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ORIGINAL LESSONS IN MAGIC.

BY ELLIS STANYON.

In every issue from No. 1, Vol. I., to present date.

Hofzinzer's Phantom Eights.—There is scarcely any sleight of hand trick with cards more brilliant, or likely to create a more lasting impression than the one I am about to describe. I have named the trick after its inventor, who was in the habit of working it with the Eight of Hearts, although, for that matter, it might just as well have been shown with any other card.

I do not, of course, claim to have invented anything in connection with the trick, but the following *arrangement of sleights* is mainly my own, made for the purpose of eliminating the *clumsy* and impracticable methods given in other explanations. The effect is as follows:—

A card is chosen, noted and returned to the pack, in which it is shuffled by the performer, who then undertakes, given three chances, to pick it out from the rest of the cards. He first takes the top card, which proves to be wrong, and is forthwith thrown face downwards on the table; the second chance is taken on the bottom card, which also is wrong, and is placed on the table by the side of the first; the third and last chance is taken from the middle of the pack, but again the card is the wrong one and is placed on table by the side of the other two. Here the performer, apologising for having failed, says he must try and bring the trick to some sort of conclusion. He therefore requests a lady to choose one of the three cards laying on the table. Taking up the card indicated he gives it a flip with the fingers of the opposite hand, when it turns out to be none other than the chosen card; it is then re-placed face downwards on the table. A second lady is now requested to say which of the other two cards she would have chosen; the one indicated is turned up, and, as before, is found to represent the one originally chosen. The performer then takes up the remaining card, and, in like

manner, causes it to change into one of the same suit and value as the chosen card. Still holding this last card face downwards he pretends to overhear a remark to the effect that all the cards are alike—in all probability the remark will be made—whereupon he calls the attention to the bottom card of the pack, which, being of the same suit and denomination as the chosen card, confirms the suspicion; but this is only a part of the deception, for glancing back again at the card in the right hand, it is seen to be an indifferent one. Placing the indifferent card on the top of the pack he remarks, "The chosen card, now at the bottom, will come to the top." He thereupon "ruffles" the pack, then raises the top card, showing it to be that originally chosen. The two cards on the table are turned up and found to be indifferent ones; these are returned to the pack, which is then handed for inspection.

Explanation.—The trick is performed with an ordinary pack of cards, to which is added a couple of duplicates, say of the Eight of Hearts; the three Eights are, at the outset, on the top of the pack.

Advancing, the performer makes the "pass" (the pass palm, force, change, false shuffle, etc., fully explained in my "Conjuring with Cards"), bringing the three eights to the centre and forcing one of them on an unsuspecting member of the audience—it should be an easy matter to "force" one card from a "bank" of three all alike. While the drawn card is being noted the performer runs two indifferent cards on to the top of the two eights, marking the division with the little finger as usual, then receives the drawn card on the top of the two indifferent ones; this done he makes the "pass," *between the two indifferent cards*, which has the effect of placing one Eight second from the Bottom and two Eights on the Top of the pack, covered by an indifferent card. This method of "placing" the cards is my own improvement on the clumsy method hitherto adopted.

The ordinary over-hand shuffle is now made, which, if done twice, may readily leave the several cards, both at top and bottom of pack, in their original positions.

The performer now, taking his first chance, removes and shows the top card, which is, of course, wrong, but before

placing it on the table he, under cover of talking and moving about, changes it (Top Change) for the top card, one of the Eights, then remarks, "To avoid picking this card out again by accident, I will place it on the table."

He now makes his second choice and, under cover of turning over the pack to show the bottom card, which is of course wrong, *slides* the indifferent one from the top to the middle, to get it out of the way. Still holding the pack face upwards, he pushes the two top cards (kept together as one) about half way off the pack to the right. The right hand now grips the two cards at the side, thumb on the face of the indifferent one, and fingers on the back of the Eight, when the pack is turned over sharply towards the body; under cover of this movement the thumb of the left hand draws the indifferent card back on to the pack, while the right hand withdraws the Eight and quietly lays it on the table—this is a pretty sleight and easy of execution; the same effect may be accomplished by what is known as the "slip" or "slide," "Conjuring with Cards," p. 14.

The third Eight is still on the top of the pack, and is now "passed" to the centre, from which position it will be remembered the third choice is to be made. The Eight is now drawn out behind an indifferent card, both being carefully held together to pass as one—pack placed face downwards on table to right. On being told his third choice is wrong the performer, still talking and holding the card face downwards between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, brings the palm of the right hand carelessly over same—the left hand then draws out the Eight while the indifferent card is left palmed in the right to be secretly replaced on the pack when picking up the latter, the left hand at the same time placing the Eight (supposed indifferent card) by the side of the other two on the table.

When making the third choice, apart from the desirability of avoiding repetition, any card might have been drawn from the centre of the pack and changed for the Eight at the top by means of the Top or Bottom Change.

First lady now chooses one of the three cards on table, which must of course, as all three are Eights, represent the one originally chosen—top change and replace the card on the table faced downwards.

Second lady is invited to choose between the other two cards, and while she is making up her mind the performer "thumbs" off the top card (duplicate Eight) into *profonde* or *servante*—or he may "palm" off the card if desired. The card now chosen is raised and likewise shown to be the Eight of Hearts; it is then changed (Bottom Change) for an indifferent card, which is re-placed on the table.

The third card is now taken up and shown to be the Eight of Hearts, after which it is changed (Top Change) for an indifferent card—there is now an Eight at top and bottom of pack.

This is the point where the suspicion of the audience is aroused, and, while still holding the indifferent card (the supposed Eight) in the right hand, the performer calls attention to the bottom card of the pack, which being seen to be an Eight of Hearts only confirms the suspicion that all the cards are alike. Surprise, not unmixed with consternation, is then shown when, a moment later, the card in the right hand is turned up and seen to be an indifferent one. Under cover of this astonishment, the indifferent card in the right hand is once more changed. Bottom changed, *i.e.*, passed on to the bottom of the pack covering the Eight known to be there, and leaving the Eight from the Top in the hand. The Eight in the hand (supposed indifferent card) is now

openly replaced on the top of the pack, while the Eight at the bottom is commanded to pass on to the top. Bottom of pack shown and eight also removed from top and shown, then when replacing it and apparently leaving it on the top of the pack, it is palmed away, when the balance of the cards, including the two on the table, may be inspected and found to be *all different*.

N.B.—Before allowing the pack to be inspected, the one Eight, left second from the bottom, should be passed to the top of the pack.

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CARDS FLOATING ON HAND.

BY HARRY G. CLEVELAND, Lakewood, Ohio, U.S.A.

This is almost the same as one of the orthodox methods, but the addition of the little wrinkle mentioned below improves the trick materially.

Run a needle through the hard flesh where the middle finger of the right hand joins the hand. Then, on the small piece of skin which passes over and holds the needle, stick a small pellet of magician's wax. Now you are ready to begin the trick.

Take the pack in the left hand and place it in right hand, faces up, and press down on it so as to stick the bottom card to the wax. Now take cards from the top of the pack and place around under the pack (under the needle). Slide off the remainder of the deck and turn the hand over, when the cards will appear to float on the hand.

The improvement lies in the fact that the front card is not always necessarily perpendicular, as was formerly the case with the two front cards, and also the needle is hidden from view, while after performing the trick if a slight pressure is placed at the back of the cards the needle will break away from the skin and the cards will fall, leaving absolutely no clue to the mystery, whereas with the various prepared cards which are used to bring about this effect there is always something to get rid of.

This trick can also be worked by the pin and ring method, a la floating table, by preparing a card with a pin in the middle and palming this on to the deck, or with a tiny flap on the first card to be raised and gripped between the fingers (or with a fine flesh-coloured thread encircling the hands.—Ed.), but I consider the above method the best of the several I have seen.

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This issue of MAGIC, forms the third number of volume twelve, i.e., the 135th issue published monthly without cessation from October 1900, down to the present date. Thus, it will be seen at a glance that this is the oldest and from which it may be deduced, the most successful of the present day magical journals no other can show such a record.

But all this could not have been accomplished by myself unaided; I have my readers to thank for their valuable support, many of whom have stood by me, from the date of issue of the first copy to the present time, in my efforts to teach the latest and best conjuring tricks in an original manner. Therefore, in presenting No. 3 of Volume XII., I offer to all those who have rendered me this valuable assistance, my sincere thanks, at the same time expressing the hope that such support may be continued, as I feel sure it will, to enable me to go on compiling the mass of valuable information I have on hand as demonstrated by what I have already published in connection with my Dictionary of Magical Effects, with explanations in the vernacular, the first portion of which appeared in MAGIC, for June last and which has been and will be continued month by month in the future—given the necessary health, long life and that appreciation so necessary for a work of this kind.

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF CONJURERS.

The past year, October, 1910—September, 1911, has proven the most successful year since the inauguration of the society in 1905—making six years. The seventh year commenced on the first of October with every promise of a great increase in membership—a perusal of the following will show why.

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A DICTIONARY OF MAGICAL EFFECTS.

WITH EXPLANATIONS IN THE VERNACULAR.

BY ELLIS STANYON.

SECTION X.

SPECIAL BALLS, TRICKS WITH.

This section will deal briefly with various balls in imitation of the ordinary solid ball for which they are to be substituted in the course of the trick for the purpose of securing a special effect. The method of changing a solid for a special ball is practically the same as that already explained in Section VI., *Colour Changing Effects*, q.v.; the same applies to the combination of Sleight of Hand movements necessary to obtain the special effect.

1.—**Red Ball to Red Fluid.**—Water coloured with cochineal from I.R. ball with oval opening $\frac{1}{4}$ in. long. Ball concealed in pocket at opening in vest and provided with catgut loop (projecting) to engage in thumb.

2.—**Ball to Water.**—Shape and dye a piece of sponge in imitation of a billiard ball, then fill it with water. Substitute the sponge at the moment desired, and squeeze out the water.

3.—**Ball and Tomato.**—Select a tomato, size and colour of the ball, which substitute for the latter, then place it in the mouth and actually swallow it, producing the ball from any desired place.

4.—**Ball to Confetti.**—Egg shell, enamelled colour of ball in use, is filled with confetti. Change ball for egg, large end of which present to audience when it will appear to be the ball. Break shell, and shake the pieces out with confetti.

Variation.—Confetti may be done up in a piece of paper shaped as much like ball as possible, and, of course, of the same colour. Toss confetti in the air and shake out amongst it, as it falls, a large silk Union Jack.

5.—**Balloon Balls.**—To be filled with confetti or a silk handkerchief. Change ball for balloon of same size and colour, break and contents will burst out. Novelty for combination.

6.—**Ball to Fire.**—Change ball for a penny celluloid toy ball of same size and colour. Wrap in paper which light—slight burst and flame.

7.—**Handkerchief Changes to Ball.**—Hollow imitation, in wood, ivory or metal, of the balls in general use, having a $\frac{1}{4}$ in. opening in the surface, and through which a silk handkerchief is pushed in the act of rubbing the latter between the hands. When the handkerchief is well inside the ball the latter is exhibited; it is then apparently placed in the left hand (palmed in right) from which it is vanished in the orthodox manner. The right hand then deliberately puts it in the left breast pocket, leaving it there and at the same time removing a pupicate solid ball, presumably the one just vanished. The usual manipulations may then proceed. See also "Conjuring for Amateurs," p. 55. *An idea*—Cover the hole with a half shell.

A Clever Move.—The centre of the handkerchief is first pushed into the ball lying on the left hand. The palm of the right hand, pressing on the handkerchief, then describes a series of circles which will be found to have the effect of passing it into the ball. This move is also effective where a celluloid egg is used in place of the ball.

8.—**Folding Handkerchief Ball.**—Consists of two brass hemispherical shells nesting one within the other, and pivotted together so that the inner one may be turned up to form a ball—closed with a suitable catch. More suitable for changing ball to handkerchief than vice versa. Probably evolved from the folding cannon ball.

9.—**Ball Changing to Flag.**—Two metal half shells to shut together with a snap to form a ball. Shells are sewn to opposite corners of a silk handkerchief or flag which is then shut up between them. Sleights may be executed with the ball which is finally broken open displaying the flag stretched between the hands.

10.—**Ball and Handkerchief Change Hands.**—A hollow brass ball having a $\frac{1}{4}$ in. opening covered with a half shell provided with a stout wire loop in which is pinched a handkerchief. See "A" and "B" in Fig. 1. The shell is then placed on the ball (see "C"

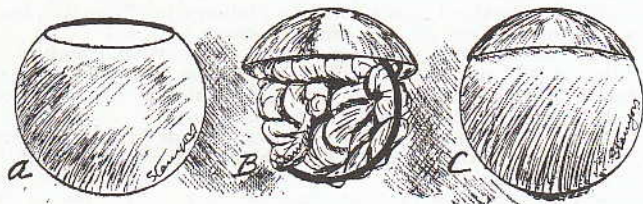


FIG 1.

in the Fig.), which is then taken in the left hand while a duplicate handkerchief is shown in the right—the objects change places.

Explanation.—First, the ball proper is secretly let fall, into the folds of the handkerchief, the shell (with silk in loop), properly held, making it appear to be still in the left hand. The right hand has then only to work the handkerchief into the ball while the left works the duplicate out of the loop and over the shell, and the trick is done. Shell may be readily back-palmed—the flesh coloured loop passed over second finger.

An explanation at greater length will be found in "MAGIC" for March, 1910; and with two Hollow Balls in "MAGIC" for July, 1906. The price of the trick ball, which may be obtained from this office, is 5s. 6d.

11.—**Lighting Change of Handkerchief to Ball.**—A hollow celluloid ball containing a spring roller which may be wound up as required. Corner of handkerchief is pushed into the top of closed hand, i.e., into the ball, where it is caught on pin in centre of roller which is then released by pressure on a stud on the outside; silk disappears like a flash and ball is shown lying on palm of hand.

If the silk be of same colour as ball the hole in latter will be less likely to be disclosed; it may even be tossed in the air. This applies to other handkerchief balls. The price of the spring ball is 12s. 6d. A celluloid egg with the same spring roller may also be obtained from this office at same price.

12.—**Thimble Balls.**—A thin spun brass thimble painted flesh colour and screwed to the surface of a ball will enable the performer to balance the latter on the tip of a finger without visible means of support. The thimble may, if desired, be "let in" the surface of the ball. Useful in connection with many effects.

Example.—Ball is palmed in left hand. Change over palm (Section I., No. 6) to show hands empty and produce from air on tip of finger of right hand. Left hand has meanwhile secured another "thimble" ball from vest or elsewhere. Right hand now seems to place ball in left hand, really palming it and showing one already there; this is placed aside and another one produced from the air by the right hand. Continued if desired and governed only by the supply of balls.

An Addition.—Three flesh-coloured thimbles, properly arranged in line between four balls, will enable the performer to produce four at once between the finger tips of either or both hands.

13.—**Glass Handkerchief Ball.**—Known as the Polychromatic Ball. Identical with No. 7 of this Section, but composed entirely of glass with the necessary hole in its surface. Changes a handkerchief of any colour, selected from a number by any person, into a ball of the same colour. The colour of the silk, of course, takes effect through the glass. Price of the glass ball is post free 1s 9d.

The trick is prolonged by restoring the ball to its original shape, i.e., hiding it in the hand and pulling out the handkerchief; the effect may then be repeated with a different colour.

14.—**Bouquet Ball.**—Two metal half shells to shut together with a snap to form a ball and containing two bouquets made of small sized spring flowers; a bouquet is attached to each of the two shells which are thus hidden when the flowers expand.

A similar effect is obtained with an egg, using the familiar tin egg fashioned as described and usually sold full of sweets.

15.—**Hemispherical Handkerchief Ball.**—A half shell in brass, representing exactly half of a ball, is closed with a flat metal plate having a smaller opening in the centre and through which a silk handkerchief may be inserted or withdrawn. The plate also carries two small sharp hooks by means of which it may be attached to any part of the clothing.

A ball may thus be changed to a handkerchief, and the ball vanished on to the back of the sleeve in the act of pulling up the latter; or the "fake" may be employed directly as a handkerchief producer or vanisher. May be back-palmed as explained in the opening to Section IX.

16.—**Diminishing Balls.**—The apparent diminution of an ordinary sized billiard ball, first to one half, then to one quarter its original size.

All that is necessary is to be provided with the different sized balls and to be proficient in their manipulation which is practically the same as already described in Section VI. "Colour Changing Effects," q.v., just as easy to change the size as the colour.

The smallest ball, however, is usually hidden (pinched) into a cavity cut into the next larger sized ball. Thus the last change appears truly magical and negatives the idea of a ball being changed for another of a different size. A full explanation of the trick will be found in my "Conjuring for Amateurs," p. 54.

N.B.—A very interesting and lengthy explanation of the multiplying, colour changing, and diminishing billiard balls, including "patter," will be found in Hoffmann's "More Magic," pp. 261-279. This work may be obtained from the office of "MAGIC," post free for 4s. 11d.]

17.—Sleights with Small Balls.—Using the smallest ball of the diminishing set, and having a duplicate of the same in the right hand waistcoat pocket.

(I).—Proceed to rub ball into left elbow, drop it, *apparently by accident*, and when stooping to pick it up, turn back towards audience and quickly put it in the mouth. Face about and continue the rubbing at elbow, pretending to pass ball up from thence into left hand, which next slaps the back of the head and ball falls out of mouth into right hand. This is very effective.

(II).—Make one or two sleights with the ball (Section IV.) then actually put it in the mouth—pretend to swallow it and produce duplicate from vest pocket. Make one or two more sleights, then seem to place the ball in left hand (palming it in right) which slaps back of head and ball is shown in mouth. Right hands *seems* to remove it, but pushes it back and shows palmed ball; repeat the last sleight, then allow ball to fall out of mouth into right hand, which had meanwhile dropped duplicate into *profonde*.

This latter sleight is very effective when done with two small eggs—use large ones if they can be conveniently taken into the mouth.

SECTION XI.

BALL TRICKS, SIMPLE—THREAD MAGIC, &c.

Where a thread is used it will be understood that it is intended to be of silk and as fine as possible, consistent with strength, that it may be the less discernable; if used against a moderately dark background it is absolutely invisible, while a light ground, such as the face or shirt front will reveal its presence. The length of the thread when given, will be approximate only, it being always best to find the exact length by actual experiment.

1.—Floating Ball Between Hands.—Hands held about a yard apart and just above the head, ball floats across the intervening space from one hand to the other and back again any number of times.

The secret is a loop of black thread passed over forefingers and stretched between the hands so that the ball will ride upon and not fall through it; for this reason a celluloid ball is used. The trick is also effective with a ping-pong ball, or a rubber one coloured to match the billiard balls ordinarily employed.

A loop running down the leg of the trousers and weighted to bring the bight normally on the surface of the waistcoat through which it is passed, may also be used. This is arranged on the fingers as explained and provides an additional effect in that the distance separating the hands may be varied at any moment, the weight always keeping the loop taut.

The weighted loop is also employed for suspending the wand from the hand in a variety of positions; when done with, it disappears.

2.—Floating Ball on Wand.—Runs from one end of the wand to the other and back again any number of times.

A black nail projects about $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. from the side of wand close to one end and at right angles to same. A thread is tied to the nail and stretched along the wand to the hand holding the opposite end. Result, the thread lying along the wand, about half an inch from and parallel to same, supports the ball.

Variations.—To both ends of a thread, a little shorter than the wand, are tied catgut loops, to be passed over the second fingers of the hands holding the wand by the ends. This again brings the thread in position to support the ball as described. In this case, both the wand and ball may be inspected.

The trick is also done with a *grooved wand*, using an unprepared ball or egg. One of the hollow tin eggs, painted white and loaded with a lin. leaden ball will cut some very amusing antics on the grooved wand.

3.—From one Hand to the Other.—Ball taken in right hand arms outstretched on either side, passes into left hand. Show both hands empty then seem to pick up ball from table in right hand, really trapping it or rolling it on to *servante* under cover of the hand; while doing this the left hand secures duplicate ball from the vest and the trick is done.

Variation.—Actually take ball in the right hand, extending the arms as described. Now lay the ball down on the table, then turn round and pick it up in the opposite hand. Be careful how you try this on a Scotchman.

4.—Indian Ball Trick.—The old trick done with a billiard ball—why not? A silken cord, about two feet in length is threaded through a hole in the ball. Cord is then held perpendicularly between the hands and the ball started from the top falls rapidly to the bottom, or will travel slowly and stop at any point desired.

Hole is slightly curved, when the tightening of the cord between the hands will be found to produce the effect described.

One end of the cord may be placed under the foot, leaving one hand free to direct the ball by graceful movements of the wand.

Thread across the stage, manipulated by assistants at the wings, will cause the ball to rise.

5.—Grandmother's Chapelet.—The old trick of Three Beads on double cord, but done with billiard balls. Both cords are secretly doubled in half and the bight of one placed through that of the other and doubled over to the extent of about $\frac{1}{4}$ -in.; centre ball hides this arrangement and the cords appear to run straight through all three. The ends of the double cords are now held by the spectators; one cord only is then taken from each and a knot tied over the balls, after which the ends are handed back to the holders. Handkerchief thrown over balls, cords slackened to effect the release then pulled; balls are off the cords which are now straight and free from knots.

N.B.—Both numbers, 4 and 5, will be found very effective tricks when introduced in connection with a billiard ball act. See also under "Balls, Various Tricks With," Section to follow.

6.—Ball Levitation.—Rises perpendicularly from left to right hand held about 18 in. above it.

One end of a suitable black thread is first passed through a hole in ball to the surface of which it is then fixed about $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. away from the hole. The free end of the thread is then attached to a finger ring to be slipped on the left hand when about to present the trick. Thumb of right hand is then passed through the loop, found on the surface of the ball, and all is ready. The wand may be used in place of the thumb.

Ball may be caused to float horizontally from one hand to the other. Slip loop off thumb and toss ball in air, catching it in left hand. Ordinary ball may be examined and then changed for the prepared one. May be done with a card, celluloid egg, coin, etc. In the case of the card and coin, a thread guide, a minute piece of tubing, must be fitted on to one side, which will, of course be kept to the rear.

7.—Magnetised Ball.—Suspended to finger tip, any part of hand, or wand, along which it will travel. One end of thread to which is attached a minute wooden cup filled with wax, is attached to ball, the opposite end being pinned to coat.

8.—Balls Change in Papers.—Red and black balls, wrapped in separate pieces of paper, change places.

One paper, in which is put say, the black ball, is double and contains a piece of red surface paper. Having wrapped up the balls, the performer, pretending to have lost track of their respective positions, tears one packet, exposing the red paper, which is, of course, taken to be the ball of that colour. The rest is obvious.

A full explanation of the above method of performing the trick will be found in "MAGIC" for December, 1909, along with the sleight of hand method of presenting the trick, using a couple of borrowed handkerchiefs instead of the prepared paper.

Another Method.—Each piece of paper has a round hole cut in the centre, through which the balls may be seen; the wand is passed through these holes to prove no deception.

In this case the papers are *both* double, containing respectively, red and black surface papers in the form of a slide, which is pulled over the hole aforementioned by a white silk thread suitably arranged. The slide is, of course, moved while the paper is flat, i.e., as the hands come together preparatory to wrapping up the ball. Once moved, the slide must be kept from view until such time as the packets become "mixed" and it becomes necessary to locate the balls; then arises the deception and the trick is practically finished.

Having located the balls by means of the deceptive slide, the packages may be given to be held, one on either side of the stage, by two gentlemen who will be exhorted to open same *quick* (this for obvious reasons) immediately the performer counts "Three."

Visible Method.—Balls are wrapped in unprepared pieces of paper and returned to the gentlemen to each of whom the performer whispers, "Change places yourselves when I count three." The visible change will then be observed. Don't do this in Scotland.

9.—Balance One Ball on Another.—One balanced on another held at finger tips. Concavity in the lower ball; or may be done with unprepared balls (or eggs) by inserting between them a small pellet of wax.

10.—Balance Balls on End of Wand.—End of wand concave or having a pin (to pass into hole in ball) either permanently fixed

or attached to a "thimble" piece matching tip of wand and palmed on to same.

Variation.—One ball balanced on another and both on end of wand. End of wand concave and a small portion of wax between the balls; or wand fitted with a piston rod to be passed up through a hole in the first ball (or wooden egg) and into the second. Piston secretly moved by thumb of hand holding the wand. Also done on a billiard cue made in three portions for convenience.

11.—Balance Ball on Card on Wand.—Spike on corner of card inserted in hole on side of wand near end; ball set on spike on opposite corner (diagonally) of card. Ball may be "balanced" on wand without the card intervening—set on short spike projecting at right angles from the side of the wand; spikes should, of course, be black. A wooden egg may be used in place of the ball.

12.—Balance Ball on Edge of Fan.—Ball or wooden egg set on point of wire projecting just sufficient above the top edge of open fan; opposite end of wire pivotted with ribs of fan. Thumb of hand holding fan to engage in ring on wire, so that the latter, carrying ball, may be moved from one end of the open fan to the other.

(To be continued).

Any piece of apparatus, balls, or other accessories, mentioned in connection with any effect above described, may be obtained from the Office of "MAGIC." A low price will be quoted on receipt of an addressed envelope bearing a penny stamp.

QUERIES.

All queries inserted under this head are complimentary to readers of Magic, and all readers are invited to offer solutions to the queries of their fellow magicians, and thus help one another. Solutions to be short, concise and to the point to occupy as little space as possible.

172.—Psycho's Cards.—Six cards, on each of which is printed the names of several objects, are handed to a spectator with a request to mentally select a name on any one card and remember it; then to touch the back of the performer's head with the card in question. This done, the performer instantly announces the chosen name. The cards are not prepared, no confederates are employed, and no questions are asked—then how is it done?—L. S.

173.—Leipzig's Spirit Slates.—Pair of slates, shown to be of the most ordinary description, are tied together with a piece of chalk between them and given into the keeping of a spectator. After the lapse of a few seconds the person separates the slates and finds writing on them. Said to be new and impossible of detection. No exchange of slates; no flap, mechanism, magnetism, confederate, fluid, or preparations of any kind used. Can any reader offer a solution to this latest miracle?—L. S.

174.—Cards From Pocket.—Ordinary pack shuffled and cut into two portions by any person, the performer meanwhile showing his pockets empty; he then takes the two halves of the pack and places them, each in a separate pocket. He may now, without hesitation, produce from his pocket any card called for by a spectator; any number of cards may be so produced. An entirely new method greatly simplified.—B. M.

175.—The Devil's Camp.—Heralded by a drummer, several soldiers march about stage and finally into a tent placed upon a raised platform. The drum is heard in the tent up to the very moment the latter collapses, when the sound is observed to come from the rear of the building, from which point the soldiers (the same men that entered the tent) now march up on to stage and off at wings. How is it done?—L. S.

176.—Self-Palming Coin.—Held between the extreme tips of the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, the other three fingers being tightly closed into the hands so that it is quite impossible to "palm" anything. Held thus the coin is now transferred to the left hand, from which it disappears and the hand is freely shown on all sides. Hands do not approach body and the trick is done without the aid of threads, wires, string, hooks, wax or "pull" of any kind, yet is quite easy to perform. Required the secret.—L. S.

REPLIES TO QUERIES.

Any and all readers, especially those whose queries appear, or have appeared above, are invited to reply, using as few words as possible, to any queries of their fellow magicians. Replies to bear the same number as the query. All replies, as in the case of the queries, are to be considered complimentary.

133.—Sealed Letter Test.—If it is intended to give, say, three or more tests, then so many sets of envelopes and papers will be required, arranged as follows:—Lay a plain unprepared envelope face upwards on the table; on this a similar envelope containing a piece of carbon paper with plain paper under it to receive the impression of writing that will be done on its face; on this a plain

square of paper that will go in the envelope without folding—this arrangement represents one set and the several sets are to be stacked one on top of the other.

The performer, holding the packet of sets in the left hand, goes to the first person and hands him the plain piece of paper from the top of the packet, also a fairly hard pencil, requesting him to write a question—to facilitate this, he hands him the prepared envelope upon which to write. The writing done, the person is requested to fold the paper into four and place it in his pocket. The performer casually taking the envelope and with which he (supposing the packets of sets he is holding be a pack of cards) forthwith makes what is known as the *Bottom "Change,"* which leaves the top plain envelope in his hand—he remarks, "or better still, you might first seal your writing in the envelope."

The same procedure is enacted in connection with the remaining tests, leaving the performer in possession of a copy of everything written; he may then go behind a screen and read out each question in turn, giving a suitable reply to each.

A subtle method of changing the envelope is as follows:—Deliberately place the prepared envelope on the bottom of the pile of sets which then place under the arm under the pretence of requiring both hands to instruct the person how to fold the paper. Having done this, take the envelopes from under the arm and deliberately remove the top one in a manner suggesting it can be none other than the one previously in possession of the person.

For how to make the "Bottom Change" see my "Conjuring with Cards," page 8.

135.—Card in Bottle in Boxes.—The chosen card is "forced" and must be "palmed" out of the pack to prevent the possibility of its being discovered therein at the close of the trick; or it may be torn up and placed in a pistol to be fired at the nest of boxes; or placed in the box along with the empty bottle.

An empty bottle, duly sealed, is now put into the smallest box, which may be locked or tied with tape. When this box is put into the next largest, it falls through same into a black-art well in table top, where it may be hidden by a loose slab, upper side of which is covered like the table, which falls from the lid of this box. This bottomless box is then put into the largest of the three, also bottomless and placed over a piston trap, where the two are at once loaded with a duplicate of the smallest box, in which is a duplicate bottle containing a duplicate of the chosen card. The precise method of working, especially the arrangement and manipulation of the boxes, may be varied to a considerable extent.—D. H.

136.—Educated Gold Fish.—The letters dropped into the round glass aquarium are painted on weighted wood blocks to sink and not rise again. The letters that do rise are imitation ones cast in paraffin wax, and having sufficient small shot pressed into them to cause them to rise slowly when released.

The twenty-six wax letters, in two rows of thirteen, are arranged, each in a separate "pocket" of a tin receptacle, occupying the rear half of the bottom of the aquarium. This is hidden by a mirror division of polished metal, reaching up to a level with the ring of stand supporting the aquarium and reflecting the front half, thus forming a perfect illusion. The letter required will only rise on the pull of a thread, which throws back a small lead weight pivotted to the side of the "pocket." The threads are lead through the bottom plate of the "fake," up behind same, over the top rear edge of aquarium and down to the bottom stay of stand (on a level with the floor of the stage) where each is attached to a small ring—above each ring is the indicating letter. An attendant below stage, hearing the word, pulls (through a narrow slit cut in the stage for the purpose) the rings to release the required letters.

N.B.—A detailed explanation of this illusion will be found in "Our Magic," by Maskelyne and Devant, just published. See List on page 23.

137.—Card Mentally Chosen Disappears.—One of the "four" cards shown fanned out is printed to represent two cards fanned, e.g., as in DeLand's Phantom and Knock-out Card Tricks. In reality, therefore, three cards only are shown and each of these is backed with a different, but, in point of suit and denomination, similar card. The choice made, the supposed four cards are closed up, secretly reversed and then spread out on table, when, of course, the chosen one will appear to be missing.

The trick may be constructed from the "Knock-Out" set.—D. H.

139.—New Handkerchief Production.—Tied on the inside of left wrist with flesh coloured silk thread. Standing right side on the right hand grasps wrist in the most natural manner, hiding handkerchief, and the left hand is turned about that it may be seen back and front. Now turn left side on and repeat the movement on right hand. Turn again and repeat the movement on left hand, this time securing the handkerchief in the right hand—bring both hands together and reveal it.

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