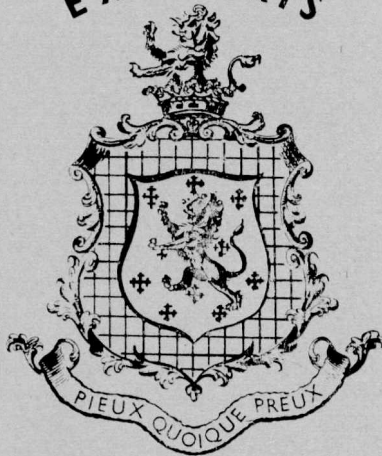

MISCELLANEOUS · MAGIC.

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M.I.M.C. (LONDON)

Miscellaneous

Magic.

PERCY NALDRETT.

Author of

"Magical Notes & Notions,"

"Moments of Mystery,"

etc.



*Printed and Published by Percy Naldrett,
Portsmouth, November, 1915.*

FORE-WORD.

Once again the writer has pleasure in presenting to the magical fraternity a modest array of miscellaneous ideas—some original—some merely improvements or adaptations of existing experiments, all of which it is hoped will prove of interest and use to the reader.

The writer takes this opportunity of thanking numerous correspondents for friendly criticism, and also those who have generously offered ideas for publication; in this respect special thanks are due to that genial humorist, Mr. Harry Leat, of Tooting.

The publication of this little volume is sufficient proof that its predecessors have found favour, therefore it is with confidence that the writer signs himself—

Percy Aldrett

Have a Cigar?

The conjurer borrows a shilling from an obliging member of the audience, at the same time offering him a pocket-knife in order that he may mark the coin for purposes of identification. The performer opens a box of cigars and asks the owner of the coin to accept one in return for his kindness. The box is then closed and placed under the performer's arm. The marked shilling is wrapped in a piece of tissue paper and the little parcel is placed in a clip standing upon the table. A match is applied to the parcel and the coin and paper disappear in a flash of flame. The conjurer apologizes for this misfortune and endeavours to propitiate by offering another cigar, but upon opening the box a dove or a rabbit is discovered with an envelope attached to its neck by ribbon. Placing the cigar box aside, the conjurer asks a lady to open the envelope. A smaller envelope is found within; this is opened and discloses a still smaller envelope. The performer asks the lady to feel the envelope, and upon doing so she states that it contains a coin. The envelope is now handed to the lender of the coin and he extracts the shilling and expresses his satisfaction as to its identity.

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Despite the puzzling nature of this pretty problem, the method of working is very simple, and moreover, the effect can be accomplished in a variety of ways, according to the conditions under which the magician is performing. The method employed by the writer is as follows.

The cigar box has two lids—one at the bottom and one at the top—and the labels on the box are of such a nature that the box may be turned completely over without arousing suspicion. There is only one or, at most, two layers of cigars, which are supported by a "false bottom" or partition fixed across the box about three quarters of an inch down. The lids are provided with very tiny hook catches, to prevent them coming open at the wrong moment, and a few minute air-holes are provided in order to prevent discomfort to the rabbit, which is of course already concealed in the large compartment of the box.

A duplicate of the smallest envelope is taken and a flat tin tube about three inches long and capable of admitting the free passage of a shilling, is inserted into the envelope which is then sealed up as far as the tin tube will admit. This envelope is concealed in the opening of the performer's vest.

The marked coin is wrapped in a piece of flash paper in the familiar way known as the "coin fold." The packet is knocked on the cigar box, thus proving the presence of the coin. The coin is now allowed to slip out of the paper which is then placed

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in the clip. It is an easy matter for the conjurer to let the marked coin slip down the tin tube into the sealed envelope. The tube, by the way, has a tiny hook soldered to it; this hook engages in the performer's vest. At the first opportunity the conjurer secretly gets possession of the envelope by pulling it down from beneath his vest, thus leaving the tin tube behind. The envelope is folded in half and palmed.

The smallest of the nest of three envelopes that are attached to the rabbit contains a duplicate coin, and this envelope is changed at the right moment (*see note later*) for the envelope containing the actual borrowed coin.

Suggested Patter:

"Ladies and gentlemen. For my next experiment it will be necessary for me to borrow a £50 note. Dear me! No £50 notes forthcoming? Well I will not use one of my own for obvious reasons. Oh no! You mistake me—what I meant to convey was that if I used one of my own notes you would suspect me of confederacy. This part of the trick always reminds me of the German War Loan—its so difficult to borrow money when your credit is bad. However, as I can't get £50 I will be satisfied with a shilling, and I will give the lender interest in the shape of a guaranteed cigar. Thank you sir, you evidently know a good investment. Before I take the shilling from you I would like you to mark it in such a manner that you could swear to its identity.

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Do you swear, sir? I beg your pardon? You may if I dont return your shilling?. In that case I think you had better have security. Now sir, you have defaced the coin. Are you aware that there is a heavy penalty for defacing the coin of the realm? Never mind, I won't say anything about it this time. Now I propose wrapping the shilling in this piece of tissue paper. Listen! I will rap it on the box so that you can tell by the sound that it is really there. Oh, by the way, sir, have a cigar. I'm sure they are excellent cigars. My wife gave them to me last Christmas, and I always reserve them for my friends. Very unselfish of me, isn't it. Now I will place the little paper packet in that small clip upon the table there.

Now sir, I promised you interest, and you will be pleased to hear that I propose to turn your old shilling into a new sovereign. I didn't tell you that at first as I really hadn't time to take a shilling collection. By the application of a match I generate a little heat. Oh, dear! I've developed too much heat. You see how your money burns, sir,—so does mine. I'm afraid that my financial operation has been a failure. Will you have another cigar? You will? That's very good of you. You are the only man who has ever forgiven me—but you haven't smoked the cigar yet. Have another. Look out! There, you wern't quick enough—all the cigars have gone—they were probably eaten by this wild animal. Now madam, would you be kind enough to hold

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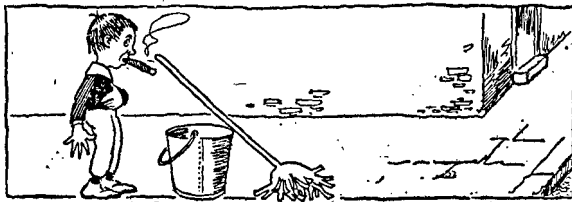
Bunny while I place the box on the table. Thank you. And now will you please open the envelope. It contains another? Open that also. What? Still another? How tiresome. Here, let the gentleman who lent me the shilling open the envelope himself. Is that your coin sir? It is? Thank you very much for the loan of it and please don't tell anyone how it is done."

Note.—

As the envelopes are opened the performer takes the discarded envelope in his left hand and under the cover thus afforded he opens out the folded envelope containing the borrowed coin. In the act of passing the last envelope to the gentleman the magician changes the envelopes by means of the card sleight known as the "bottom change."

If the reader desires to cut out the envelope changing part of the trick, he may let the lady extract the duplicate coin from the smallest envelope and he can change the coin in the act of passing it to the owner for identification.

If it is desired to present the above experiment at a children's party, chocolate cigars should be used instead of the genuine article.



Have a Cigar?

Flash-Paper Butterflies.

When properly presented, with appropriate music, the familiar Japanese Butterfly trick provides a delightful interlude in practically any programme, and it is acceptable to any class of audience. It is not the object of this book to give a detailed explanation of such a well known effect, but to those who work the butterflies this little idea will prove to be practical.

To fashion the butterflies flash paper is used in place of ordinary tissue; and after the usual manœuvres the butterflies are allowed to hover round the flame of a candle standing upon a side table; eventually the butterflies come into contact with the flame and they disappear in a flash of fire, thus bringing an already perfect illusion to an artistic and logical conclusion.



The Eclipse Color Changing Billiard Ball.

The writer, while practising a few billiard ball sleights, chanced to drop a red ball into a tumbler. This immediately suggested a novel effect; viz.—to cause a billiard ball to change colour instantaneously. A little thought, followed by practical experiment, evolved the following very pretty problem.

The performer places a red billiard ball into a tumbler which is then covered with a plate “just to keep the draught out.” The tumbler is standing upon a Jap tray. The conjurer calls attention to the brilliant colour of the ball, and it instantaneously changes to white. The white ball is removed from the tumbler, and thrown into the air a few times to prove that it is not prepared in any way.

The trick is entirely mechanical but the working parts are so simple that there is no possibility of a mishap. It is well known that if a ball be painted half red and half white, the result from a magical point of view is a failure—*but*—if a slot or groove is cut round the line of junction it makes the idea quite practical, and a ball thus treated may be safely

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held up and exhibited as a red or white ball according to which half is facing the audience.

The tray has a steel peg or tongue protruding from the centre, and when a tiny catch is released, the mechanism concealed in the bottom of the tray causes the peg to make a half turn. As regards the actual construction of the mechanism it is obvious that many devices can be used to attain so simple a movement. The writer has two experimental models by him, one of which is operated by means of a toothed quadrant engaging in a small cog on the shaft of the peg, and the other is actuated by a coiled steel wire spring. For rapidity in working the latter is perhaps the most satisfactory.

The tumbler has two holes in it—one in the bottom “and one to drink out of”—if we are permitted to make such a mild joke.

The peg or tongue is shaped so that it fits into the slot, thus securely supporting the ball. After the change has been worked the performer takes out the white ball and secretly places a white half-shell over the red portion. This shell is made to fit tightly so that the ball may be thrown from hand to hand, or if the performer is a stickler for finish then he may change it for a genuine white ball and pass for inspection.

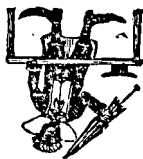
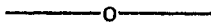
The hole in the bottom of the tumbler has to be fairly large in order to admit of the passage of the tongue, but by holding the tumbler with one finger

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blocking the hole, water may be poured in to prove that the tumbler is unprepared, or a celluloid plug may be utilised to acheive this object.

The reader will recognize the advisability of using the Eclipse Colour Changing Ball in conjunction with some other billiard ball effect. Here is a good suggestion: have a duplicate of the faked ball and drop it, white half to the audience, into a wine glass of just sufficient size to grip it. Now cover the wine glass with a coloured silk handkerchief at the same time giving the glass a half turn. The Eclipse ball is now visibly changed from red to white and the handkerchief is lifted, disclosing the red ball resting in the wine glass.

Apart from the above the slotted billiard balls may be introduced with advantage into almost any series of sleights with billiard balls, as, provided ordinary care is used, it is impossible for the audience to detect that fake balls are being used.

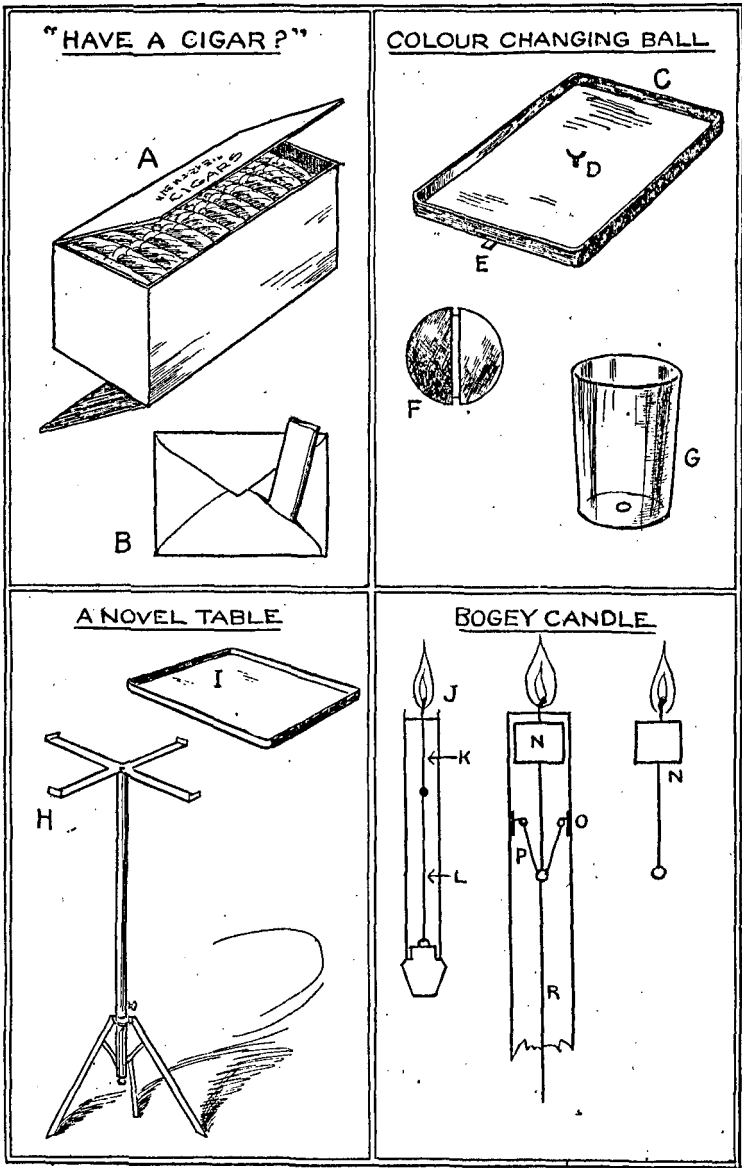


————— *turn over.*

A Nobel Table.

Here is a novel table which possesses the advantage of being elegant as well as useful. It should, perhaps, be named a "tray-holder" rather than a table. It consists of the usual folding tripod, but instead of the conventional table-top being fitted it carries a nickelled framework capable of holding an ordinary Japanese tray. This framework may consist of simple cross pieces, or it may comprise an ornamental design. It is flanged to prevent the tray from slipping. This arrangement looks very neat and the tray is useful in sleight-of-hand work as nothing can roll off. The performer may have several trays, each containing the necessary apparatus for a problem, and as each experiment is concluded the tray is removed and another substituted; this is obviously a great advantage.

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A—Fake cigar box with two lids and space for rabbit. B—Tube inserted in envelope. C—Jasp tray. D—Tongue to hold slotted ball. E—Catch to release internal mechanism. F—Slotted ball. G—Tumbler with hole in bottom. H—Plated cross to hold tray. I—Jasp Tray. J—Cup to hold wax. K—Wick. L—Rubber band. N—Lamp. O—Push-on joint. P—Elastic. R—Thread.

A United Front.

The performer comments upon the political situation during the early part of July, 1914, and offers to give a practical demonstration of the course of events. Taking a silk Union Jack, he tears it in halves, at the same time asking the audience to excuse this apparently unpatriotic action. One half of the flag is placed into a tumbler which is then given to a spectator to hold. Taking the remaining half of the Union Jack the conjurer rubs it between the palms of his hands and it changes to a German flag. The spectator in charge of the tumbler is asked to investigate and the Union Jack is found to be completely restored. The performer now passes the German flag through a "mill" or "mangle" which has the effect of changing it to a composite Allies' flag.

The requirements and preparations for this topical experiment are very simple. Two silk Union Jacks about fifteen inches square are obtained; one of these flags is cut into two pieces and then lightly basted together with fine white silk. This flag may be held up for inspection, but a jerk will cause the halves to separate.

Two tumblers are required; into one tumbler the whole unprepared Union Jack is stuffed. This tumbler is now concealed behind an open opera hat

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standing upon the table. During the course of the trick the conjurer apparently places the tumbler containing the *half* of Union Jack, upon the table. What really happens is that the tumbler is dropped down a black-art pocket in the table, and the hat is lifted, disclosing the duplicate tumbler. (This easy change is also used in "The Suffragette Problem" and "Wireless Parcel Post." See *Magical Notes & Notions*.) Later on the tumbler is given to a spectator to hold.

The German flag should be somewhat smaller than the Union Jack and is folded with the black portion outside. It is then attached to the outside of a handkerchief pull of the cup variety, by means of a strip of tissue paper, or a rubber band. The other half of the Union Jack is stuffed into the "vanisher" which then carries it away under the coat, the performer gripping and retaining the German flag as he releases the pull.

Those readers possessing a combined changing tube and pull will probably prefer to use it instead of the ordinary pull as described above.

Most magical dealers stock what is generally known as a "Postal Order Printing Machine." It consists of two paper-covered rollers arranged in such a way that as a blank piece of paper is wound in a postal order is discharged at the other side. Such a machine can be purchased very cheaply and in this case, instead of being used for changing a piece of paper, it is utilized to wind in the German

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flag and discharge the Allies' combination flag, or, if the performer desires, an Irish flag will provide an equally suitable finish to this pretty effect. The reader will naturally understand that the rollers in the "mangle" are to be about ten inches in length, and he should mention this fact when asking a dealer to quote.

Suggested Patter.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I propose to give you a practical demonstration of the political situation as it stood during the early days of July, 1914. With your permission I will divide this flag into two parts. It is rather a drastic action, but I feel sure you will agree that we were, at that time, a divided nation. I will isolate one half of the flag by placing it into this tumbler. By the way, perhaps someone would like to retain it in order to prove that there is really no deception on my part. Of course I cannot answer for this lady, but I feel sure that there is nothing deceptive about you madam. Now I take the remaining half of the Union Jack, and we will wait and see—what happens. I believe that trouble is brewing—things are looking black. (Here the performer allows the black portion of the German flag to protrude from his hands.)

Here, you see, we have the German menace—they thought to catch us while divided, but if you will investigate madam, you will find that we have dropped home troubles in order to present a United Front to the enemy.

The Bogey Candle.

This mysterious accessory is useful in connection with almost any spiritualistic experiment and will also prove of value to those magicians who are wise enough to preserve the air of mystery when "off," as well as "on" the platform, to the extent of playing a few harmless magical jokes upon unsuspecting casual visitors.

Here is the effect: a candle is lit in the ordinary way, but after a few moments it goes out—not slowly, but with an electric rapidity. It is entirely self-acting, but may be timed to within a few seconds by careful preparation.

The candle consists of a brass tube of the correct length and circumference, covered with white glazed paper. A disc is soldered about an eighth of an inch down the tube, thus forming a small cup to contain candle wax. The disc has a small hole drilled through the centre, just large enough to admit the free passage of a piece of candle wick. This wick is only about an inch in length, but it has an elastic band attached to its lower extremity. The wick is secured in the cup by the simple process of pouring melted candle wax round it. When

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quite cool and set, the rubber band is pulled down and hooked over a miniature screw-eye. A wooden block is turned up to fit tightly into the bottom of the tube and also into the candlestick intended to be used. Now, upon the wick being lit, the candle will burn quite naturally until the wax becomes soft, when the elastic band will pull the wick down into the interior of the tube, causing the light to be extinguished in a most weird manner.

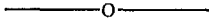
The candle may be effectively used in the Spirit Photo experiment, the performer explaining that the spirits will signify the completion of their work by putting out the light.

While on the subject of trick candles, mention must be made of an improved "Target Candle." The article stocked by the magical dealers consists of a miniature lamp sliding up and down a brass tube and actuated by a thread and spiral spring. The objection to this style of candle is that the coiled spring "talks," and the candle flame disappears and re-appears to a decidedly unmusical accompaniment.

After considerable experimenting the writer devised a silent system, in which the coiled spring is replaced by a rubber band. The candle tube is made to come into two portions by means of a simple "push-on" joint—this facilitates repair or investigation of the interior. A wire rod, three inches in length is soldered to the bottom of the

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lamp ; this rod terminates in an eyelet. Two small hooks are soldered to opposite sides of the inside of the lower portion of the tube. An elastic band is threaded through the eyelet in the rod, and the ends of the band are caught upon the respective hooks. The two portions of the tube are now shut together, a piece of strong thread having first been fastened to the eyelet in the rod, and led away via the bottom tube through a hole drilled in the wooden plug by means of which the candle is made to stand upright in the candlestick. The usual air holes are drilled in the back of the top portion of the candle. The rubber bands require renewing occasionally, but the smooth silent action of the mechanism amply repays for the trouble taken in preparation.



IN LIGHTER VEIN.

How to tell the exact number of people who have been in a room.

Count them as they come out.

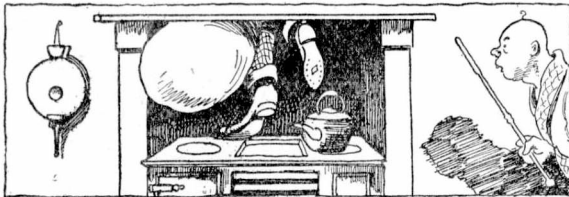


How to make a small piece of elastic go a long way.

Stretch it.

A Vanisher Hint.

In using the De Kolta handkerchief pull it requires very great care to avoid the "thump" or "flop" as the cup strikes the body. Here is a simple way of surmounting this difficulty. Have a loop of elastic sewn to the trouser near the side brace button. The loop should be of sufficient size to stop the cup without letting it pass right through. The pull elastic should go *right round the body* and terminate at one of the brace buttons instead of being attached to the vest as is usual. The elastic loop acts as an efficient buffer and ensures a beautifully smooth silent vanish. If the performer is wearing a dinner jacket the above method is perfect, and by slightly altering the position of the loop it can be adapted for use with a dress coat.



A Vanisher Hint.

Patter for
“Matter through Matter.”

By Harry Lat.

Amongst my collection I have the trick called “Matter through Matter,” or “The Utterly Impossible,” and I found that it did not “go” at all well if worked seriously. I arranged the following patter for it and was then quite satisfied with the reception of the trick. It is needless to say that the necessary explanations should be added to the patter, where necessary, to aid the audience in following the trick. My frame, by the way, is covered with salmon-coloured plush, with white celluloid discs on it to guide the drawing pins.

“Ladies and gentlemen, as you all seem in such a pleasant frame of mind, I would like to show you a frame of mine. You can tell by the colour that the salmon shooting season has commenced. I might tell you that I have had this frame ever since I got it, and it was to have gone round a good intention. I'm not sure what the spots represent, but evidently they are something to do with my past. Aren't they beautifully white? If ever you come across a square

like this it is as well to go round it—and look for splinters.

Even though I am a conjurer do not think that I am going to work a Frame trick on the enlargement plan. If you read it in *John Bull* it is so. A gentleman here says he read it in the *Sunday Magazine* that the margarine was wrapped up in. Has any gentleman a pocket handkerchief that he could lend for a little experiment? I would like one without trap-doors or emergency exits in it. Thank you sir.

As you will perceive, there are no holes in this handkerchief; there soon will be, but that's a mere detail. (*Show drawing pins.*) I have here some safety pins—safe on one side only. It was one of these that inspired the well-known anonymous author to write that beautiful and soul-stirring ballad, "How I got my own back with the Master."

I now propose pinning this piece of rag—I mean this beautiful square of Irish linen to the frame, so that if I stand behind, you will be unable to see my face, for which you should be truly thankful. (*Show large paper bag that hatters use*) I have here a paper bag made from wood pulp. Pulp—what a charming sound. P. U. double L. P. Pulp. I could say it for hours—Pulp. I obtained this bag from a tile manufacturer or thatch merchant, and I propose covering the frame with it. There we are. (*Pass bodkin and tape through*). You've all heard the famous saying of Sister Susie that a stitch in time saves nine. That's so, so I will sew and en-

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deavour to do this gentleman's handkerchief a good turn. You don't look very pleased. Clockwork in the centre of a handkerchief is quite the rage, or likely to get you into one. Do smile, sir. (*Pass wand through.*) You will not mind me seeing if I have made very large holes with the tape. (*Pull wand backwards and forwards.*) By jove, the beautiful cambric has commenced to tear. I'm so sorry, but if I cut off the frayed edge with this knife you could have it patched. (*Business with knife.*) Dear, dear, you are unfortunate. The knife has accidentally slipped. What a gash! How awkward for you when it rains. (*Business, pouring water through.*) Just what I thought. Leaks something shocking. You'll soon be able to see through this trick. What a lot of holes. I should imagine that this handkerchief cost one shilling—net. Now it looks like one fishing net. Talk about shooting peas through it—why these will drop through, and they are not sweet peas either. (*Drop peas through on to tray.*) Sounds exactly like beer stones—ale stones I mean. Would anyone present like to join me in a handkerchief split?

Now, sir, it is really too bad of me to do all this to your handkerchief. Will you let me pay for a new one, or bind me over to keep the pieces—(*pull frame out of bag*)—but there are no pieces! For once the frame trick is not a swindle, and when I have removed the pins your handkerchief will be none the worse for its little adventure.

A Hat Loading Hint.

Here is a very simple yet infallible method of loading a hat. A needle or headless brad is driven into the rear edge of a square Jap tray. The tray is placed on the table and the load is suspended by means of the tack. Supposing the table to be on the performer's left, he takes the hat in the left hand and approaches the table. The right hand lifts tray and tilts it towards the audience, thus concealing the load which is suspended behind it. The tray is placed over the mouth of the hat, thus scooping the load into the hat. The hat and tray are retained for a moment by the right hand while the left hand moves the table slightly forward. The tray is replaced upon the table and the production commences.

A topical touch may be introduced by producing ammunition from the hat in the shape of shells—these being hollow shapes nesting one within the other, and painted to represent the genuine article. If the audience is composed of the general public, then the shells may very well be followed by half-a-dozen collapsible war babies, especially if the expression on the face of the owner of the hat leads one to believe that he is not averse to a little harmless fun.

A Conjuring Carnival.

Where the thorough entertainment of the juvenile section of a party is concerned, there is nothing to compare with a liberal display of "paper fireworks," but to get the maximum effect the best materials must be used. The reader will find that the following series of productions will be received with great acclamation by the tiny tots, and at the same time the apparent expense involved will not fail to impress the person who is paying for the conjurer's services.

Nothing new or original is claimed, but the sequence is the result of a great deal of personal experience. We will commence by describing the material to be used; a quantity of mouth coils, throw-out coils, and small paper flags will be required. We wish to impress upon the reader that the *best* must be obtained—the cost may be a trifle more, but it is worth it. Of coils, there are two qualities on the market—thick common paper and the *tissue paper*. The common ones are practically useless. If the reader *insists* on the tissue paper coils he will get them, and he will have the satisfaction of knowing that they are of British manufacture. Even

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mouth coils made of tissue are twenty to thirty feet longer than those made of the heavier paper, and this is a great difference when production and cover are taken into consideration. As its name implies, a throw-out coil is meant to throw *out*, but a better effect is got by throwing them *up*, and the display is almost equal to the coils that are termed throw-ups. The tissue coils are easy to handle, take up less space when wound, when thrown up they float in the air quite a few seconds, and do not hang like a wet rag when used for cover. Again, the colours are very brilliant, and give a silky appearance. The same may be said of the flags—get the tissue, British made, Allies' Flags.

To prepare for the experiment, drive a pin into the top rail of a chair and place a throw-out coil thereon. Make up two packets of paper flags, securing each packet with a thin band of gummed paper, and conceal the packets by impaling them upon pins placed behind the lapels of the coat. Wrap a hundred silk spring flowers up in black tissue paper—two packets will be found most convenient. The packets of flowers are vested. A large silk Union Jack is pleated and concealed in the vest opening. Two rings sewn to the top corners of the flag will be of great assistance in shaking the flag out as a finale. If the various packets are placed in readiness behind the screen or other retiring place allotted to the performer, he can quickly dispose of them about his person when ostensibly removing

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some of his paraphernalia from the scene of action.

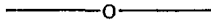
When ready to present the experiment, having the various loads in position, and a mouth coil palmed in the right hand, the performer coaxes one of the juveniles to come forward and assist him. At most children's parties there will be found two or three boys in sailor suits. If possible, one of these budding Jellicoes should be obtained. While questioning the boy as to his age, name, etc., the conjurer stands with his left hand naturally resting on the boy's left shoulder. Then, under pretence of seeing something, the left hand drops a little lower down and slightly opens the boy's "jumper," the right hand is now brought up and the mouth coil is allowed to drop down into the "jumper," the end of the coil being clipped in the fingers of the right hand. The coil is now produced, hand over hand. Holding the bunch of paper in the right hand the magician asks the boy to take a seat, and in the act of placing the chair in position he secures the throw-out coil which he immediately produces by giving a strong upward and outward throw, keeping the right hand well in motion, to and fro, so as to obtain the greatest effect by causing the paper ribbons to float through the air.

Plenty of opportunities will be found of getting possession of the packets of flowers from the vest and when the throw-out coil is gathered in, the paper bands are broken and the flowers are allowed to gradually well up from the mass of ribbons. A word

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of caution here—have a Japanese umbrella open so that the flowers may fall therein, otherwise a rush by the youngsters may result in the capture or destruction of the flowers—experience teaches.

Next the bundle of paper is taken by the left hand and shaken as though to discover whether there are any more flowers in it. Meanwhile the right hand rests naturally upon the lapel of the coat and secures the first packet of paper flags. The flags are rubbed between the hands, which causes them to separate and develope, and they are thrown to right and left as produced, the performer walking down among the audience for this purpose. The second bundle of flags is obtained and distributed in a similar manner, and, walking back to the table or platform, the conjurer gets hold of the silk flag and shakes it out to the accompaniment of the National Anthem on the piano.



HINTS BY B. WAYRE.

How to die any colour. Mix the poisons.

How to prevent moss gathering on a billiard ball. Roll it.

How to clean paint. Wash it.

How to make plated table legs look like new. Never remove the price tag.

To thread a needle in a dark place. Exclude all light.

Tricks with the "Zelka" Hat Fake.

Since the days of Hartz and his wonderful hat, productions from this piece of head-gear have somewhat gone out of favour. But Mr. Zelka's invention has made possible many really startling effects which otherwise could only be obtained by means of much practice and skill.

The appliance is marketed as a "Hat Loader," but this title is a trifle mis-leading, as the apparatus is not used to actually *load* a hat, but is used to conceal articles already placed in the hat by the performer. To the average conjurer the effect is that the hat is shown empty and then indetectably loaded by the performer, so, on this plea, the title "Hat Loader," is no doubt justified:

The apparatus consists of a strip of brass twenty-seven inches in length by three eighths wide. This strip is bent to the shape of the mouth of a bowler hat, and is made adjustable by means of a slot and bolts. Two pieces of dull black elastic cloth are sewn to this frame so that they over-lap slightly in the centre. When the fake is pressed into a bowler

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hat it gives a "black art" effect, yet there is ample room beneath the fake to conceal about eighteen to twenty-two fair sized eggs. The performer, in producing the eggs, simply pulls them through the opening in the elastic, which then automatically closes. This fake is certainly one of the most useful and practical pieces of conjuring apparatus ever devised, as it lends itself to so many combinations apart from the popular "Eggs from Hat Trick."

The reader is advised to purchase the fake from the Le Roy Co., who sell the apparatus at a reasonable price.

In the original pattern the brass frame-work was on *top* of the elastic and was concealed by the leather sweat band of the hat, but the metal work invariably causes a kink in the leather band. If the frame is put underneath this difficulty is avoided, and, what is more important, it allows the fake to be more easily removed.

If the fake is to be utilized for the production of eggs, it is best to hold the hat in the left hand in such manner that the left thumb can grip the edge of the elastic and hold it back, thus facilitating the *rapid* removal of the contents of the hat, which in the "Boy, Girl, and Eggs Trick," is of course such an essential point.

An idea which I have found very practical, is as follows. A couple of small rabbits or a pigeon is concealed under the fake, and the hat, until required, stands mouth downwards on the seat of a chair.

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When presenting the trick the magician loads in *on top of the fake*, either from servante or vest, a hat coil. The coil is produced in the usual way, and a pretence is made of stuffing the paper ribbons back into the hat. Under cover of the coil the performer inserts his fingers in the fake and pulls it clear away from the hat and places it aside with the bundle of paper. This leaves the conjurer free to produce the live stock and give the hat for examination; or, if desired, the audience may "discover" the contents of the hat.

If the above does not appeal to the reader in consequence of the necessity of loading in the coil then the following variation may interest him, as it is quite self-contained. Two pieces of elastic, each about two and a half inches by a half inch, are sewn to the underside of the fake. Two bouquets of twenty-five silk flowers each are prepared and inserted under the elastic strips. It is a very easy matter to produce the bouquets by pulling them through the gap in the fake, and under the ample cover they afford the fake is extracted from the hat and placed aside.

Here is a very effective combination. The conjurer produces three eggs from a black cloth. As each egg is produced it is dropped into the hat. The hat is held over the flame of a candle for a few moments for the purpose of hatching the eggs. The magician then removes from the hat several pieces of egg shell, and two live chicks. But even this

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fine effect does not conclude the experiment, for the conjurer, taking up the black cloth, gives it a shake and out drops the "mother" of the chicks in the shape of a Bantam Rooster. This climax never fails to secure applause.

The preparations for the above combination are very easily made. Two live chicks are concealed beneath the hat fake, together with various pieces of egg shell. The black cloth is prepared with an ivory egg on a piece of thread and the eggs are produced by the well known method so admirably described in detail by Prof. Hoffmann in "More Magic," which method, by the way, is deserving of more attention by modern magicians.

The Bantam is concealed in a triangular bag which opens downwards, the mouth being closed by an extended flap. The bag is suspended behind a solid-backed or draped chair, by means of two rings—one on the bottom of the bag and one on the flap. After the third (?) egg has been produced the thread is broken from the cloth, and the cloth is casually thrown over the back of the chair. The hatching process is now gone through and the egg shell and chicks produced, together with the ivory egg. In picking up the cloth the performer also grasps the rings by which the bag is suspended and by releasing the ring which is attached to the flap of the bag, the bird flutters to the floor and the sudden change from darkness into light will probably cause him to give a triumphant Cock-a-doodle-do!

A Rising Card and Spirit Writing Effect.

Some few years ago the writer witnessed a performance by Mr. Carl Hertz, at the Portsmouth Hippodrome. The most mysterious item presented on that occasion was "Balchazzar's Blackboard," in which answers to sealed questions appeared on a blackboard previously shown back and front to the audience. The success of the illusion undoubtedly depended upon a very smart assistant well versed in historical dates and topical events.

The writer does not pretend that the trick about to be described is in any way as perfect as the illusion mentioned above, but he does think that this adaptation of the idea will prove useful to those performers who have the requisite platform accomodation at their disposal.

The effect is this. The magician distributes three blank visiting cards and envelopes to fit. He requests the spectators to write any question upon the cards and seal them up in their respective envelopes. The conjurer collects the envelopes and places them in a little clip so that they may be in full

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view of the audience. About a dozen white cards fifteen by twelve inches, are given for examination and the performer explains that he will cause the answers to the questions to materialize on these cards; he does not guarantee accuracy, but promises that the answer shall in each case be appropriate to the question, and that if any jocular member of the audience has written a comical or impertinent question he must not be surprised if he gets an equally saucy answer. This having been made clear, the conjurer places the cards into a large open-faced box or houlette. Having placed the houlette in a convenient position, he proceeds to open the first envelope, and reads the question aloud. Let us suppose the question is—

“When was the South Sea Company originated?”

Slowly a card is seen to rise from the houlette and in a bold scrawl of the approved spiritualistic type is seen the answer—

“May, 1710.”

The card is removed and the next question is proceeded with—

“When was the Tower Bridge opened?”

Again a card rises from the houlette, bearing the correct answer—

“June, 1894.”

Let us suppose that the third question is of the jocular order—

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“ How long can a donkey live ? ”

The answer is found to be appropriate—

“ How old are you. ”

Now for the method of working. The houlette has a compartment at the back capable of holding six or seven cards. This houlette is kept behind the scenes until actually required. After collecting the questions the conjurer changes them for three duplicate envelopes. The questions are dropped upon a tray or among some surplus apparatus and the assistant takes them away. The duplicates are placed in the clip.

Now immediately the assistant gets possession of the question envelopes he opens them and by means of a dictionary of dates and other reference books he is able to write the answers on large cards, and he then arranges them for rising, by means of the time honoured system of threading. The questions he re-seals in fresh envelopes and places them in a clip at the back of the houlette. The houlette, by the way, has a servante attached to it. He then takes the houlette on to the platform.

The performer meanwhile has been exhibiting the large blank cards and explaining things to the spectators—sometimes called “ bargaining,” and not a very difficult matter for a really entertaining magician.

The houlette being ready the performer places the blank cards therein and takes the dummy envelopes

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from the clip on the table. In the act of placing the houlette in the correct position, he drops the dummy envelopes into the servante and secures the original questions.

The assistant merely pulls the thread and the cards rise as required.

If the performer wishes the houlette to be on the platform from the commencement of the trick, it is suggested that he adopt the rising card system described by Mr. Devant in "Our Magic."

By rubbing the sealed envelopes over with a sponge soaked with methylated spirit the questions may be read through the envelope, thus saving a lot of time. On a warm evening the spirit will evaporate in a few seconds, leaving the envelope perfectly clean. On a cold night the evaporation may be hastened by dropping the envelopes on a hot plate. This is a very useful dodge, but the performer should supply the spectators with soft lead pencils, thereby ensuring a good black impression.

—o—

MORE HINTS.

How to bend glass. Boil it till thoroughly soft, then tap it gently with a rubber mallet.

To renovate wax fruit. Bake in a slow oven till quite hard, then polish with condensed milk.

A Blackboard Mystery.

Here is a practical idea whereby answers to sealed questions can be made to appear upon an unprepared and examined blackboard, but in this case it is necessary to cut a trap in the stage, about thirty-six by two inches.

The blackboard is *really* unprepared and the easel is one of the three-legged variety. A large sheet of card-board or mill-board is used to cover the blackboard as occasion requires, and beneath the stage are three very thin blackboards made by pasting slate-paper on to good flat card-board. These "flaps" are each the same size as the real blackboard.

The presentation of the trick is exactly as described in the last experiment, the question envelopes being changed for duplicates. The assistant writes the answers upon the black flaps, the conjurer meanwhile causing much amusement by carrying the easel and board down to the audience for the purpose of inspection.

The assistant, immediately he is ready, communicates with the performer by means of a pre-arranged signal, and the conjurer places the easel with its two

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front legs immediately at the rear of the trap. The card-board cover is casually allowed to rest against the legs of the easel, while the blackboard is given a final wipe with a duster.

The assistant meanwhile pushes up the first answer flap under cover of the card-board, and closes the trap. The performer, in picking up the cover, takes the answer flap with it and covers the real blackboard, taking care to get the edge of the answer flap flush with the edge of the blackboard. The first question is opened and read out aloud, and the card-board cover is removed, disclosing the answer. The cover is again placed against the legs of the easel while the blackboard (really the flap) is cleaned, thus giving the assistant an opportunity of pushing up the next answer flap. At this point the conjurer may add to the mystery by offering to place an identification mark in the corner of the board. He accordingly brackets off the corner with a chalk line, and places any initial the audience may choose, in the enclosed corner. The third answer flap has the corresponding corner cut away, and the edge of the cut portion is well chalked. Thus, when the third flap is imposed on the second flap it does not cover up the identification mark and the line of junction is masked by the chalk line. It is merely the principle of the "Eureka Slate" on a large scale.

The Spirit Photography.

The mysterious materialization of a photograph of a playing or post card has found favour with both the conjuring fraternity and the public. Therefore a simple and satisfactory method of presenting this self-contained effect, will not be amiss. The writer has always striven to eliminate complicated movements and sleights, preferring to adhere to simple and natural methods of obtaining effects; whether he has pursued this policy to a point of actual laziness or not, is an open question, but it certainly seems a waste of time and energy to introduce a lot of difficult work and detail into a trick, if such trick can be accomplished with a minimum of trouble, always provided that the effect *to the audience* is the same.

The materials required for the experiment in question are : a packet of sensitized paper, (glossy, twelve sheets to the packet—not sixteen, as they are too small) a half-plate printing frame, fifteen or twenty picture post cards all alike, and a similar number of mixed picture post cards, and a half-plate negative of the subject depicted on the duplicate cards.

The duplicate cards are cut a trifle shorter than the indifferent cards and are then prepared in the following peculiar manner. A duplicate card is laid face down on the table and a small dab of paste or

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gum is placed half an inch from the bottom edge ; a " long " or indifferent card is now laid on top of the duplicate card, and the two cards are placed aside to dry. The whole of the cards are thus stuck together in pairs and an indifferent card is placed upon the bottom of the pack. This pack may be shuffled, provided that the backs of the cards are kept towards the audience, and the pack may also be " riffled " to prove that they are all different. The duplicate cards, being a little shorter than the indifferent ones, escape the thumb or finger, and consequently the audience only see the faces of the mixed cards. The pack is placed upon a tray and a spectator is asked to cut and note the card at which he cuts ; it is bound to be a duplicate card which the spectator sees. This, then, is the ingenious method used to " force " the choice of the subject to be photographed. The reader should avoid having a *too* popular subject for his duplicates. A better impression is made by having the picture of a statesman or sailor who is only occasionally heard of ; for instance Admiral Sturdee would be preferable to Sir John Jellicoe, as being less likely to lead the spectators to suspect a " force."

A photographer will supply a half-plate negative of the required subject for a shilling or so. A few prints should be taken off on the sensitized sheets and put aside for stock.

A piece of thin flat card is cut to fit accurately in the front of the frame, on top of the glass. A piece

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of sensitized paper is gummed (paste will discolour) on to each side of the card, thus forming a flap which may easily be slipped on to the front of the frame when required. This flap should be kept in a letter-press or heavy book when not in use, to keep it always perfectly flat.

The packet of sensitized paper is arranged in this order: the packet of paper is halved and placed back to back; the flap is next laid on top, and on top of the flap one of the prints is laid face down. The whole packet is now turned over and replaced into the original envelope.

In presenting the experiment the performer comes forward and explains the nature of sensitized paper, opening the envelope, but taking care that the print is underneath. He exhibits a few sheets of the paper and then places the packet under his left arm while he demonstrates the construction of the printing frame. The envelope has been thrown on the table near the rear edge, and the packet of paper is taken from under the arm and placed down upon the envelope, but with the print at the *top* of the packet. The dodge of placing the paper under the arm allows the packet to be turned over without arousing suspicion. The empty frame is laid on top of the paper and the glass is dropped into position. The print is then drawn out and placed into the frame and the back of the frame is fastened into place. The performer, in picking up the frame, slips the flap upon the front and then turns the frame so that

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the audience can see what appears to be a piece of blank paper in it. The frame is thrown face down upon the packet of paper, and a handkerchief is borrowed. The frame is now picked up, the flap being left on the packet of paper. Just as he is about to wrap it up the performer suggests that the spectators would like to place some identification mark upon the paper in the frame. Accordingly a crayon is provided and the back of the frame is opened for that purpose. The frame is then wrapped up in the handkerchief and left in charge of a lady.

The pack of picture post cards is shuffled and riffled by the performer and a gentleman is requested to cut the pack and make a note of the card. As the conjurer advances he demonstrates the idea by cutting the cards. This lets the gentleman see what is required of him and eliminates the possibility of having the cards dropped upon the floor or otherwise exposing their preparation. After sufficient by-play the gentleman is requested to name the chosen card, and upon the lady removing the handkerchief the photograph is discovered in the frame, and is removed therefrom and presented to the lady as a souvenir.

Some performers use a paper covered glass flap, and some favour a piece of opaque white polished celluloid; but the flap described above will be found quite satisfactory, as it is impossible to detect even at close quarters, and it has the advantage of being an absolute match.

The Siege of Kiao Chow.

The performer exhibits a small German flag and hands a plated metal tube for examination. A spectator is requested to push the flag into the tube and seal the ends of same with a couple of metal rings and some tissue paper provided for that purpose.

The conjurer places a Japanese flag into an unprepared glass tube. The Japanese flag instantaneously disappears, and breaking open one end of the metal tube, the magician extracts the missing flag therefrom.

The working of this effect depends upon the use of the familiar drum-head tube, a stock article to be obtained of any magical dealer—but a rather daring, yet simple ruse is resorted to—as a matter of fact the German flag does not vanish, but remains in the tube.

The torpedo fake is prepared beforehand with a duplicate Japanese flag. The conjurer plunges the fake into one end of the tube; the fake easily pushes the German flag along the tube in order to make

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room. The Japanese flag is vanished from the glass gas chimney by means of a simple whipcord pull, and the duplicate flag is produced from the drum-head tube. Not one spectator in a thousand will suspect that the German flag remains in the tube—anyway the writer speaks from personal experience and has never been challenged on this point.



Kiao Chow.

Another Hat Loading Hint.

When working upon a proper stage, an absolutely undetectable load may be effected by getting an assistant up in the "flies" to hoist the load from the servante into the hat by means of a thread, the operation being covered by an out-spread flag held by the performer, which he has previously produced from the hat.

The Silver Skewer.

The following experiment is the outcome of suggestions made to the writer by Mr. H. C. Mole, of Aintree, who was also instrumental in hitting upon a happy title. The combination lends itself to a host of variations, and if the reader does not care to "lift" the thing complete, then he should have no difficulty in arranging something from the ideas submitted.

A number of balls of wool of various colours are dropped into a brown-paper bag such as fruiterers use, and the mouth of the bag is screwed up. A large silver-plated skewer is now thrust through the bag. A colour is selected by the audience, and upon the bag being torn away the ball of wool of the selected colour is found impaled on the skewer.

A red ball of wool is next dropped into a tumbler and covered with a red silk, and a white ball of wool is dropped into another tumbler, and covered with a white silk. The tray containing the tumblers is given into the custody of a lady. After a little by-play the silks are removed and the balls of wool are found to have changed places. All the balls of wool are now dropped into a borrowed bowler hat and another colour is selected. Upon the hat being

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inverted a monster ball of wool of the chosen colour rolls out, all the small balls having disappeared.

The balls of wool must not be wound too tightly, and the skewer must be very sharp. The first choice of colours is "forced" by means of a velvet changing bag and pieces of card bearing the names of the various colours thereon. The bag has *three* divisions instead of two as in the ordinary variety of bag. The mixed cards are dropped into the first compartment and when the bag is offered for a spectator to select a card, the middle compartment is presented, in which are cards all bearing the same colour. Later on, when the second choice of colour is made, the third division of the bag is offered, which contains cards corresponding to the colour of the monster ball of wool.

When dropping the wool into the paper bag it is an easy matter for the performer to locate and keep within touch of his fingers the ball to be skewered, as will be found upon actual experiment.

There are two methods by which the *passee passee* effect can be obtained. The first method requires no special apparatus, with the exception of an extra ball of white wool. This extra ball is palmed in the right hand. The red silk is spread over the left hand and the red ball of wool is held by the tips of the fingers of the left hand (through the handkerchief). Now the corner of the handkerchief is taken between the first and second fingers of the right hand, and

as the handkerchief is brought up to cover the red ball the substitution is made, leaving the red ball palmed and the white ball wrapped up in the red silk, which is then stuffed into a tumbler. The same process is gone through with the white ball and the white silk, which finally leaves the performer with the surplus white ball palmed ; this is dropped into the *profonde* under cover of a half right turn. This series of moves is used by some conjurers in connection with a *passee passee* billiard ball effect.

The other method is entirely mechanical, but the effect is good. In this case the white ball has a layer of red wool wound round it, and the red ball has a layer of white wool. They are connected with a windlass beneath the rear edge of the table, which under cover of the silks, winds off the surplus layers of wool. The windlass is actuated by an assistant pulling on a thread which is wound round the axle of the windlass—as the thread unwinds, so the wool is wound up. In this method the prepared balls must be laying amongst a quantity upon a plate, only a few of which are used in the skewer experiment.

The monster ball of wool consists of a hollow wooden "cannon ball" with a layer or two of wool wound round it, and an opening is left so that the small balls of wool may be dropped into the interior. The large ball is loaded in from the servante.

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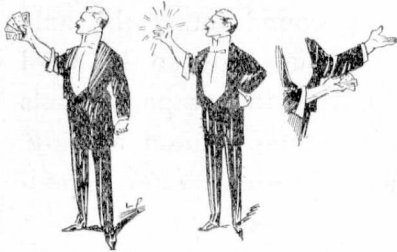


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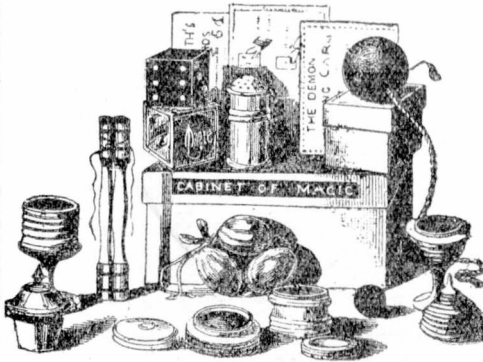
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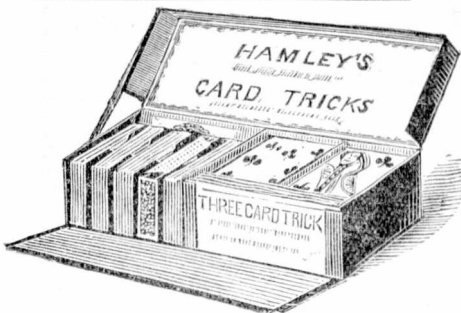
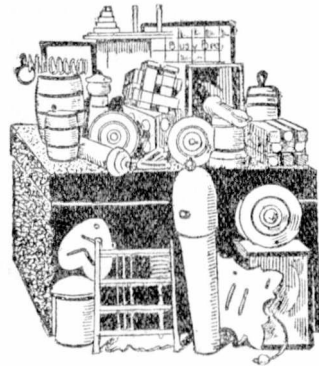
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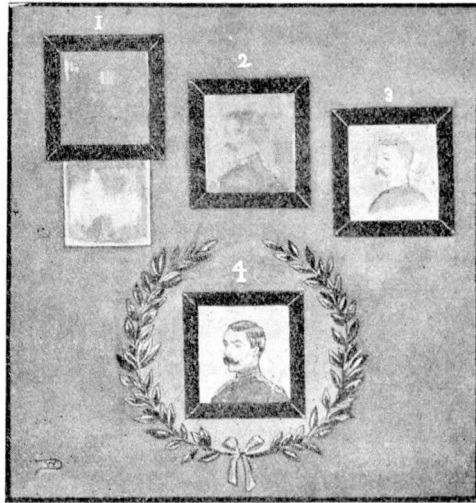
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