the "ball" can be rolled over once or twice without completely withdrawing it, thus rolling more silk on to itself, making it a tighter fit). As the "plug" is shoved home by the index finger, the left little finger completely releases the rest of the blue silk ejected from the fake, so that it hangs down behind (Fig. 111a). Note that the small corner of the blue, which

had been caught behind the tape during loading (Figs. 84 to 87), prevents the silk from dropping altogether; it will hang from the fake by corner "X" (Fig. 111b).

The right finger is withdrawn from the left fist and shown "accidentally" empty, in a gesture.

The right hand now removes the blue silk by its top corner with an outward and upward sweep, during which the following actions take place. The right approaches the left to take away the silk (Fig. 112, still side view). -Note the straight index finger and curved other fingers. The hand passes outwards horizontally across the front of the left fist, and nips the top end of the hanging silk between the first and second fingers (Fig. 113, showing top view). As this is done, the left thumb presses the fake through the fist to project beyond it (Fig. 114 showing top view). The right



continues without pause in an upward sweep, lifting the fake from the left fist by the corner still caught in it (Fig. 115 showing side view again). If this move is executed smoothly, casually, and without hurry, the steal is not noticeable. It may seem as though the corner of the silk might be dragged out of the fake due to the pull, but with practice it will be found that there is no appreciable pull at all on it, as the left thumb pressing suddenly on the other end of the fake virtually shoots the fake clean into the right fingers. Attention to angle is necessary to ensure that the right hand covers the whole of the left fist when the fake is discharged therefrom; otherwise the movement of the left thumb will be visible.

The right hand next makes a down-and-up movement, and throws the blue silk into the air. During the downward swing, the fake is pressed well back into the palm, and held there with both the thumb across the end and the third and fourth fingers curled around it (Fig. 116, side view). The first and second fingers also slide back until they grip the corner of the dangling silk very tightly indeed as near to the fake as possible (see also Fig. 116). On the upward swing throwing the silk clear of the hand, the first and second fingers are extended sharply, tugging the corner out of the fake (Fig. 117), and immediately letting-go so that the silk is thrown into the air. This will be found difficult at first, but easy and certain after sufficient practice.

As the silk falls, it is caught again by the right hand, by the corner, between first and second fingers (Fig. 118, side view), the fake being finger palmed.

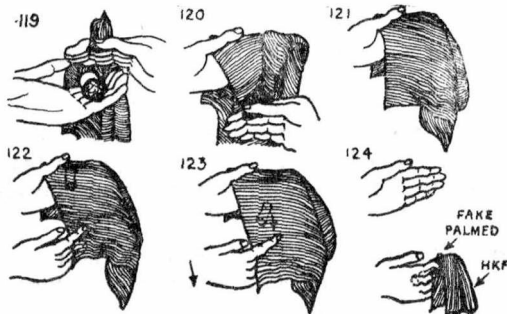
The performer remains facing left during the whole of this series of moves.

This colour-change routine is used four times during the trick, so adequate practice is obtained for the rather difficult moves by rehearsing the effect in its entirety—day by day until proficient.

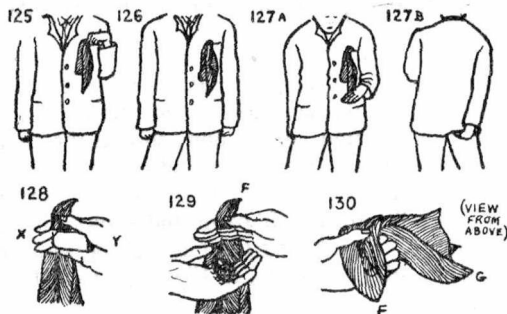
3. *Accidentally showing the blue silk to be unprepared.* The performer should have kept his left hand as a fist, without altering its position, up till now, so that the "wise ones" will probably suspect it. He therefore casually opens the hand and shows it empty. Turning to face the front, he lays the blue silk on the left palm and shows his right accidentally empty, in gesturing (employing the same moves as with the white silk), as shown in Figs. 118 to 121, giving the back view.

Turning to face left while showing the silk, he pulls it with the right hand clear of the left, without the two hands coming together, but the left is seen to be empty. To do this, the right hand grasps the edge of the silk well below the left (Fig. 122, side view) and drags the silk downwards across the left palm (Fig. 123), during which the fake is

dropped from the left into the right behind the silk, thus leaving the left hand obviously empty and the silk draped over the now finger-palmed fake in the right hand (Fig. 124, front view). The performer is still facing left.



4. *Secretly disposing of the first fake and obtaining the second.* Turning to face the audience, the performer stuffs the blue silk into his breast-pocket with the right hand (Fig. 125, view from audience), at the same time secretly



shoving the first fake into the pocket beneath it. Remarking: "Uncanny, isn't it!" the hands are spread apart, palms towards the audience, in a gesture. The performer glances slowly across the spectators from left to right, during which the body swings about half-right. At the same time, the right leg is stuck out stiffly (as a gesture), indicated in Fig.

126, showing the view from the audience (although the performer is swung more round to his right than this drawing indicates). The hands fall to the sides at this point (Fig. 126), and the body is bent forwards and to the right while the left hand is raised to seize the hanging silk by the corner (Fig. 127a, front view). The action of bending forwards and to the right at the moment the arms drop is to cause the right hand to swing naturally behind the body round the hip (Fig. 127b, back view), where the hand goes up beneath the coat, pulls the second fake containing the red silk from its holder and finger-palms it. Immediately, the left hand pulls the blue silk downwards out of the breast pocket, the body straightening at the same time, and the right leg being slid back to the left. This causes the right hand, with second fake palmed, to swing back to the front of the body.

This appears to be a verbose description of a simple steal with the inclusion of many unnecessary body-movements. This is not so. Every movement, including the half-right turn, extending the right leg, gesturing with the palms, the hands dropping to the sides at the same instant as the body bends forwards and to the right (causing the right hand to swing naturally behind the hip); the simultaneous withdrawal downwards of the silk from the pocket by the left hand with the body straightening and the right leg being brought up to the left (causing the right hand to swing naturally in front of the hip again under cover of the withdrawal of the blue silk from the pocket); all blend with practice into one movement which gives fair natural cover from side angles and the maximum of misdirection at the crucial moments. Are you out of breath?

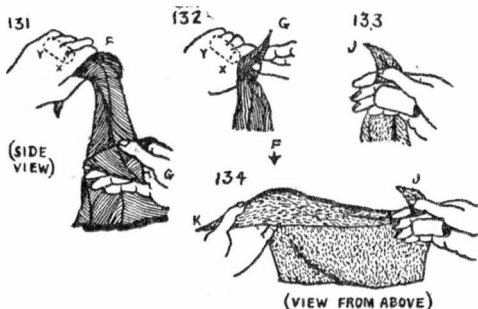
Note that the fake will be finger-palmed with end "X" towards the fingers and end "Y" towards the palm.

5. *Handling the blue silk naturally prior to the second change.* As the left hand pulls the blue silk clear out of the breast pocket, it swings it away towards the left and throws the silk in the air (at the same time as the right hand swings in front of the hip again). As the blue silk descends, the right hand dexterously catches it by a corner

between first and second fingers (Fig. 128, back view). Note which end of the fake is "X" and which is "Y," and be careful of angles. The left hand makes a gesture towards the pianist, accidentally showing itself empty.

The right hand now apparently drops the silk casually over the left palm. Actually, the silk is drawn rapidly across it, and not really dropped, during which the fake is dropped from right into left (Figs. 129, back view; and 130, top view). These moves correspond with those used to show the white silk empty (Figs. 100 to 103) but are done fast enough to make it look as if the silk was dropped casually on to the left palm. The right hand is now casually shown empty while gesturing once more towards the pianist.

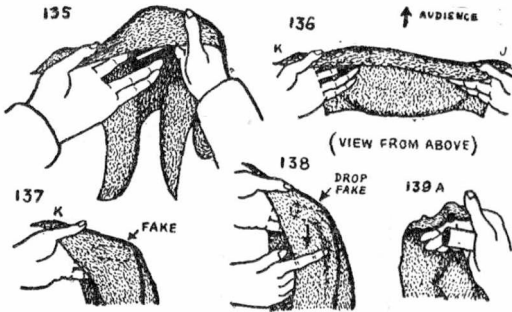
Finally, the conjurer faces left, picks up the hanging end "G" (Fig. 131) and inserts it into the fist (Fig. 132), at the same moment dropping end "F." These moves automatically leave the fake in the left fist the right way round for the colour-change.



6. *Change of the blue silk to red.* This is accomplished in the same manner as the change from white to blue, until the now red silk is thrown up triumphantly and caught again by a corner by the right hand (Fig. 133 shows the back view of the situation at this moment).

7. *Showing the red silk apparently empty.* The performer faces front, holding the red silk in the right as in Fig. 133 (back view). The left hand picks up a hanging corner and stretches it out sideways to show the whole face

of the silk (Fig. 134, top view). The left fingers are held beneath the corner of the silk, as shown. The right hand now, in one motion, drops its end, and dives behind the silk (Fig. 135, back view). As it does so, the finger-tips twist

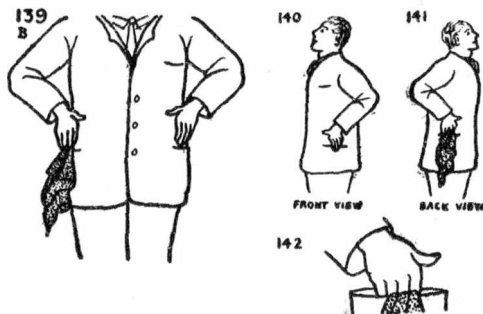


the fake out of the palm and leave it deliberately between the extremities of the second and third fingers of the left, behind the silk (Fig. 135). At the same time, the thumb comes over the top edge to grip it between itself and the index finger (still Fig. 135). Without pause, the right hand slides outwards again along the edge of the silk to the end it came from (Fig. 136, top view). The effect to the audience should be that the right has merely adjusted its hold on the corner. At this point the audience can see both palms empty and the silk held spread in front and below them (still Fig. 136, top view).

The right hand now drops its corner and the silk hangs by the other corner from the left (Fig. 137, top view). The audience now see the whole left palm and most of the fingers (more so than Fig. 137 implies—the portions of the fingers holding the fake are only just concealed by the hanging folds). The right hand is shown empty during a gesture.

The right hand next approaches the silk and grips it between first and second fingers well below the left (Fig. 138, side view). It drags the silk off the left, while the fake is dropped into it behind the silk, ending up finger-palmed (Fig. 139a, back view).

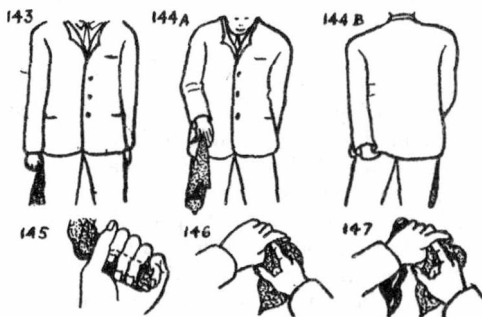
8. *Disposing of the second fake.* The conjurer is still facing front, with the fake finger-palmed in the right hand behind the red silk (Fig. 139a). As a gesture of conclusiveness to the previous moves showing the silk empty, the hands are rested on the hips for a few moments, thumbs to the front (Fig. 139b, front view). Saying: "Now, what shall



we have next?" the magician turns right and takes a slow step, gazing pensively upwards as if trying to think of a colour (Fig. 140, front view). At this moment, the tips of the right fingers behind the body (which, due to the hands-on-hips position lie right on the coat-pocket opening) are inserted into the pocket (Figs. 141 and 142, back views), hold the edge open and drop the fake inside. At the same moment the performer has a brainwave and suddenly says: "Oh, I know . . ." (to pianist) "Could you play a little yellow music, please?" During this he turns to the front again and the hands leave the hips.

9. *Interlude for argument and obtaining the third fake.* Though this is interpolated purely to gain time and misdirection for getting possession of the third fake, the effect, so I have gathered, is enhanced. Following the patter the performer requests the pianist to play "yellow music" and the latter strikes up something of the type of "Narcissus." The conjurer commences to push the red silk into his left fist as before (there being no fake, however). After a few bars, he withdraws the red silk, stops the pianist, and an argument develops as per patter (see "The Effect" earlier).

During this, the conjurer stands facing half-left, with the left leg extended sideways (Fig. 143, front view, but facing



more round to the left). During the argument gestures to the pianist display the hands empty, and at a suitable point some gesture is made with the body which will bring the left hand behind the hip. My gesture is to hunch the body and advance the right shoulder in a defensive attitude, following the frightfully idiotic remark about, "No, pink—or at most, a pastel orange!" This causes the left hand to swing naturally behind the body (Fig. 144a, front view), upon which the hand instantly seizes the third fake from under the coat (Fig. 144b, back view) and finger-palms it. Straightening the body automatically swings the hand in front of the hip again.

The conjurer immediately says: "Oh, all right; have it your own way—yellow music . . ." (aside) ". . . pink!" During this, the two hands are brought together, and the silk is pulled rapidly through the left. In so doing, the hands approach each other, backs towards the audience. As they meet, the left hand is turned palm to the front behind the right, and instantly leaves the fake finger-palmed in the right. Without the slightest pause, the left fingers encircle the hanging silk and slide it along away from the right, until the silk falls clear of it. The left is then accidentally seen empty. All this is done very rapidly, the impression produced being that of casual gestures accompanying the patter. The right hand then lays the silk rapidly on the

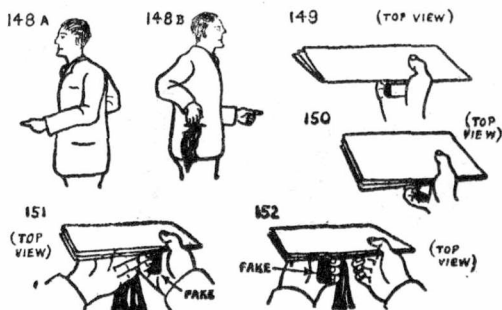
left palm, leaving the fake beneath it (as before), and after casually showing the right hand empty, it seizes a corner of the red silk while the left drops it and turns over, forming into a fist (with the fake inside) ready for the colour-change.

10. *Change of the red silk to green.* Facing left, the usual routine of shoving the red silk into the left fist is recommenced, but in this case, the left little finger is crooked across the fake so that the green silk cannot expand (Fig. 145, view from underneath). This is to defer discovery of the "mistake" in colour as long as possible. When most of the red silk has been pushed inside (Fig. 146, side view) some of the green is allowed to expand (Fig. 147). After a very little by-play, the normal colour-change routine is completed, up to the point where the now green silk is thrown into the air by the right hand and caught again between first and second fingers.

11. *Showing hands empty and disposing of the third fake.* Facing front, but still keeping the left fist closed, the performer says to the pianist: "If you're thinking the same as I'm thinking . . ." (pointing to silk with closed fist) ". . . It ought to be turning a delicate shade of purple!" During the latter, the left hand is opened momentarily (to allow a glimpse of the empty palm) and the green silk apparently dropped across it. Actually, the fake is dropped on to the left palm beneath the silk (as described earlier with the blue silk, Figs. 129 and 130). The right hand is shown momentarily empty in a gesture, after which the silk is dragged off the left palm, the fake being dropped into the right behind the silk (as explained earlier for the blue silk, Figs. 122 to 124, only more rapidly).

Without pause, the green silk is shaken in the air by the right hand, which then comes to rest near the right coat-pocket. Without the slightest pause, the magician swings right, pointing to the table with his left hand (Fig. 148a, front view) and swings back again to face the audience, all in one movement. During this, he says: "I've got a piece of swing music here—shall we try the effect of that for a

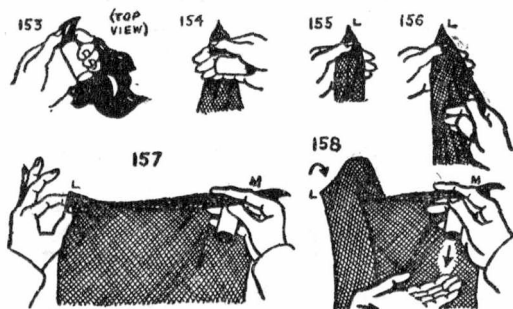
change?" In the swing to the right and back again, the right finger-tips secretly open the right coat-pocket, and the fake is dropped therein, the hand moving away from the pocket again as the body swings to the front once more (Fig. 148b, back view). This should all be executed smartly and smoothly in order not to arouse suspicion.



12. *Secretly obtaining the fourth fake.* Transferring the silk from the right to the left hand, the magician walks up to the table on his right and lifts the music-sheet with the right hand, the latter being placed directly over the fake so that the fingers encircle it (Fig. 149, top view). In so doing, the fingers disengage the rubber bands so that the fake lies loose in the fingers. Facing the front and keeping the sheet square to the audience, the hands turn it right way up so that the audience can read the title, the right fingers (holding the fake) moving across behind to grip the top edge (Fig. 150, top view).

The left hand holding the green silk now gestures in such a manner as to show its emptiness, and then takes up a natural position just in front of the waist, palm upwards, and the fingers cupped in a natural manner. Looking at the pianist, the conjurer says: "Do you feel in the mood to play it for us?" and stretches his right arm (with music-sheet) towards the accompanist in a normal gesture; the natural conclusion to the gesture being for the arm to come back again to the waist. This brings the sheet of music bang in front of the left hand for a moment, during which the fake

is dropped into it (Figs 151 and 152, top view). When the hands separate the fake will be well screened by the corner of silk in the left hand (Fig. 153, top view). The



magician then walks down and hands the music to the pianist to play and returns to centre-stage.

The artist must be careful to keep the sheet of music square to the audience all the time or the fake will be visible round the sides.

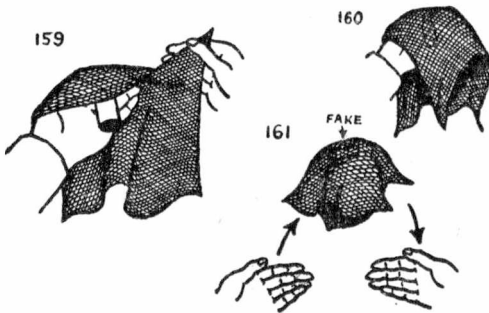
13. *Change from green to jazz silk.* This is executed as before, until the jazz silk is thrown into the air and caught again, by a corner, by the right hand (Fig. 154, back view, shows the position at this stage).

14. *Showing jazz silk and hands to be empty.* Facing front, the left hand lifts a corner "L" of the jazz silk between first finger and thumb (Fig. 155, back view), and the right drops its end. Bringing the finger-palmed fake behind the silk, the right seizes an edge close to the left hand between first and second finger (Fig. 156, back view), slides along to the corner "M," and the two hands then display the silk (Fig. 157, back view). As this is done, the left hand is held so that the palm is seen to be empty (as in Fig. 157).

After holding this position momentarily, the left hand leaves go of corner "L" and simultaneously dives beneath the centre of the silk. At this moment, the fake is dropped into it from the right (Fig. 158 and 159, back view). The

right leaves go, leaving the silk lying on the left palm over the fake (Fig. 160).

The silk is now tossed a foot into the air across from the left hand and is caught by the right, the fake travelling quite safely underneath the silk (Fig. 161). This permits the audience to see both hands empty at the same time as the silk is seen apparently empty in mid-air. It is a delightful move.



The jazz silk is finally tucked into the coat pocket with the fake inside it and the trick is complete.

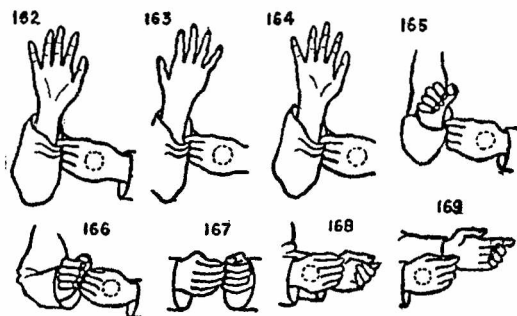
Concluding Notes. The reader may have found the following of such a long and dull description to be heavy labour; may he please have pity on the author for the many hours he spent trying to describe the actions in understandable language! A lighter style would only have doubled the letterpress and obscured the meaning. Some indulgence may also be accorded for the "left" and "right" abbreviations for left hand and right hand.

BILLIARD-BALL SECTION

AN OPENING ACQUITMENT

Let us assume the magician has secretly obtained possession of a ball in the left hand and wishes to show both hands apparently empty before producing the ball. The obvious way of accomplishing this is to use the standard change-over palm, swinging the body from one side to the other as the ball is rolled from hand to hand across the heels of the palms. Now, it has often struck me that this move is not perfectly deceptive, as the movements are not quite natural. If one wished to show one's hands genuinely empty, one would not brush them past each other in such a marked manner nor during the manoeuvre swing the body from one side to the other. What is required is a series of natural movements which will provide natural cover for the change-over palm to be made. The physical difference between the sleight to be described and the well-known standard transfer-palm is practically nil, but in this case misdirection is used in such a way that the actions required for the sleight are the natural outcome.

As far as the spectators are concerned, the magician faces them and extends his right palm towards them as in Fig. 162, at the same time hitching back the sleeve with the left



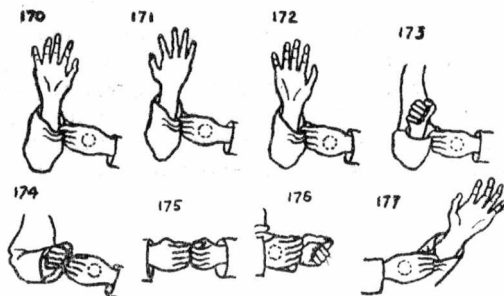
first finger and thumb. He then turns the right hand to show both back and front (Figs. 163 and 164), and pulls the sleeve down again (Fig. 165). As he does this, he turns to his left, slowly extending his left hand and pointing with it (Figs. 166 to 169). He then produces a ball from mid-air.

The diagrams are self-explanatory. The hitching-back of the sleeve and pulling it down again are done with the left first finger and thumb only. Note that the right hand is lowered as the sleeve is pulled down (Fig. 165) so as to bring the hands close together. Then, provided the moves illustrated in Figs. 165 to 169 are executed slowly, smoothly, and naturally, it should really appear as if the hands have been shown genuinely empty without any hanky-panky.

The pulling up of the sleeve and, most important, the pulling down again naturally bring the hands into the correct position for the change-over palm. Moreover, pointing to the left with the left hand gives a natural excuse for swinging the body to the left. Surely this procedure is more deceptive than the bald use of the original change-over palm?

ANOTHER SIMILAR ACQUITMENT

The principle is much the same, the difference being that both sleeves are hitched back in turn. The whole routine, as seen from the audience, is clearly illustrated in Figs. 170 to 177.



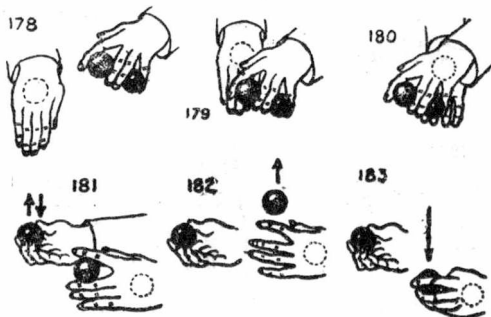
The performer faces the spectators and raises his right palm towards them, at the same time hitching back the right sleeve, using the first finger and thumb of the left hand (Fig. 170). The right hand is turned back out and then palm out again (Figs. 171 to 172). The sleeve is pulled down again as the right hand drops (Fig. 173) bringing the hands close together. At the same time, the performer starts to turn to his left (Fig. 174), and the right hand automatically passes the left (Figs. 175 and 176) in moving back to grasp the left sleeve between first finger and thumb (Fig. 177). The left sleeve is now hitched back, and the left hand shown empty back and front.

Again, the hitching up and pulling down of the sleeves has been made the excuse for providing natural misdirection and for causing the hands to pass each other in the natural course of the action.

ROUTINE FOR COLOUR-CHANGING ONE OF TWO VISIBLE BALLS

The advantage of this routine lies in its ease and in the fact that the hands are apparently shown to be guileless using natural movements, no "hand-washing" being required.

The moves are shown in Figs. 178 to 195, which show

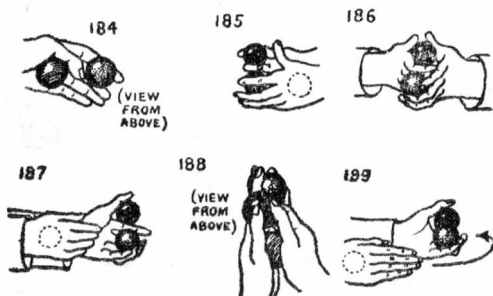


the front view as seen from the audience unless otherwise stated. For ease of reference to the drawings, let us speak of the "black," "spotted," and "lined" balls, as illustrated; taking it for granted that these really represent colours such as red, green and white.

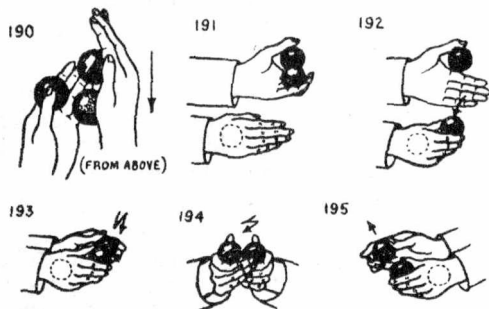
Assume to begin with that the conjurer has produced visibly the "black" and "spotted" balls. During a move with them, he faces right, while the right hand secretly obtains the "lined" ball and palms it.

Facing front, the right hand is brought up to the left and the "black" ball removed from the latter, at the same time as the performer turns to face right again (Figs. 178 to 181). It is clear, vide the drawings, how the palmed "lined" ball is transferred to the left hand during this. The "black" ball is now tossed in the air and caught again by the right hand (Fig. 181). The "spotted" ball is next thrown up (Fig. 182) and caught again by the left hand (Fig. 183). Note the way in which the left thumb, bent inwards, prevents the balls meeting and clicking together when the "spotted" one is caught again (Fig. 184 shows this more clearly).

Swinging casually around to face left, the performer at the same time puts the "black" ball back in the left hand between thumb and forefinger (Figs. 185, 186 and 187). During this the "spotted" ball remains lying on the left fingers. Also during this the "lined" ball is transferred to the right palm as in Fig. 188.



From the position of Fig. 187, the right hand strokes the "spotted" ball (Figs. 189 and 191), during which the colour-change is executed as in Fig. 190. The "lined"



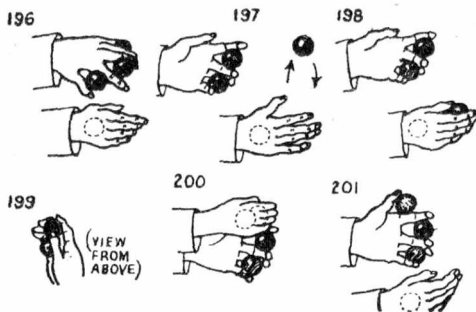
ball strikes the left little finger-tip and rolls between it and the right fingers. At the same time, the heel of the right hand presses against the "spotted" ball, which rolls between the two hands. Continuing the movement, each ball is rolled simultaneously into the position previously occupied by the other so that as the hands separate, the

“lined” ball is found exactly where the “spotted” ball had been—the latter now being palmed in the right hand (see Fig. 191 again).

The “lined” ball is forthwith dropped into the right hand (Fig. 192) and the two balls knocked together twice (Figs. 193, 194, and 195), after which the hands separate again. During this, the performer turns to face right, timing it so that at the second knock he can adroitly transfer the palmed “spotted” ball from the right into the left hand, as indicated. This last move is a little more difficult to execute neatly and deceptively—more so than the other moves—and requires practice.

ROUTINE FOR COLOUR-CHANGING ONE OF THREE VISIBLE BALLS

Simplicity and natural actions are again aimed at. The moves are illustrated in Figs. 196 to 209, all but two of which



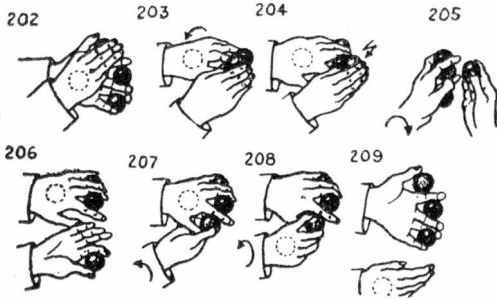
show the spectator's view: these are Figs. 199 and 205, showing the performer's views from above and to the side.

Let us assume that during a previous move the right hand has secretly palmed a fourth ball—say, a pink one. And assume that the three visible balls are held in the left hand as in Fig. 196, the one between thumb and forefinger being red.

The conjurer faces left all the time. The right hand, with pink ball palmed, approaches the left (Fig. 196), removes the red ball from between thumb and forefinger, tosses it in the air (Fig. 197), and catches it again (Fig. 198).

The right hand is raised to put the red ball back between thumb and index finger of the left (Fig. 200). On the way up, the two balls in the right hand are brought close together till they touch (without "talking"), the red being rolled behind the fingers (as for a finger-palm) so that it is obscured (Fig. 199). Instead of putting the red between the left thumb and finger, the pink is put there instead (Fig. 200. Note that the red is in a finger-palm position completely obscured by the fingers). The right hand moves away outwards and downwards to reveal the pink ball, the red being rolled from finger-palm to the palm proper as the hands separate (Fig. 201).

Having displayed this change of colour for a moment, the right hand comes up again, takes away the pink ball, and knocks it once or twice against one of the other visible balls (Figs. 202, 203 and 204). Note that as the right hand



removes the pink ball from the left, the palmed red one is transferred to the left palm (Fig. 205 shows the performer's view of Fig. 202), and the left immediately turns over *behind* the right (Fig. 203). The right then knocks the pink ball against one of the others in the left hand (Fig. 204).

Having done this, the right hand turns over from the wrist to display the empty palm (Fig. 206). It then places the pink ball between thumb and forefinger of the left hand (Figs. 207, 208 and 209). But in so doing, the right fingers go straight up behind the left and press against the palmed red ball (Fig. 207). As the right leaves go of the pink, it is twisted back-out from the wrist (Fig. 208), the fingers pulling the secreted red ball invisibly into the right palm. The hands separate (Fig. 209). The left hand may now be casually shown empty and the moves are complete.

Care must be taken of angles during the transfer-palms. Trial before a mirror will soon show the operator how to hold the hands and how to twist them from the wrists without allowing a glimpse of the palmed ball.

CUPS AND BALLS SECTION

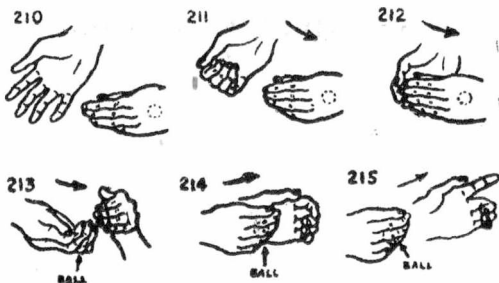
THROWING A CUP INTO THE AIR

I do not remember ever seeing this sleight, nor ever reading about it. Even if it has been published before, I really did discover it for myself! It is too good not to be made known to keen magicians, so it is explained hereunder.

A cup is held mouth up with a ball lying inside at the bottom. It may be thrown up into the air in such a manner that it will turn over on the way, giving a flash of the interior to the audience. It is caught again mouth up. Try it. The ball will not fall out. And the flash of the interior presented to the spectators is so brief that they cannot notice the ball inside. It is all most convincing.

ACQUITMENT TO PRECEDE PRODUCTION OF THE FIRST BALL

Figs. 210 to 215 show the audience's view of the sleight.

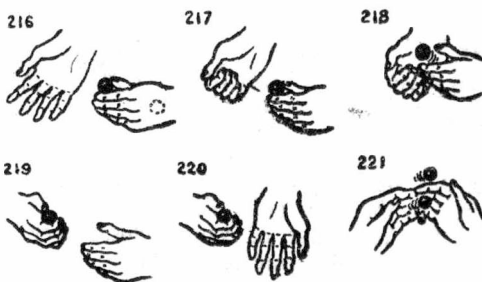


Assuming the first ball to be produced is palmed in the left hand, the performer faces the audience and shows his right hand empty (Fig. 210). He then swings round to face left, at the same time pointing upwards with the left hand, which is now seen to be empty (Fig. 215). He reaches into the air with the right hand and produces the ball. This is what happens during the swing to the left. As the hands begin to swing round, the right fingers relax and naturally bend inwards (Fig. 211) thus producing a "cupped" hand. As the hands pass across the front of the body, the left comes momentarily in front of the right, during which the ball is dropped or jerked from the left into the right hand (Figs.

212 and 213). Meanwhile, the left fingers commence opening (Figs. 213 and 214) and terminate pointing upwards into the air (Fig. 215). Executed smartly the transfer is invisible.

ACQUITMENT TO SHOW TWO BALLS AS ONE

Figs. 216 to 220 show the move as seen by the audience.



Facing them, the right hand is shown empty. The visible ball in the left fingers is tossed into the right, and the left hand is then shown empty.

Fig. 221 is a back view of Fig. 218 and shows the secret: that is, throwing both balls across at the same time, one visibly and the other invisibly. With proper timing, the hands are held well apart, and the visible ball thrown across casually without the hands appearing to come together. Of course, they do really, at the crucial instant, but *only just*. The move will appear perfectly above-board as there is, to a certain extent, an optical illusion that the hands do not actually come together.

A SUBTLE METHOD OF VANISHING A BALL

The subtlety lies in the fact that the ball is really palmed away some time before the vanish is to take place. It can be used at any time the magician happens to be handling two balls.

Figs. 222 to 226 show the moves as seen from the auditorium. Suppose two balls be held in the right hand (Fig. 222). These are apparently casually dropped into the left



hand (Figs. 223 and 224) but in reality one ball is retained finger-palmed in the right (Fig. 227 showing back view of Fig. 223). The left hand, of course, closes over the supposedly two balls—really only one. After a few words of patter, the right forefinger rolls one ball out of the left fist (Fig. 225) and removes the ball (Fig. 226), it being made obvious that only one ball is removed. Thus the audience are led to believe that one ball still remains in the left hand. This illusion may be heightened by the left fingers apparently adjusting the position of this imaginary ball in the palm. The non-existent ball may now be caused to vanish at any desired moment.

THE END



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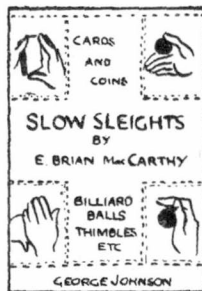
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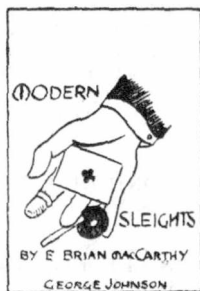
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