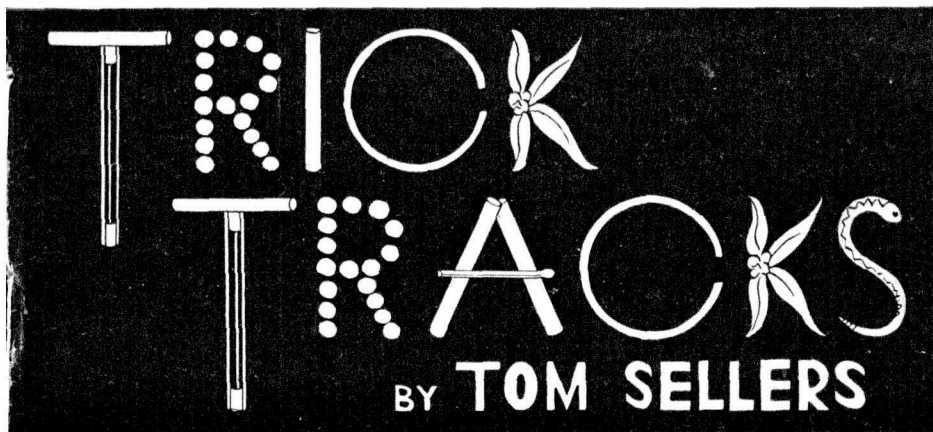


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TRICK TRACKS

BY

TOM SELLERS

Author of "Tricks that Work,"
"Seller's Secrets," etc.

THE FIFTEENTH BOOKLET OF THE SERIES.



LONDON

GEORGE JOHNSON, "The Magic Wand" Office,
24 Buckingham Street, Strand, W.C.2.

1942

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FOREWORD.

There are tricks that put us on the track of different (and sometimes better) problems. For example: the principle of the production box described in this booklet may be adapted for other purposes.

Once again, dear readers, I leave it to you.

TOM SELLERS.

Edinburgh 1942.

A PRODUCTION BOX.

Effect. A very large production is made from a small box seven inches square.

Requirements. A box seven inches square, made with a bottom that will spring up against one of the sides on releasing a catch. See Fig. 1. A table with a box top two inches deep, the top being removable in order to get access to the interior. There is a hole cut in the centre, six inches square. The whole of the table top and sides are covered with black velvet, and there is a fringe. Fig. 2. A piece of tin covered with velvet is slipped under the velvet of the table top to cover the hole. Fig. 3. The table top is eighteen inches square, and the piece of tin six and a half inches square. Next make two oblong boxes seventeen and a half inches long by five and a half inches wide and one and three-quarter inches deep; these boxes to have a half-inch hole bored at the centre of each. The next requirement is four square boxes, five and a half inches square by one and a half inches deep. These square boxes also have a half-inch hole at each end.

Preparation. Fit all the boxes inside your table top as shown in Fig. 4. Now load up boxes (and spaces) with the items you intend to produce. Replace the top of table and you are ready.

Method. Show the production box empty and put it down over the trap; press the catch and the bottom flies up. Push the piece of tin aside and make your first production from No. 2, Fig. 4. Figures 5 to 9 show how the different loads are brought under the trap, shifting the various boxes by pulling with the finger inserted in the holes of the boxes. After the last load, the piece of tin is pulled over the trap and the bottom of the box pressed back to its normal position.

COIN ON KNIFE OR SWORD.

This is a variation of the original method used for this well-known effect.

Requirements. Three discs of clear celluloid. Two of the discs are thin, and one is thick, the diameter of the two thin discs being

the same as that of a half-crown, the thick disc is a little less. The three are cemented together, the thick disc being between the two thin ones. See Fig. 10.

Preparation. A knife and an inverted wine glass is on your table. Put the celluloid disc on top of the inverted glass; it will be almost invisible at a short distance. Place three small pellets of wax on the upper side of disc.

Method. Borrow a half-crown, keep it in full view while you walk to your table and deposit the coin on top of the disc. Pick up the knife to show, if desired pass for inspection. When the knife is handed back, pick up the coin and disc together, pressing them into contact so that they will adhere to one another. Set the disc on the blade and let it run back and forth a few times. Retain the disc after removing the coin to return it to the lender.

FROM MATCH TO MATCH.

Effect. The performer places a match between third and fourth fingers, and another between first and second fingers. The match between the third and fourth fingers is struck on box, the flame travels up and lights the match between the first and second fingers.

Requirements. Two matches and a piece of thread about three inches long. Tie each end of the thread to the head of each match and replace in box.

Method. Hold the box in the right hand, open with left hand, and remove the two prepared matches; close the right fist, have the thumb upwards. Place one match between the third and fourth fingers, and one between the first and second fingers. Strike the lower match on the box, the flame will travel up the thread and light the second match with a pretty effect.

It found necessary the thread may be lightly waxed.

"GIVE ME A LIGHT, PLEASE."

Effect. The performer places a cigarette between his lips, then strikes a match to light the cigarette. As soon as the match is struck, the flame leaves the match, floats upwards and lights the cigarette.

Requirements. A packet of cigarettes, a box of matches, six inches of thread.

Preparation. Run thread into the end of cigarette and attach the other end of the thread to the head of the match. See Fig. 11. Put the cigarette back into the packet and the match back into box. Put both into the jacket pocket.

Method. Remove box and packet together ; take out the cigarette, then the match, and return the packet to the pocket. Place the cigarette between the lips and strike the match. The flame will run up the thread and light the cigarette. At this point, flick out the match with the well-known finger dodge.

THE HAUNTED CHAIR.

Effect. The performer makes passes in the direction of a chair. As he does so the chair tips backwards and forwards as long as desired.

Requirements. A chair and a length of thread.

Preparation. Have the chair about the centre of the platform. Tie the thread to the back of the chair as shown in Fig. 12. Next fix the free end of the thread to the wing, but see that it is fixed higher than the chair back.

Method. Show chair all sides. Turn it upside down to exhibit the bottom ; at this point the chair back should be touching the floor. Here you step over the thread, getting a foot on each side of it. Now stand the chair upright, the thread being between the legs. See Fig. 12. To make the chair tilt to and fro, simply take a step back or forwards as you make passes. Break the thread at the conclusion.

A MAGNETIC PENCIL.

Effect. An examined pencil is made to adhere to the fingertips.

Requirements. A piece of wire, bent to the shape shown in Fig. 13. The loops marked "x" "x" are made so that they can be clipped in the crutch of the thumb, the reason for having two loops is that you can work the change-over palm with the fake. The whole affair is painted flesh colour.

Method. Pass the pencil for inspection, meanwhile getting the fake into the right hand, clipping in the crutch of the thumb. Show the left hand back and front, receive the pencil in the right hand and as you proceed to stroke the back of the left hand with the pencil, transfer the gadget from the right to the left hand, using the change-over move. The gadget should now be in the position shown in Fig. 14, and the pencil is placed between the arm of the gadget and the fingers as shown, the back of the hand being towards the spectators. When removing the pencil, the change-over is again made, bringing the gadget into the right hand again. The gadget is disposed of when finally tossing the pencil out for inspection.

THE FLOATING PAPER.

Effect. The performer causes a piece of paper to float up and down while he makes passes. A hoop is also passed over the paper to prove there is no natural means of support.

Requirements. Two chairs at opposite sides of the platform, a length of thread, a hoop and a sheet of tissue paper.

Preparation. Attach the thread to the bottom of the chair leg on the right side; the other end of the thread is attached to top corner of the cross-bar of the chair on the left. The thread should be taut when you are standing upright as the thread lies across your left shoulder. The hoop should be hung on the corner of the chair before the thread is attached. (See Fig. 15.) Allow the thread to drop to the floor and all is ready.

Method. Pick up the hoop and the piece of tissue paper, put the hoop over your head and at the same time pick up the thread and allow it to fall over your left shoulder. Step backwards till you are about four feet away from the chair; stand upright till the thread gets taut, and crumple the paper round the thread. Allow the paper to rest on the left hand while you bend downwards slightly. To make the paper rise straighten the body gradually; to make it fall, bend forwards. Keep your eyes on the paper while you make passes, to take attention away from yourself. Pass the hoop over the paper; take the hoop in the left hand, replace over the chair and as you pull the paper free from the thread with the right hand, the thread falls to the floor again—this as you walk to the front to toss the paper to the spectators.

SPIRIT RAPPING.

Effect. The company sit around the table as usual, hands are all linked together by the little fingers. The lights are put out, and raps are heard.

Method. When the lights are put out and the hands linked together, press your right hand hard and flat on the table, spread your right thumb as far to the right as possible. If you now bring the thumb, still pressing it on the table, towards the first finger, you will find that the thumb will jerk and make a distinct rap; several jerks will make several raps. That's all, with the exception that you must see that the thumb is perfectly dry.

THE "FINDER" PENCIL.

Effect. This is designed to pick out a certain card, or a number, from a row placed on the table. This pencil makes the discovery in a mysterious manner.

Requirements. A pencil and a ring, the ring being about one inch in diameter.

Method. Lay out the cards in a row on the table. Now slip the pencil through the ring in such a manner that the pencil is supported near one end by leverage. Hold the ring by the first finger and thumb as shown in Fig. 16. You can now make the pencil point to a forced card, or any card named. If you raise the thumb slightly the pencil will sway to the right; if you raise the fore-finger slightly the pencil will swing to the left. With practice you will be able to make the pencil move to any point desired with accuracy that seems uncanny. The slightest movement of the finger and thumb causes the pencil to sway backwards and forwards. (The ring is not quite at the correct angle in the diagram, it should be held nearly upright.)

THE CORK RETURNS.

Effect. A cork taken from a bottle, vanishes, the cork re-appears in the neck of the bottle.

Requirements. A metal bottle as shown in Fig. 17. Running from the neck of the bottle to the bottom is a tin tube. A small

hole is drilled in the centre of the bottom of the bottle. Cut a cork to fit the bottle, as shown in Fig. 19; this is cut from sponge rubber and is fixed to a rod (Fig. 18) by the cleft. The rod and cork are then pressed down into the bottle (Fig. 17). A real cork of the same shape as the fake one is required, this is covered with powered sponge rubber to make it match. The last item is a tin disc with a pin fixed to the centre. (See Fig. 20.)

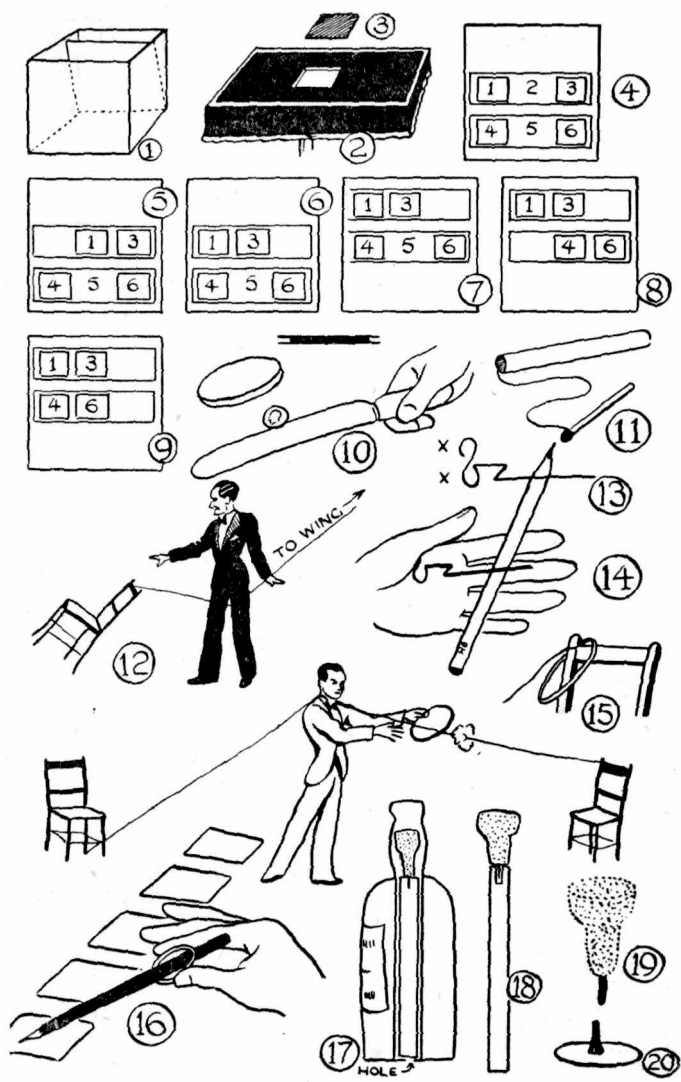
Method. Place the disc and pin behind some small object. Remove cork from the bottle and lay the cork aside for a moment. Cover the bottle with a handkerchief and stand the bottle over the pin on the disc, thus forcing the rubber cork through to the top of the bottle. Vanish the first cork by your favourite sleight, lift up the handkerchief and show that the cork has arrived back in the bottle.

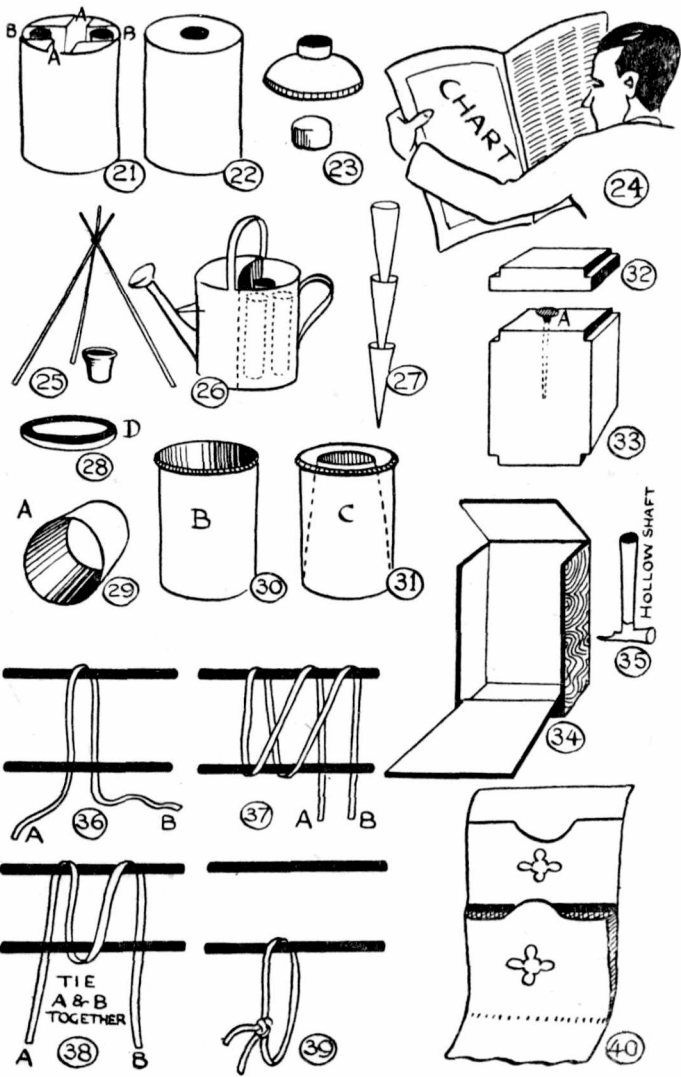
A NEW CHANGING OR PRODUCING CANISTER.

Construct a canister as shown in Fig. 21. Divide it throughout its entire length with four angular pieces of tin; the size is four and a half inches in diameter and five inches high. Make the space B. to B. one and a half inches, and the space A. to A. one inch. Next insert two tubes, closed at the bottom, into section B. B., the tubes being one and a half inches in diameter; the tubes must work easily back and forth, as at B. B. Fig. 21. Next solder on a disc for a top, with an opening one and a half inches in diameter. The canister should now look like Fig. 22. Now solder on the dome top and lid as shown in Fig. 23. This should make the apparatus look like the usual tea caddy.

To Prepare. Have the tubes in position as in Fig. 21. Load one tube with three knotted silks; leave the other tube empty. Fill up space A. A., Fig. 21, with tea.

To Present. Empty out the tea and tip the canister, getting the empty tube to the centre of canister. (As the space A. A. is only one inch the tubes cannot go astray.) Pick up three loose silks and insert in this empty tube. Tip the canister again, getting the other tube into the centre of the canister. Then withdraw the three knotted silks. Other variations will suggest themselves to the reader.





CALENDAR BOOK TEST.

Effect. A spectator is asked to choose three figures from a calendar. A page of a book is opened to correspond with two of the numbers, Then the spectator is asked to count to a word to correspond with the third number. The performer divines the word.

Requirements. A book, a calendar, a slate, a piece of chalk, a scribbling pad and a pencil.

Preparation. On the *frame* of the slate write the following numbers and words from the book :—

Page 36, the 9th word.	Page 69, the 3rd word.
Page 39, the 6th word.	Page 93, the 6th word.
Page 96, the 9th word.	Page 96, the 3rd word.

Method. Hand calendar, pencil and pad to the helper. Tell him to mark off a square of nine numbers on the calendar, then ask him to add up each column, and reduce each column to a single digit by adding the two figures together (4 & 2 equals 6, and so on). He writes these three figures on the pad.

Example :—

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
Totals of each Column	42	45	48			
	6	9	12			
			3			

It will be noted that the columns are to be reduced to a SINGLE digit.

The performer can only be given six possible combinations. The example shown gives 6—9—3.

The performer now asks the spectator to give him *ANY TWO* of the three figures. Suppose the spectator replies "Nine Three." The performer hands him the book and asks him to find page 93. Meanwhile the performer picks up the slate and chalk, secretly making a mental note of the word against 93 by glancing at the frame of the slate. The helper is now asked for the remaining number. "Six." He is told to count to the sixth word on the selected page and to concentrate upon it. The performer then does his mental showmanship business and writes the word on the slate.

Having the required information written on the frame of the slate makes it very easy for the performer, but it would not be very much trouble to memorise the six possible words.

A free choice of three or four different books could be given by having the necessary information handy so that a secret glimpse could be taken.

NOVEL BOOK TEST.

Effect. The performer asks for any three figures, such as 4, 5, 2. These being given they are written on a slate or board. A book is now handed out and a spectator is requested to open it at page 45, these being the first two figures of the previously given number.

The spectator is now asked to count along to the word represented by the last figure: in this case the second word. He is asked to concentrate on the word and then close the book. The performer now picks up a newspaper and draws attention to an advertisement printed in the "Personal" column. This advertisement reads as follows:— "So and So, the magician, will discover a word, from a book, which has been thought of by a spectator." This page is torn out and given to a spectator to read. When this has been done, the performer concentrates and then discloses the word.

Any book may be used and the number is not forced. I am inclined to think that the method I give has never been used in any book test. Here is the secret.

Preparation. Obtain a book of at least 100 pages. Now get a large sheet of white paper, the size to be slightly less than the page of a newspaper. Divide this sheet into 100 sections, 10 along by 10 down. Number these sections from one to a hundred (See Fig. 24). Under section one write the first nine words from page one; under section two write the first nine words from page two, and so on up to ninety-nine. On the other side of the paper put some wax at intervals along the edges. Advertise in the "Personal" column of a suitable newspaper, as explained in the effect. When the paper is published, purchase a copy, and proceed as follows: Take your white sheet or chart and stick it to one of the centre pages of the newspaper by means of the wax. Fold up the paper and all is ready.

Method. Hand out the book. Now ask for a number of three figures; we will say, for instance, that 463 is given. Tell the spectator to open the book at page 46. When he has done this, ask him to count along to the third word, to concentrate upon it, and then close the book. Now pick up the newspaper and tell the spectators that you will read out a very interesting advertisement. Open the paper and appear to be looking for the advertisement. Actually open it at the chart and quickly note word three on section forty-six. Close the paper, tear off the advertisement page, point out your advertisement and have this read out by a spectator. After he has done this, you say, "I will now proceed to keep that promise." You appear to concentrate, and then name the chosen word.

A FLOWER GROWTH.

This simulates the "Indian Mango Trick," but the method used is quite different. To give the presentation some colour a turban should be donned and an Oriental instrument played during the trick.

Requirements. Three sticks, tied together near one end, so that they will stand upright when the free ends are spread apart (See Fig. 25). A flower pot, some earth, a sheet to cover the sticks, and a specially constructed watering can. This can is the usual

type used by gardeners, but it is divided in half by a partition, and in the part nearest to the handle three metal tubes are fixed. (See Fig. 26.) Three feather plants must now be made, by fixing feather flowers to three thin tapering tubes. The tubes are tapered in order to fit one within the other. Fig. 27.

Method. Erect the three sticks. Show the flower pot, fill it with earth from a bag, and place the pot within the sticks. Now cover the sticks with the sheet, and arrange so that the opening is at the back. Sit behind the tent, take the can and pour some water out visibly. Bring the can behind the tent and pretend to water the earth in the pot; really take one section of the plant from the can and stick it in the pot. Bring the can into view again, remove the sheet and show the small plant growth. Repeat the above routine twice, sticking the 'growths' on top of each other.

If preferred the rear half of the can may be divided into three, instead of using tubes, though these compress the feather flowers very well.

LIQUID TRANSPOSITION.

Effect. A metal cup, full of liquid, is placed in a tube; the liquid vanishes and finds its way into a hat.

Requirements. An open tube as shown at "A" Fig. 29. A tin cup "B" Fig. 30, and a "Ghost Tube" affair, "C" Fig. 31, which fits easily into "B." Between the double sides of the Ghost Tube, a quarter of an inch from the top, the tin ring "D" Fig. 28 is soldered, making a shallow tray between the two sides. A hat and a jug of water are further requirements.

Preparation. Place "C" into "B" and partly fill the little tray with water.

Method. Show tube "A" to be empty. Fill "B" with water. Show hat empty and place "B" inside; apparently remove "B" from hat, but really bring out "C." Now here is where the misdirection comes in. Apparently spill some water from "C," this being actually water from the little tray at the top. Take "C" and put it into the tube "A." Eventually show "A" empty, allowing the audience to look through the proper end, of course. Walk over to

the hat and remove "B," then pour the liquid into the jug. You will notice that "A," "B" and "C" all have a lip running round the top edge. The lip on "C" should be a fraction larger than the lip on "B," thus making it easy to lift "C" from "B."

THE GHOST TAPS.

Effect. A small wooden block is freely shown. It is put into a little empty box; on top of the block a miniature hammer is placed and beside the hammer a stout two-inch nail. The box is now closed. When held in the hand a series of taps are heard. The box is now opened, the hammer removed, then the block; when this is examined the nail is seen to be deeply imbedded in the centre of the block. The box is seen to be empty.

Requirements. A block of wood of the shape shown in Fig. 33, $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. x 2in., a hollow cap is made to fit one end, $\frac{3}{8}$ ths of an inch deep, Fig. 32; this is further hollowed out in the centre to take in the head of the nail, "A" Fig. 33. The cap fits on to the block and covers the nail which is deeply embedded in the centre of the block. The join of cap and block can easily be hidden by a simple painted design.

The next requirement is an oblong, box with lid at top, and door in front, Fig. 34. $5\frac{1}{2}$ in. high and a little over 2in. square. The front door is hinged $\frac{3}{8}$ ths of an inch from the bottom; this converts the bottom of the box into a shallow tray.

A miniature hammer is required, the full length of the hammer being $2\frac{1}{4}$ in. The handle of this is hollow. Fig. 35.

Preparation. Hammer a stout 2in. nail into the centre of the block, but leave a quarter of an inch of head projecting. Replace the wooden cap on top. Have a duplicate nail at hand.

Method. Show the block and box freely. Insert the block, cap end down, into the bottom of box, via the front door. Close the front door and put the hammer in from the top. Next show the nail. Apparently drop it into the box, but really put it into the hollow handle of hammer. Close the lid of box, and hold in the right hand, thumb at front, fingers at the back. Tap on the back of the box with the nail of the third finger; open the lid and remove

the hammer. Open the front door, remove the block, leaving the cap behind in the bottom of the box. Note that the cap should fit loosely.

"MYSTIFY YOURSELF!" RIBBON AND STICKS.

I give this trick the title "Mystify Yourself," because it was quite a while before I could see how the result came about.

Effect. Two spectators face each other. They hold two pieces of broomstick between them, one piece being held higher than the other. The performer takes a length of ribbon and hangs it over the top stick only; several twists are given with the ribbon round *both* sticks, the ends of the ribbon never going between the sticks. The ends of the ribbons are now tied. The ribbon is unrolled, and—Presto! The loop of ribbon is on the *bottom* stick. The ends of the sticks are securely held by the two spectators throughout the trick.

Requirements. Two pieces of broom-stick, two feet long, and a yard of ribbon.

Method. Request the two spectators to hold the sticks, one above the other. Hang the ribbon over the top stick as in Fig. 36. Next, twist the two ends around the sticks as in Fig. 37. Now bring end "B" only, back to the front, Fig. 38. Tie the ends. Bring the loop over the top bar and you will find the loop securely tied round the bottom bar. The illustration shows but one twist, actually several twists should be given to "A" and "B" (Fig. 37) before the end "B" is brought around to the front. The result is the same as in the single twist illustrated.

OBTAINING THE KEY RING.

This is a method for secretly obtaining possession of the "key" ring in exchange for one of the ordinary rings, when presenting the classic "Chinese Rings."

Requirements. Make a chair-back foulard as shown in diagram 40. Notice that the foulard has two sections at the bottom half; they are of sufficient width and depth to accommodate and conceal one of the rings used. The foulard is designed in a manner that conceals the pockets.

Method. Have the key ring in the back partition of the foulard. Pass out all the remaining rings for inspection—after having linked some of them together. Receive back the two singles and the set of three. Lay them upright against the foulard, but at the same time slip one of the single rings down into the front compartment. Now receive back the set of two, lay these against the rings on the chair and as you lift the whole lot up together, slip out the key ring behind the other rings and continue with your usual routine.

A NUMBER PREDICTED.

Effect. The performer shows a slate on both sides. Taking a piece of chalk, he writes something on the back of the slate and lays it aside without letting the spectators see what has been written. He now asks a spectator to name the first figure that comes into his mind. This done, the performer picks up the slate, turns it round and in heavy white characters is seen the number which was given by the spectator.

Requirements. A framed piece of white enamelled plate, about seven inches by five inches. The appliance looks like a school slate. Paint one side dead black and smoke the other side black with a candle. Obtain a lump of chalk; I advise a *lump* as the figure will be fairly thick.

Method. Show the slate on both sides. Take the chalk and pretend to write something on the smoked side of the slate, then lay the slate aside. Now ask for a figure. This given, pick up the slate and hold it in the right hand, fingers at front, thumb at back. As in your patter you go over what has happened, write the number with your thumb on the back of the slate. It only remains to turn the slate round and show the number. As you have rubbed the soot off with your thumb, the white enamel shows through and the number shows up boldly.

THE GREEN RAY MYSTERY.

Effect. The clairvoyant goes out of the room. The performer writes a chosen figure on a card; this is dropped into an empty box on the table. A coloured handkerchief is chosen from several of

varying colours, this is also dropped into the box. The performer now has a card selected from a pack held behind his back. The pack is put into the box beside the handkerchief and the number card. The box is closed and covered with a red handkerchief. The performer now lays a pair of spectacles with green lenses, either on top of the handkerchief covering the box, or on the table.

The clairvoyant enters, picks up the glasses and puts them on. She then divines the chosen number, the coloured handkerchief and then the chosen card, by looking through the green spectacles.

Requirements. A small, shallow box, four silk handkerchiefs, a short piece of pencil, a piece of blank card, an extra red handkerchief, a pack of cards, a pair of spectacles with metal "lenses" painted green.

Preparation. Place a pellet of wax on the inside centre of one lens of the spectacles and put the spectacles in the right hand jacket pocket.

Method. The clairvoyant gets her information as follows. The figure on the card is conveyed by the table top (or the box) being divided into nine imaginary squares, thus:—

1	4	7
2	5	8
3	6	9

The spectacles are placed in that position which corresponds with the required figure.

The colour of the chosen silk is coded by placing the short piece of pencil on the table behind the box in one of the following positions: Pencil point up, RED. Point down, WHITE. Horizontal, point to the right, BLUE. Pencil set at an angle, GREEN.

The card is revealed in this way: Cards, shuffled and cut, are placed in your hands behind your back, the top card having been noted by the spectator. Facing front, you tear the index corner off this card, slip the card to the centre of the pack and finger-palm the torn corner: Here you arrive at the point where the pack is placed in the box and the box covered with a handkerchief. The hand goes to the pocket for the spectacles and presses the torn index on to the waxed "lens." Setting the spectacles on top of the table—

or on top of the box if there is room—codes the number on the card.

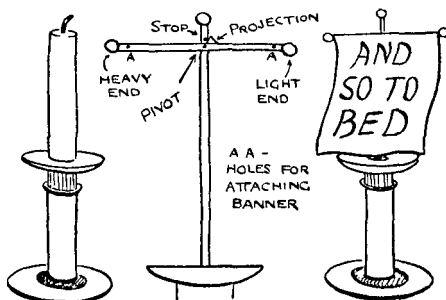
The clairvoyant, when called into the room, proceeds as follows. She looks at the *position* of the spectacles to get the number, then at the pencil to get the colour of the handkerchief, and learns the cards denomination as she puts on the spectacles.

Admittedly all known ideas, but built up to form a simple and interesting thought-reading effect. The necessary quaint scientific patter regarding the "Green Ray" must be arranged by the performer. The spectacles are opaque, but may have a tiny pin-hole.

The *position* (table) indicator is credited to Patric Playfair. The *torn index corner of card to Bruce Hurling*.

"AND SO TO BED."

Effect. A candle is seen burning in a candle-stick. A tube is placed over the candle and when the tube is removed a small banner with the above title is seen to have taken the place of the candle.



Working. The diagrams explain matters. The cross bar with the banner is turned down in line with the upright, then the hollow candle is slipped over. It only remains to put the empty tube over the candle, remove tube and candle together —and so to bed!

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