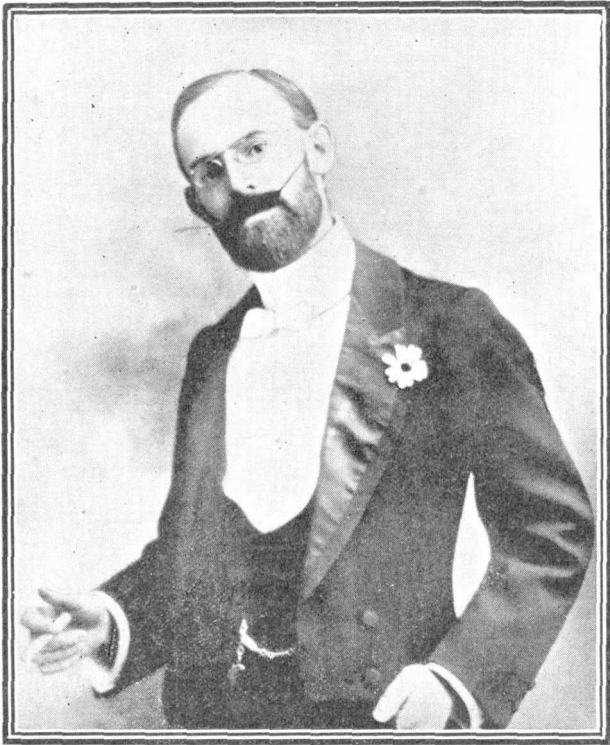


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Problems in *Mystery*.

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MAX STERLING.

# PROBLEMS IN MYSTERY

FOR PRACTICAL  
MAGICIANS

EXPLAINED AND ILLUSTRATED  
BY ONE  
MAX STERLING

PUBLISHED BY  
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## PROBLEMS IN MYSTERY.

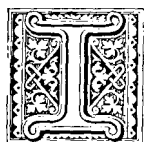
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# FOREWORDS.

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IN placing before my confrères in the fascinating Art of mystifying a selection of practical effects drawn from my actual repertoire—both for stage and drawing room—no claim is made to any great originality for the principles involved in their execution. Attention is merely called to the novelty, sequence of arrangement, and method of presentation.

While a knowledge of the technique of the magic art is presumed, in treatment of detail no single fact has been withheld; no single subterfuge resorted to diverting from *the true method* employed by the writer.

Readers may probably recognise many “twists” on their own *modus operandi*, yet the author humbly claims it is just that trifling “twist” that adds the desired charm, creating for an old effect an entirely new trick.

To assist others in turn to evolve further “twists,” and so devise something like sequence in their programmes, is the one object of these pages.

MAX STERLING.

KERSWELL, CULLOMPTON, DEVON,

ENGLAND.

*November 1909.*

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## Problems in Silk and Wax.

The State Library of Victoria  
"ALMA CONJURING COLLECTION"



UNDER this title is presented a series of effects with handkerchiefs and candles carefully arranged to fall in natural sequence without interruption for a period of from 15 to 20 minutes. The situations created lend this item admirably to humorous patter, which will no doubt occur to the reader. As a hint to such, it may be stated the writer places it before his audience as an "Irish Trouble," using green silks as the "emblem of Innocence—not necessarily Purity"—and a "Wicklow—I should say a low-wick—candle," etc., etc.

**Effect.**—The performer advances with a wax candle in his right hand. A candle-stick with box of matches lie upon a copy of any local paper on a small table to his left. The candle is introduced as the "Waxy" part of the programme, and a polite request is made for the loan of a small silk square.

If this is not immediately forthcoming, not to lose time, he steps among his audience, and—with permission courteously asked—"discovers" a small green kerchief in the hat, neckwear, or any garment that may happen to be of like colour. He returns to his table and converts a portion of the newspaper into a cone, places the handkerchief in and closing it, hands it to someone on his left to "take great care of." The matches are now displayed as the ordinary article and one withdrawn from the box to light the candle. The wick is so short the first attempt fails. The box of matches is again carelessly shown and a second match taken out and struck, the box closed and handed to the nearest party on the right hand for convenience and "security." Again the candle fails to light, and the person holding the matches is requested to try and light the candle himself. On the box being opened by the volunteer assistant the matches are discovered to have flown and the kerchief flies out in their place.

The entertainer affects astonishment and mildly "upbraids" the person in charge of the cone with lack of attention to its

safety. Taking the paper cone from the holder it is slowly opened and the crowd of loose matches fall to the ground, while both sides of the paper are exhibited empty. Instantly, this effect is disclaimed as the original intention of the conjurer. He explains his desire to cause the silk to pass into the wax. To illustrate this possibility the handkerchief is rolled between his hands, vanished, and discovered between his teeth. The roll and vanish is repeated and the silk found under his left knee. It is now thrown over his outstretched, open, left palm, and one of the audience requested to breathe upon it lightly. Instantly it has multiplied into a large number in various colours which are allowed to fall slowly to the carpet.

Should astonishment be expressed, an offer is made to repeat the process, for which purpose the magician stoops to secure one of the silks from the pile on the floor. Again the handkerchief is carelessly thrown over the same hand without any confusing movement, blown upon, and five large silks are seen extending from the finger tips.

For the time being, these are laid upon the table and the original square offered to a gentleman possessing a "strong breath, Irish for preference. I mean a gentleman of athletic breathing powers" with an invitation to blow it direct into the candle from where he is seated. After several vain attempts, to illustrate his requirement, the performer rolls it once more between his palms and the closed left hand still showing a morsel of silk presented to his assistant to blow upon. Satisfaction crowns this effort, and with the hands displayed empty the wizard takes the candle from the table and hands it to the gentleman that he may personally verify the magic of his labours and find the handkerchief within it. Examination of the candle reveals nothing, however, therefore he is requested to cut it into three portions—after first decapitating the burnt wick. To protect the clothing one of the large handkerchiefs is spread over his knees, the candle is cut, and a selection is offered by the performer with the pieces in his hands. By popular vote one section is chosen and handed back to the assistant, who by means of the penknife discovers the wandering silk snugly embedded in the wax.



With the remains of the candle collected in the large handkerchief return is made to the table, onto which the contents are released, the silk being still retained to pass through a series of knots and releases, then the five are knotted one to the other, circled for a moment securely tied, gathered into the left hand and finally blown apart, each floating, as blown, to the ground while the performer retires.

## WORKING INSTRUCTIONS.

**Requirements.**—Candlestick ; two carriage or other thick candles ; ordinary box of matches ; fake for matches ; faked newspaper ; about 25 small silk squares ; 4 green ditto ; 5 large silk squares, one of which should be of the same green ; small corner fake for the green silk.

**Preparations.**—Cut one of the candles into two or three pieces of equal length after cutting the wick-head off level with the body. With a sharp pocket knife hollow out one section just far enough to leave one end intact. Neatly bulk—not rolled or folded—a small green square and insert ; cover with a wad of soft green tissue paper, then cover end with some of the wax scooped from the centre and seal with a heated knife, which melts and smoothes the base. If this is neatly done the fact that the candle is faked is undetectable. Reserve the other section or sections (according to the working of the trick with the candle in two or three pieces) for future use.

The genuine matches are taken from the box and bundled together with a thin thread. The box is then fitted with a fake *solid block of half-matches*, the remaining space is occupied by a duplicate small green square with a small shot sewn into one corner. This handkerchief is rolled from its centre half its length ; the other half is pleated over the roll ready to spring up the moment the cover of matchbox is withdrawn.

Keep the fake block of matches and handkerchief in position by placing two full-length matches over both and putting on the cover.

The newspaper is faked with a pocket by pasting down three

edges of two sheets. This must be done neatly to appear as a single sheet at close quarters.

The small handkerchiefs are taken each by the middle and together from their centres rolled into a tight ball entirely covered by the green. Secure with small rubber band.

The larger squares are stretched full length and rolled into their smallest bulk with the green on the outer side. Tuck in the end without using rubber to secure. This is in readiness to be gripped by thumb and finger for instant release.

A small green silk is vested on the left side.

Trousers should have three pochettes on the left and one on the right. In coat the usual profound.

**Working.**—After introduction of ordinary candle, in going to take the first silk from person in audience advance with sleeves well tucked up—arms bare—hands empty. Extend the right hand to produce silk. This is the usual misdirection, while *under cover of the movement* the vested silk can be secured by the left. Finger palm and advance hand as if to assist the right. Leave the silk at base of any fold being “searched” at the same time holding the fabric back. Without ostensibly showing the right hand still empty, it can rise again before it slowly dips into the same fold to secure the silk.

The same lady may be asked to hold the silk for a moment while a cone is made of the prepared paper. The paper should be torn with apparent carelessness from the entire issue. In displaying cone empty with the right, the left hand secures bundle of loose matches from pochette. Load into cone on transferring it to the left hand, taking hold of it by the mouth and allowing matches to fall by breaking the thread with the first finger. The right hand accepts the handkerchief which has to be inserted into the pocket already held open by a finger of the left. Display silk actually in the cone, fold over, and pass to lady to hold.

To light the candle take one of the two ordinary matches from the box, which to the public appears quite full. This must either be blown out or otherwise prevented from burning, as the use of a second match *convincés* that the matches *must* be genuine. On closing the box after taking the second match allow the fake block

to fall into the right hand, finger palm, and strike the match. This allows for the bent finger concealing fake. Now hand the box to someone on the right. This match also has to fail, and the holder of the matchbox asked to open same and pass another. The fake is now got rid of into profound on right. On opening of the box the pleated half of the silk flies up and more than fills the space. It is immaterial if the holder—out of curiosity, perhaps—prematurely opens the box or not, as the next move is to take back and open the paper cone, allowing the missing matches to fall. Crush paper and throw “off.”

Take the small silk from box and place the shot corner on the ball of the palm. This acts as a fulcrum in rolling, and is the surest and most rapid *visible* disappearance the writer knows. Vanish in this or other method and produce from any desired point of the body. After second or third time use the under-knee or behind neck recovery, as cover for the left hand to obtain the bundle of small silks from pochette on the same side. In recovering the original silk throw it with indifference over the left palm, which now advances (loaded) to receive it. The thumb releases the rubber band while the cupped fingers prevent the burst of handkerchiefs as they expand. Release slowly, and this one-handed effect will be found charming.

After the last silk has fallen and the hands shown empty, a slight bow by way of intimating the conclusion of the effect—or, it is to be hoped—in acknowledgment of applause, gives ample cover for the left hand to secure the bundle of large silks. Repeat as before, only the tucked end must be released and secured by a single movement of the thumb when a slight upward throw makes a brilliant display. These are placed on the table, and the original small silk offered to a voluntary assistant. Vanish by any method found most convenient, displaying fake corner protruding from left hand. Retain fake clipped between thumb and first finger on opening both hands *empty*, and on turning towards the table for the candle place fake in left pochette.

After cutting candle, secure and palm faked section from right pochette. Take the chosen piece with tips of the same fingers containing duplicate, and a slight turn provides an undetectable

exchange. Hand faked piece to assistant. Spread a large silk over his knees and assist the assistant to cut open and recover. With the large silk return refuse wax to table and proceed with any known handkerchief movements, and conclude with the five knotted and released. This is the ordinary half-hitch. Release on gathering up the second time, leaving the ends between thumb and fingers of left hand. A gentle upward throwing or waving movement will allow each to fall separately, and as the last falls retire, thus silently intimating the conclusion of the item.

**Remarks.**—This programme, exactly as described, was first produced on the public stage by Mr. Max Sterling, at the Apollo Theatre, Berne, Switzerland, and worked in silence. Two tables were used, and a glass vase upon the left to hold the cone; the matches on the table to right. As a pantomimic number it was extremely successful, and is still one of his favourite items for the drawing-room. For the matchbox fake the writer desires to acknowledge indebtedness to an article by Mr. Charles Medrington, contained in the November number of *The Wizard*, 1905. The slight addition of the genuine matches are, however, his own.

---

## “Bewitched.”

### The Animated Inanimate.



THE first reading this old subject may be regarded by some as unworthy of serious attention, yet, if presented in sequence as described, with the several original “twists” exactly as worked by the writer, it certainly forms a perplexing entertainment even for those who know the “usual” method. Simplicity is its special charm throughout, and, in the hands of a confident performer, provides a ten-minute fascinating programme suitable for stage or drawing-room.

To the patterist it affords ample scope for semi-scientific humour of the anti-spiritualistic order, and with convincing showmanship creates abundance of laughter.

**Effect.**—"Recent research in animal magnetism provides the mystic force I bring into practical play," declaims the artiste in his introductory speech. "And as talking of play suggests toys, I have an old favourite with me here to illustrate my arguments."

A small bamboo table—without covering—is the only stage furniture. The entertainer offers for examination a flat mill-board 'doll with jointed legs, "the Jumping Jack" of childhood days, as his only apparatus.

Public inspection reveals nothing suspicious beyond a narrow strip of flat metal at the back. This is explained away as the magnetic conductor, "whatever that may be." The table, to assert its innocence, also comes in for a casual survey. Replacing the table centre of stage, the toy is rubbed, laid flat on its back upon table top and is seen to rise slowly and unaided, apparently responsive to the "mesmeric passes" of the performer, and dances a jig to the nautical strains of the "orchestra."

The performer walks *right around* the table while the figure is dancing, and passes his hands over and under it to disprove mechanical assistance.

At an abrupt pause in the music the figure simultaneously collapses, and is instantly offered to the public.

Scarcely has the conjuror seized the figure for this purpose than the table itself rises in a dance to the continued music. He rushes back to stop this "unseemly levity," placing his hand upon the table top for the purpose. It now rises with his hand, sticking to it in any position as though fixed there. A borrowed silk square placed between the hand and table makes no difference.

An ordinary hat is borrowed, which on touching the magician's fingers becomes attached to them in the same mysterious manner, first to one hand then to the other as he attempts to remove it from either. Finally released, the hat is placed on the table and the borrowed silk is employed to generate the necessary magnetic influence in the sailor once more. Sparks are seen to flash from the handkerchief during the process. The figure this time rises from the interior of the hat to dance on the brim. *While still dancing* the figure is handed to audience for further examination,

and the hat continues the jig on its own account the second the showman's back is turned.

An attempt to check its strange behaviour, and it eludes capture, gracefully floating from the table to mid-air on either side of the stage, eventually it descends to the very hand of the performer, who instantly returns it to the owner.

The table is now taken "off" and a clear stage exhibited.

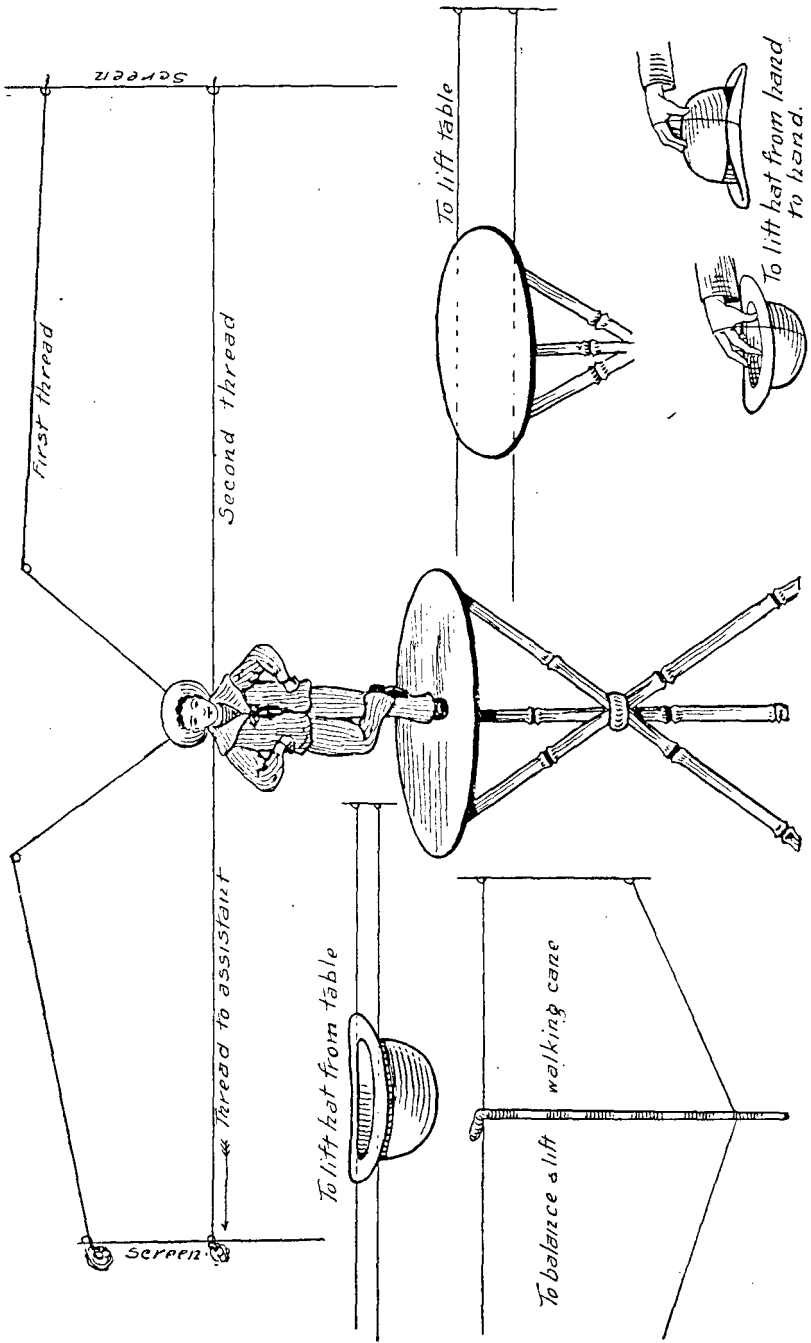
A walking cane is borrowed. This is waved sword-fashion in every direction to *prove* the absence of wire or threads over at the back or sides of the scene. Friction is applied to the cane with the borrowed silk, the latter being carelessly dropped on the stage after use. Attempts are made to balance the stick. This is accomplished. It is next laid flat on the carpet. From that position one end rises until again vertically balanced.

It dances to music as did the doll, and at command glides straight to the outstretched hand of the wizard, remaining at the finger tips until released by the gentleman in the audience who loaned it.

Bowing acknowledgments, the performer retires from the stage, followed by the *forgotten* handkerchief flying through the air after him. With many apologies for such remiss conduct the silk is returned.—Curtain.

## WORKING INSTRUCTIONS.

**Requirements.**—For drawing room.—"Fit-up," or back curtains of red or brown self-coloured material, and three-fold screens at either side to form proscenium to conceal assistant operating threads; a chandelier or other pendant should be over centre of "scene"; good supply of tailor's black hank thread; two extra small curtain rings, and two or four screw-eyes for emergency use; light bamboo table with black-headed pin almost buried into centre of top; plain band ring for left middle finger, slotted and countersunk to receive pin head on table; one electric hand lamp (sold at most novelty stores from 6½d. to 1/-); some ordinary black thread and pellet of conjuring wax; one cardboard figure (jointed legs) painted to fancy, 12 to 18 inches high, with



strip of flat tin,  $\frac{1}{2}$  in.  $\times$  2 in., fixed at back of neck; one smart assistant.

**Preparations.**—The cardboard figure is made jointed at thigh and knee only. The metal strip is cemented for the lower *half of its length* in a vertical position from between the shoulders or neck of the doll. On the opposite side of stage to operator fix three or four screw-eyes into any woodwork about 6 feet from the ground and 6 inches apart. Attach ample tailor's thread to each eye to allow plenty of play across the stage. The first thread should pass from the screw-eye to the roof, where two small curtain rings have been arranged six inches each side from the dead centre over position of table, through the rings and fastened to a large reel ready to the assistant's hand. The second thread lies flat on the stage, for which plenty of slack must be allowed, then fastened to another reel as before. The remaining thread (or two as required) is looped over two black pins stuck in the back curtains, continued over the scene to assistant's reels. Another reel must be secured to a loose thread, to the other end of which is fixed a pellet of wax, or bent pin can be substituted if desired. The wax can be temporarily stuck to the edge of the screen on the right hand. An endless loop of fine thread sufficient to loosely pass over an ordinary bowler hat is suspended from a coat button on the performer. The electric hand lamp is suspended from the back of his vest by a cord sufficiently long to allow it to swing to the hand when required. Place table in centre of stage, and draw the loop of thread from between the overhead rings until it rests on the table.

**Presentation.**—After inspection of the figure the performer returns to table, walks all around it, waves hands under and over it to prove perfect freedom, and at the same time secures the first thread in his left hand without grasping it or closing his fingers. The figure is now placed in the left hand, a finger of which passes the thread under the metal hook turned down on receiving the sailor from the audience. The figure is placed flat on the table, and with the music the assistant in the wings works his reel to the time. The performer is now able to walk *right around* the moving doll and pass his hands beneath its feet and



the table. On the figure collapsing to silence of music the conjurer unhooks it, straightens up the back metal for further inspection. The assistant pulls on his reel and the first thread is high up out of the way. Both of the back threads are raised by assistant from their resting-place on the curtain pins, and one only is stretched by him directly over the table. On returning with the figure the magician *feels* the thread with his left hand behind his back—sometimes a smart assistant will *place* it into his hand—and passes the figure on to it and again flat on the table. To the mesmeric passes it again dances, but this time the artiste cannot pass around table. He contents himself with waving hands over and under the figure. Before finishing he places his left hand under the feet, and it continues to dance while raised from the table on his palm. The right hand unhooks the doll with a natural movement, and with it the showman turns towards his public. Instantly the figure is unhooked, the assistant slips one thread under front edge of table, and the idle reel brings the second thread under the back and works the table independently of the magician. The latter must exhibit astonishment and return quickly, slipping the pin head of the table centre into the groove of his ring on the left middle finger. The table can now be carried away to the footlights and moved in any position. A silk handkerchief is borrowed and laid over the table. This does not interfere with the pin head. It is again lifted and returned to centre of stage. The handkerchief is picked up with the left hand, while the right secures the suspended lamp instantly covered by transferring the silk to the right. The thumb can easily operate the button switch while rubbing the figure. The handkerchief still in right hand gives sufficient cover for release of the lamp in swinging to the back. This pretty effect may be worked at this point or after the hat trick. In going forward for the hat, the loop of thread rests between the thumb and over the fingers of the right hand. On receiving the hat with the same hand it is allowed to slide over the brim, and the left hand in “flicking dust off,” or other natural excuse, rights the thread over centre, and the right hand holds the hat underneath by the crown. In this position pressure of the fingers raises it, and with trifling

practice the left advances and inserts fingers under thread on the brim side, allowing the right hand to withdraw and the hat to remain attached to the other. The figure is again placed on thread to dance on the brim of the hat. Afterwards the assistant passes the two threads one under each side of the brim under the hat. By raising his reels the assistant can slide the hat in any direction, eventually allowing it to slide down toward the hand of his principal. When stage is cleared all threads rest on the floor. The walking-stick should have a crook handle for preference, but any light cane can be operated with two threads ; while the third is used to steady the other side of stick. On raising the lower thread with judgment the stick will slide gracefully into the hand of the conjuror, who, with the fingertip grip so often described in various magical works, hands it down to the owner. The handkerchief on being thrown carelessly to the stage had the small pellet of wax pressed tightly to it. When the performer retires the assistant pulls the thread smartly and the silk follows. It is quickly detached and returned.

**Remarks.**—Although this description may appear complex it is in reality very simple. The simplicity however must not be permitted to carry the idea that it is easy to present. Great confidence is required, and considerable practice to insure a perfect handling of the hat effect. The assistant must also be thoroughly rehearsed, then there is rare likelihood of confusion in handling threads.

This was first produced as above by the writer, at the Temperance Hall, Leicester, 1890.

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## The Protean Aquarium.

**EFFECT.**—A square aquarium is discovered upon an ordinary table to the right hand of the performer. The other side of the stage is set with a small card table draped with an artistic table-cover falling over the front a matter of six or eight inches.

The wizard first proves the aquarium empty before filling the tank with water.

Taking a position near the stage centre, he proceeds to catch gold fish with an ordinary rod and imaginary worm over the footlights. His first effort results in a black member of the finny tribe—a tribute evidently from the Black Sea—and immediately thrown into the aquarium. Continuing the sport, a carp of orthodox golden hue is secured. On turning to place this second fish in the tank the fisherman is astonished to discover that the “mud has been disturbed” by his black captive—in fact the water has turned to ink.

Calling an assistant, an ordinary glass globe full of water is brought on and placed upon the card table, and into this the gold fish is liberated.

Four or five more are caught and added to the globe.

The rod is laid aside and a large silk handkerchief mysteriously produced with which to dry the hands. The handkerchief is then cast carelessly over the globe of fish, and on turning toward the aquarium the inky appearance has vanished, displaying the several gold fish placidly moving through the water.

Raising the handkerchief from the globe, the fish it contained are found to have disappeared.

At no time during the trick has the aquarium been covered.

**Requirements.**—A specially constructed aquarium with double glass sides half-an-inch distant, and a trap in the base of the tank operated by elastic springs.

The sides are filled with water to the ornamental beading, and each top corner carries small cups containing chemicals for the visible “ink and water” trick, each set of cups being inverted into the water by a thread.

The threads have coloured buttons or beads attached at the “off stage” ends for identity.

The trap contains the living gold fish in water until released by another thread.

The card table conceals a water-tank servante.

A globe fitted with a lining of ladies’ invisible hair net attached to a wire rim resting on the mouth.

A fishing rod as originally used in the "Aerial Fishing" trick, with silk *fish* in tubular bait.

Duplicate living fish to required number.

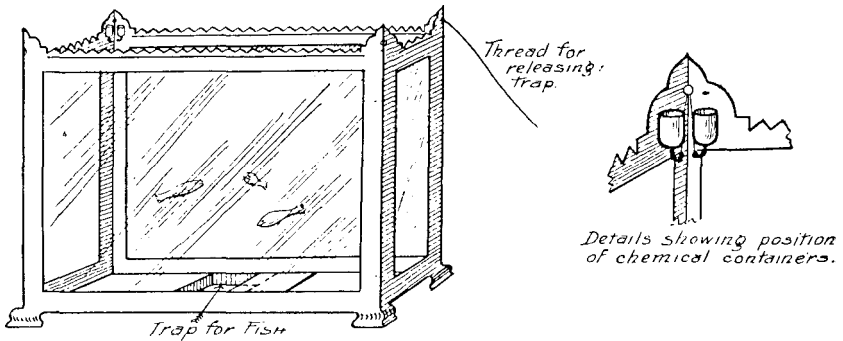
One metal toy fish enamelled black (can be cheaply obtained as a magnetic toy at any toy shop).

Large silk handkerchief.

An assistant.

**Presentation.**—Before commencing, the chemical containers are carefully loaded. The performer enters with a fishing rod in one hand and a bucket of water in the other, an assistant following with two additional buckets.

First placing his hands within the tank itself to prove it empty (the transparent sides only add the appearance of plate-glass), the performer empties the buckets into the aquarium until filled to its ornamental rim.



The first fish caught is exchanged for the black toy already palmed. This is put into the tank where, if properly weighted, it will float continuously under the surface of the water.

While the wizard is engaged with a second catch his assistant effects the change of water to ink in the aquarium sides by operating the particular thread.

The bottom of the tank being also black, it is impossible to discern that the central body of water remains unaltered.

A focussed "lime" may be directed on the aquarium.

Affecting astonishment, a globe is called for, placed on the card table, and the second fish (living) placed into it, thus falling into the hair-net lining which is absolutely invisible.

A second limelight should play on the globe.

As the last fish is being secured the assistant releases the fish from the tank trap.

By the time the artiste has produced the silk and covered the globe of fish the assistant works the final change from ink to water.

Discovering the fish swimming in the proper aquarium a rush is made back to the covered globe; the rim is grasped through the handkerchief, thus carrying the net of fish; the handkerchief raised; while under its cover the fish are disposed of into "servante," showing the globe empty.

The problem of how the fish wandered from the globe to the aquarium can safely be left to the spectators.

**Remarks.**—For the central idea of this effect the writer is indebted to a personal suggestion of his highly-esteemed confrère "Chung-Ling-Soo," though not on the above lines. The mechanical details and tests were worked out at Manchester with the valuable assistance of Mr. Harry Whiteley.

The hair-net vanish is an original conception of the author.

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## The New Trunk Effect.

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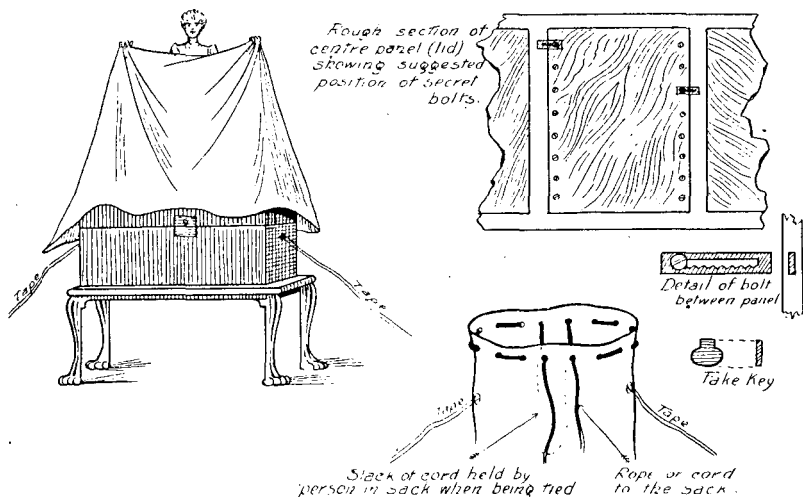


**EFFECT.**—A trunk, sack, two lengths of tape, and a pair of handcuffs are first passed round for inspection. An assistant of either sex (we will assume a lady) is next introduced; securely handcuffed by the public; the tapes similarly fastened round her neck, then placed into the sack with the tapes passing through two special eyelet holes to the outer side, afterwards the mouth of the sack itself is tied and sealed by anyone who chooses. In this condition the lady is lifted into the trunk and tapes again passed through

holes at either end, then the trunk is locked, and the lock itself may be sealed if so desired.

After the trunk is elevated from the stage, or floor of the drawing room, on to a small stand or resting upon two substantial chairs, the tapes are given to members of the audience to hold. As these tapes are around the neck any violent movement would be instantly conveyed to those in charge of the ends.

The magician now steps upon the lid, holding before him the trunk canvas cover, which just falls over the top edges of the trunk itself and reaching as high as his head. For a second he raises it higher still, when it is allowed to fall to the ground discovering the assistant in his place and he himself handcuffed within the sealed sack with the tapes around his neck, upon the trunk being unlocked.



**Requirements.**—Any top-panel release trunk of comfortable dimensions—the larger the better. The accompanying illustration gives an original and undetectable method of secret fastening bolts.

Two pieces of tape about 20 feet long.

Sack with eyelets at the top through which the cord securing

the sack passes, and two special eyelets somewhat larger in size, one on either side, for the tapes.

Canvas cover as ordinarily used for travelling trunks or a fancy cloth of suitable size.

Pair of handcuffs, faked, or for which a duplicate key is held by the assistant.

Matches, candle, and sealing wax handy.

Plenty of nerve.

**Presentation.**—The sensation numerous “box tricks” have created in famous hands should be the excuse for presenting this illusion, in which a “box” or travelling trunk *largely* figures, this arises from the fact that it is the *biggest* piece of apparatus employed, although the mystery is much deeper than the sack about to be utilised (display the sack). To *secure* this desirable end this pair of regulation handcuffs may be of some service (pass round handcuffs). Handcuffs naturally suggest red-tape methods of working, so to avoid such an insinuation *white* tape has been purposely substituted (exhibit tapes), while to secure the *seal* of your approbation for the ensuing effects here are provided a supply of wax and matches.

After the box, sack, tapes, and handcuffs have been sufficiently overhauled, the lady is next presented and immediately handcuffed with her hands behind her. The entertainer himself places the two tapes around her neck and requests anyone to seal them should they desire to do so. (Any of the several rope-ties will do for this, but the writer suggests Conradi’s method as being the most illusive.) Thus fettered the lady steps into the sack, securing with her two thumbs the slack loop of cord depending from the eyelets into the sack as it is raised by the worker over her head. When the neck of the sack has been gathered together—after first passing the tapes from the victim’s neck through their separate eyelets—the loop must be tightly held until the mouth has been secured and sealed. The cord need only pass once around the neck of the sack in tying—this will facilitate instant opening upon release of the tension on the inner loop. The sack and its living contents are now ready for depositing in the trunk. This should be carefully done that the tapes may be *straight* in line and the

ends passed through the respective holes and handed to members of the public. The lid has been closed down just prior to offering the tapes. This affords sufficient time for the lady to release herself of the handcuffs and neck tapes, so that by the time the four possessors of tapes are pulling taut she is free and no movement can follow. Great stress should be laid upon holding the tapes tight, for *only in that condition* can the mouth of the sack be eased open without imparting the knowledge to the holders. The release is so simple it is practically accomplished and the panel unlocked and held up loosely by the hand by the time the professor mounts the lid. Covering himself and the edges of box with the canvas he gives any pre-arranged signal, and the lady climbs carefully up in front of him and takes the canvas without double movement from his hands, but without disclosing her head until he has sunk behind her into the open box and closed the panel. Then can the canvas be dropped discovering the change. Meantime the conjuror readily finds the open mouth of the sack supported so by the tapes. Thrusting himself feet first into it he draws the loop and the neck closed again into original state. The ends of the tape are easily fixed over the neck and fastened again at the back with one hand, while with the other the cuffs are grasped and clasped behind him long before the box can be dismantled from its support and opened. The seals are *cut off* to open the sack, and the same applies to the front of neck seal, and the *seals alone* passed again to the audience. Unlock the handcuffs openly and the illusion is complete. The illustrations explain the rest.



## The Unity of Nations.

**N**OTHING in the *repertoire* of the writer lends itself to greater spectacular effect (commencing with an absolutely clear stage) than this sequence of items introduced under the above title.

By no means difficult to perform, it will be found an extremely



successful "dumb" act, and works in smooth, easy, natural steps from its very commencement.

Perhaps the only drawback is the trouble necessarily associated with spring flowers when used in any quantity. This alone prevented the writer presenting the "number" under the existing "two houses nightly and matinee" system ruling in England. Therefore it still remains a novelty for those who are not afraid to meet the cost of replacing flowers, or of an attendant specially engaged to supervise their collection and careful folding.

Excepting the author's "Magic of Japan," this is the only other programme worked upon an entirely empty stage, that is, without the conventional settings, a special field of novelty he has been permitted to enjoy alone up to the present day.

**Effect.**—Attired in evening dress, opera cloak, and crush hat, the wizard walks leisurely "on" swinging an ebony silver-mounted cane, and smoking a cigarette.

Never for a moment does he appear to be conscious of an audience as he amuses himself by balancing, throwing, suspending, etc., his walking stick.

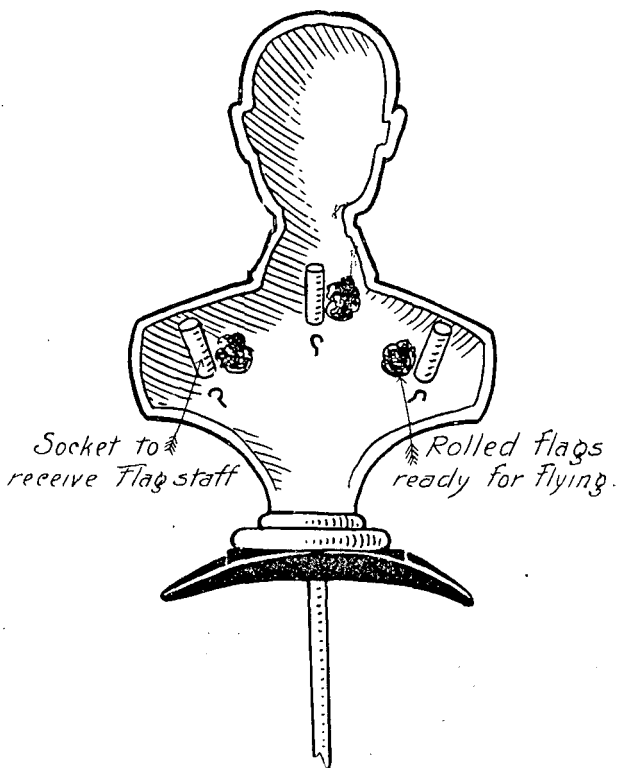
After several "magnetic" feats he ultimately balances it perpendicularly "up stage centre," and throws away his cigarette. On stepping forward again the cigarette flies from the stage to between his lips, and he continues smoking a few seconds before throwing "off."

Removing his hat, he compresses it and spins it upon the head of the standing cane. It remains there forming a small improvised table. The cloak is then removed, displayed freely on both sides as empty, yet a large plaster (or papier maché) bust is discovered upon his open hand as the wrap is tossed to the "wings." The bust is placed on the top of the hat.

Returning down stage the next effect is the creation at finger tips of a silk flag, and a shake of the flag produces three thin rods. These are arranged at the back of the bust (*see illustration.*)

Again the flag is shaken to evolve a second one. A repetition secures a third. Advancing to the footlights, the performer apparently throws each flag separately in the direction of the bust when they instantly are seen attached to the rods. For the final

effect a leaf from his coat-flower is taken at the finger tips, where it visibly increases in size and multiplying beyond description, falls from the cupped hands (arms are uncovered to elbows) in a perfect cascade. These are not permitted to fall to the stage on expanding, but retiring to the "table" are scattered all around where they remain suspended until they form a perfect slope of color from the stage itself to the base of the bust, leaving a full-stage floral trophy as the "curtain" falls.



**Requirements.**—Black enamelled thin steel tube with head "tapped" to receive the screw thread in base of crush hat which is fitted with a flat metal crown carrying about half an inch of tubing in centre under the surface to fit on head of stick. On the hat top is fixed a metal clip, into which the base of the "bust" slides and is secured.

A length of ladies "invisible" hair netting, 6 feet wide and long enough to stretch entirely across the stage used. If attached to wood rollers at either end packing is facilitated and tangling of net impossible.

The nets may have to be purchased in the usual size, but are very cheap and easily joined.

Small twisted wire fake for mouth to guide thread operating the cigarette.

A three-quarter shell bust, preferably of papier maché, fitted with grooves to receive the flag sticks and springs clipping duplicate flags. Three small hooks near base.

Three flags, one end of each attached by strong threads, with six inches or more "play" as found necessary, to the bust itself. The opposite corners fitted with long thin elastic terminating in a small brass ring.

Three ordinary duplicate flags.

Three sticks fitted at the top with wire guides to receive elastics of flags on being fixed into the bust after production.

One or three threads across stage to operate flag springs. Slipped on to spring or springs in placing bust on the hat.

500 or more silk flowers.

Smart assistant.

**Preparations.**--The end of the cigarette entering the mouth is securely tied with cotton about half an inch up. The cotton is passed once over the twist of wire mouth fake and continued "off" stage.

The bust is carefully loaded with flags with the elastic pulls temporarily tucked under the spring clips so arranged as to be easily get-at-able without fumbling.

The cloak conceals a large patch-pocket in the lining (mouth downwards) at the top of which is strongly sewed a hook to carry the bust.

The stage must be bored, and a socket sunk to firmly receive the stick. One or three threads are stretched across the back of the stage.

The flag sticks are lightly tied together with fine thread and loaded under the coat (left armpit) top downward, and with a

length of the cotton looped to the outer side of coat in any position suitable for loading into the flag on production.

The flags are vested or otherwise concealed according to individual method, and pulls or other fakes for vanishing arranged on favoured principles.

Spring flowers are packed in one bundle of 50, two bundles of 100, and a final bundle of 250. The smaller bundle is in left "pochette," 100 on each side of hips. The 250 in left "profond."

The hair netting lies flat on the stage directly in front of the socket for stick.

**Presentation.**—Enter the stage slowly, erect, facing the audience but without acknowledging their presence, puff away at the cigarette and proceed to any magnetic tricks with the stick, continually swinging and tossing in the air after each release.

Still swinging the stick step backwards to the socket in the stage and proceed to balance stick, previously throwing cigarette toward the footlights. Crush the opera hat and mount on top of stick. Then remove coat and carry over the left arm.

Advance to the footlights (taking care not to disturb the hair-netting lying on the stage), and beckon the cigarette with a finger, when it flies to the lips, on the thread being pulled by the assistant, after which it can be thrown "off." The cloak is rapidly displayed back and front, bunched by collar in the left hand, drawn over the right hand, leaving the bust unhooked on the open palm. The coat is thrown off, and the bust secured in position on the top of the hat. While fixing the bust the flag can be secretly obtained, and under cover of displaying it the loop to the flag supports secured. The fingers of the left hand secure the flag by one corner, and the folds naturally conceal the sticks, which may now be released together or separately by raising the left over the right hand. Throw the flag over the left arm, and fix the sticks into the sockets of the bust, at the same time passing the elastic over the top guide and securing the terminal rings to the hooks provided in the base. The assistant in the "wings" lifts the thread into the waiting hand of the wizard, which he naturally receives, and

adjusts over the clip retaining the flags, under cover of steadying the bust.

Again walking towards the audience the showman grips through the flag a button in the seam of the left sleeve, and draws out a second flag. A shake discovers it to the public, and the first flag is cast carelessly over the right sleeve to similarly bring to light the third.

Any favourite means should be adopted for the disappearance, and a revolver blank used to announce the raising of the flags on their staffs. This is effected by a pull on the thread, releasing clips holding the flags, which are then automatically hauled up by the elastics.

After he has pulled the flag thread, the assistant raises one end of the netting from the stage until the centre grips over the base of the bust, then drops his end to the stage again, so leaving an invisible skeleton bank to receive the spring flowers.

Taking a single leaf from his button-hole, he passes it from one hand to the other, palming it in the right and recovers it at the back of the neck, while his left hand secures the bunch of 50. These are palmed, and the same hand receives the recovered leaf at the finger tips. The right hand is now shown empty, flowers and leaf cross palmed and the left displayed. Both hands are brought together, wrists and tips touching, the thumbs at liberty break the band and a gradual expansion of the flowers regulated by the pressure of the hands as they are distributed on to the net at the foot of the bust. Under cover of distributing, ample opportunity occurs for re-loading each hundred while the final 250 is worked rapidly, and forms a magnificent display.

Care must be taken to build up the bank from the stage upward, finishing at the bust itself with a brilliant shower.

**Remarks.**—This programme of charming effects formed the writer's personal favourite, and was compiled by him for special production at the Parc Schouburg Theatre, Amsterdam, 1898.

## The Building up of the Union Jack.

**E**FFECT.—In presenting this act the curtain rises upon a stage dressed with no other properties than a small carpet square, on which stands an artist's easel, with four pieces of heavy gilt picture moulding resting at the base.

On entering, the performer at once proceeds to display carelessly both sides of each section of the frame as he dovetails it together upon the easel, proving the frame itself empty, and at the same time detached from any contrivance likely to operate it.

His next move is to produce in a magical manner a large silk handkerchief, while (if pattering) he relates the history of the evolution of the Union Jack—or the flag of any other nationality selected.

This handkerchief should be red, and described as the groundwork of our National Emblem.

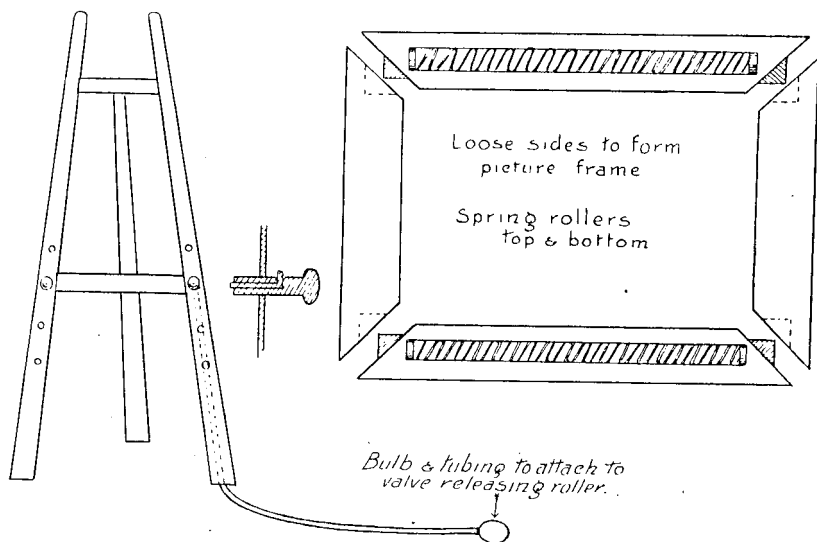
As mysterious as was its production it vanishes, and on firing at the empty frame the missing square fills the space.

A white silk (!) is the following production. This is torn into strips to form the St. George and St. Andrew's crosses. Again, the pieces secretly disappear to be recovered properly attached to the red now filling the frame on the second report of the revolver. One top corner of the white strip hangs loosely down, this the magician proceeds to correct (to prove the whites *separate* from the ground colour) before producing a third silk—blue—in turn, likewise torn and fired into the frame.

This completes the flag, which is immediately detached and

handed round for examination, while the frame itself is again taken apart before the artiste makes his final bow.

**Requirements.**—A frame specially built by a competent mechanic, or a photographic shutter manufacturer. It contains rollers, top and bottom, in the base, a strong spring roller exactly to the model of the modern focal plane time and instantaneous photographic shutter. The top roller is provided also with a weaker spring, only sufficiently strong to retain the silk webbing in position until actuated from the base. This top section carries the several flags, with the last attached to the side tapes by fine wire hooks upon the tape itself. The top bar also contains the initial lengths of tapes forming the connection with the motive base spring, and attached thereto through guides in the side sections provided for that purpose in the building of the frame itself.



The attachment is rapidly and invisibly made by means of perfectly flat wires on the hook-and-eye principle, and is accomplished after the sides are erected while apparently fixing the top securely. The hands are at that moment at the top and bottom performing a perfectly natural action.

The four spaces required in the frame exactly correspond with the action of the spring--actuated, in all, three times--while the check action with automatic release must be strictly according to pattern of the commercial shutter, with the exception that the release tube should travel from the release catch to beneath base fitting, exactly *over* a connecting joint projecting from the peg upon which it rests, and so conveying the tubing through the peg, down behind the easel leg and under the carpet where the rubber bulb rests inactive at a known spot until operated by the performer's foot at the moment of firing his revolver.

**Presentation.**—First pick up the base moulding and carefully adjust on the pegs, making sure that the release connection is properly secured. Placing the top under arm, the two sides are next erected, still holding one of the side pieces, the top is then placed in position. In pressing the top home at the corners one hand secures the protruding connecting tape, carrying it down under cover of the moulding until it slips into the waiting hook of the base spring. The same movement covers the action on the other side.

Although all parts should be made to fit easily, much effort can be pantomimed in constructing the frame, and at no moment should the hands leave it until finally complete and properly connected.

The handkerchiefs may be produced by any favourite method and vanished according to individual custom.

Affecting astonishment at each disappearance, advance towards the spot on carpet concealing release bulb, and press with foot at the moment of firing. The report covers the noise of the spring.

The rest is easy.

On taking out the completed flag, unhook the tapes from top roller and allow them to run through the side guides to the base. Take pieces apart, placing them as at the beginning at the foot of the easel, and the illusion is accomplished.

If the frame is made on a large scale it may have to be covered during the releases according to the power of the spring. In



smaller sizes this is not necessary. The original model was  $8\frac{1}{2}$  in.  $\times$   $6\frac{1}{2}$  in.

**Remarks.**—Although the principle is by no means new its adoption in this spectacular trick is warranted by its instantaneous success, and the apparent impossibility of applying it—or at least operating it. On the small scale the writer included it for a long time (1904-5) in his drawing room programme, and now in its improved form submits it as highly suitable for a stage act.

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## Four and Twenty Blackbirds.

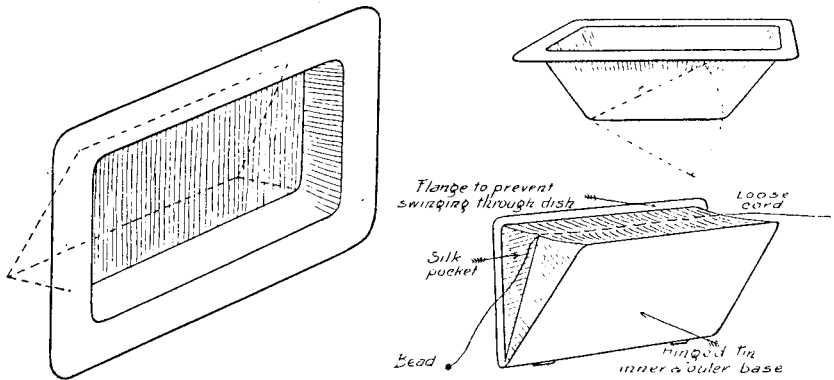
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**T**HIS simple piece of apparatus can be blended into many programmes, especially where children are to be entertained. It lends itself both to comedy and the more serious methods of handling mystery. At Christmas it could be utilised as a welcome change to the pudding or cake trick, and for pantomime gives the Dame a chance to make a real magical pie in the kitchen scene, as the productions are illimitable in bulk and variety according to the dimensions of the pie-dish.

**Effect.**—A pie-dish of tin or enamelled ware of fair size is brought on by the performer or his assistant, with the interior full face to the audience. It is then turned over to disclose the underside free from any apparent preparation.

A suitable legend should be related as an introduction, or the nursery rhyme adhered to. Some excuse or other may be made for the exact color of the birds eventually produced or their actual numbers.

A paper hand-coil is thrown out and the ribbons gathered up at once into the pie-dish ; instantly a flock of birds and huge showers of flowers overflow the dish which can be then emptied of all contents and shown again, back and front.



**Requirements.**—The pie-dish is constructed, as in the accompanying illustration, with the load securely swinging from hinges to the upper side of the base. Two metal plates form, with a lining of silk, a pocket into which both birds and spring flowers have been carefully packed. These are kept in position by the silk-lining, being drawn together at the lower edge by a single basting thread running the entire length with the ends loose, to one of which a small black bead is attached. The metal plates are flanged about  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. so that neither side can swing through the dish itself. Desired number of birds, 100 or more flowers, one hand throw-out coil.

**Presentation.**—On entering the stage the load is kept at the back by pressure of the fingers within the dish. At a slight angle its own weight keeps it in proper position, therefore the rims are held in the hand in turning it deliberately over to show the bottom. The turn is made facing the public, and from the top away from the body, and the load swinging inward closes the base for inspection. In again turning it back the left arm passes underneath to receive it, and the dish rests flat upon the forearm at an angle upward from the audience.

The hand-coil is next obtained and thrown. For the moment this action draws too close attention from the dish although the loaded interior cannot be seen. The rapidly gathered ribbons are thrust heaped into the dish which can now be brought to the level,

and in gathering the overlapping ends of paper the hanging bead is secured, and the basting thread pulled out of the silk, thus releasing the load. The right hand can enter the dish in arranging the paper shavings and assist the flow of flowers. In emptying the dish, turn it completely over so that the fingers underneath may quickly tuck in the silk sides and mouth of load, and press it flat with the base proper. The addition of small metal catches are an advantage, for the dish (empty) can then be displayed with absolute impunity.

From an 18 in. dish, 6 doves, or 20 canaries, in addition to 100 silk flowers can easily be produced.

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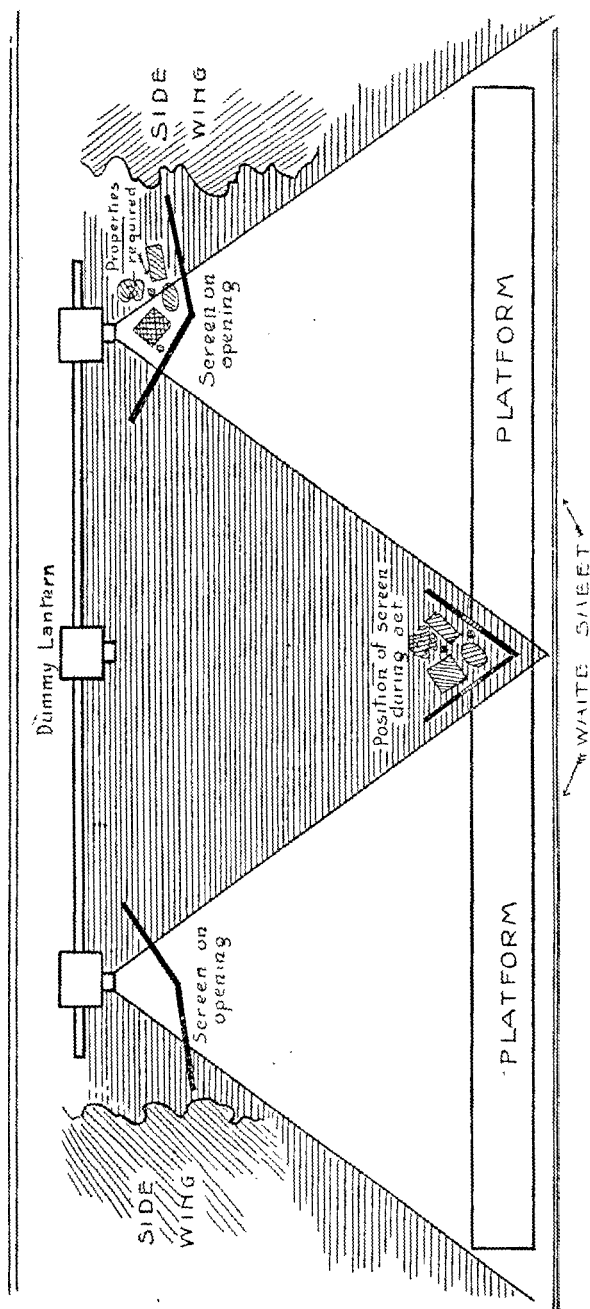
## The Man with the Mystic Shadow.



**H**IS novelty is necessarily intended for the stage only, and involves an entirely new principle in magic. The conception is strictly original, and although the writer has never staged it, on a miniature scale it proves thoroughly practical. It is now published for the purpose of stimulating further application of the system, or the act may be adopted in its entirety.

In effect, the rising curtain discovers a narrow raised platform supported by a number of slender trestles, behind which, centred at the back of the stage, is a single projecting lantern with folding screens at either side.

The performer enters, and describing the exceptional character of shadow pantomime he is about to introduce, draws special attention to the absence of all apparatus, etc., etc., and the impossibility of utilising stage traps, or the side entrances of the stage itself, for the remarkable phenomena produced, for during the entire performance it will be observed his isolated shadow does not for a second leave the sheet. He now mounts the platform and the white sheet descends in front of him.



His shadow and that of the platform are immediately thrown into strong relief by the turning of the stage lantern up and the "Front of House" lights down.

The performer commences in the orthodox manner by baring his arms, slowly turning his hands to proclaim them empty. Without further movement than closing the fingers an egg is produced. A second later the egg is a living chicken; again it changes into a full grown fowl, etc., *ad lib.* A series of handkerchief tricks provide sufficient cover to produce tables, chairs, or any other desired objects the solidity of which are demonstrated by slowly revolving that the shadow of all sides may be cast.

Possibilities of the most extravagant effects are limited only to the ingenuity of the artiste himself.

For a final effect the magician may envelop himself in a flag or other drapery, and almost before it can fall to the platform, he himself is bowing his acknowledgements in front of the house with the full lights upon him.

The sheet rising to the "flies" shows the platform exactly as "shadowed" only it is now covered with the actual productions.

**Requirements.**—Three projecting lanterns, the two side ones of which are of equal illuminating power, equal focal length of lens, fitted with connected caps to cover and uncover simultaneously.

The lanterns must be rigidly fixed—when the correct focus is synchronised—upon a metal bar or rod.

Two two-fold screens, one fitted with large open traps on either side fold.

Such apparatus, objects, and furniture desired for production.

Platform three feet wide, and sufficient trestles to support the length. None must be fixed to the centre. The ends only should be supported.

A sheet full size of stage opening, or the cinematograph sheet could be utilised if found suitable.

A smart, trustworthy assistant.

**Preparations.**—The accompanying illustration fully explains the stage setting and preliminary screening of two secret lanterns which are the whole key to the mystery. The centre lantern is turned low with open lens, on the curtain rising.

The two side lanterns have been previously keyed to the point

of fusing the focus in the centre of the sheet, to obtain which each lens is masked with one side square.

To kill the points of light additional caps of ground glass must be provided for each lens, or a screen of flat ground glass arranged a short distance in front of both.

The centre lantern is of no importance, and acts simply as "misdirection" while the stage is exposed.

Behind one of the side screens all apparatus, etc., to be used is placed in readiness.

When the sheet falls for the commencement of the act all auditorium lights must remain full on until the cue is given that the stage is set.

The screens are removed from the lanterns and lens uncapped. This is barely the work of a second, and the entertainer can easily keep the audience occupied until the rest of the stage arrangements are completed. It will be readily seen that the assistant is free to move behind and between the lanterns. He now arranges the screen (with the open traps) between the two lanterns, also the necessary furniture, apparatus, etc. The position of screen must be exact to points previously ascertained by careful tests. It should project nearly half-way over the platform itself.

From behind the screen the assistant uncovers the traps on each side, and stands ready to hand up to the performer whatever is required. In doing so the greatest care must be exercised that nothing is allowed to prematurely project into the line of light until the performer actually reaches for it. The slightest movement of the hand "hazes" the act of taking the article until it is more slowly exhibited in "shadow." Both sides of the screen must be worked from, but the performer must be careful to cross the centre rather rapidly from one side of the platform to the other. Suitable effects will readily occur to each worker, for the most astonishing effects are simplicity itself to devise. For the final surprise the assistant can support a wire head frame under the flag or cloth used for the disappearance, under cover of which the performer steps from the platform **into** the screen. The assistant can then wave the fake allowing the flag to twist around it in mid-air before permitting it to fall to the platform, thus affording ample time for the entertainer to reach the front of the house.

When the house lights and applause signal the re-appearance,

replace screen over the side lanterns, open the centre one again, and "ring up" the sheet.

**Remarks.**—Worked out in experiment by the writer in 1904.

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## Vanishing Glass of Water.

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**T**HIS brilliant yet little-known effect was communicated to the writer by an esteemed Manchester confrère and enthusiast, and although the name of the inventor (a professional magician, deceased) has passed memory the trick remains original.

**Effect.**—An ordinary glass, containing water or other liquid, is introduced as near to the audience as the worker cares to perform, whether on the stage or in the salon, away from all furniture which might suggest the possibility of a concealed servante.

An ordinary silk handkerchief is borrowed and the glass covered. It is offered to one of the public to hold and the edge of the silk is raised to show that the actual glass is being held by the volunteer assistant.

The magician simply takes the handkerchief by two corners and shakes it at the word "go" and it is gone. Both sides of the handkerchief are afterwards displayed, drawn though the hand, then returned to the owner.

Where and how the glass disappears will, in good hands, long remain a profound mystery even to the expert, should he be uninitiated.

**Requirements.**—An ordinary glass containing any liquid in use during the performance.

Half a soft rubber ball to fit mouth of glass comfortably.

A circle of flexible leather or rubber to fit base of glass, having a cord attached to its centre (the simple "sucker"). The other end of the cord is fixed to the back of the vest.

The "sucker" must be thoroughly soaked before attempting the trick.

**Presentation.**—With both arms bared to the elbows advance with the glass of liquid in the left hand, drawing special attention to the proposed feat of vanishing it complete. (Though this advice is unusual, it is quite safe and enhances the surprise.)

“To prevent any awkward splash in its invisible flight,” the suggestion is offered to wrap it up if someone would kindly loan an ordinary silk handkerchief for that purpose.

The right hand sinks to a *pochette* and palms the rubber fake. The same hand takes the glass by the mouth while the left accepts the proffered *mouchoir*. This is lightly thrown over the hand and glass. The right hand presses the rubber “home” level with the lip of the glass. The left hand can now grasp the glass through the silk and offer it to someone to “throw away.” Again take the glass from the outside of the silk with the right hand in passing it to a spectator. The latter facing the rest of the audience is asked to grasp it in the same position. While arranging the assistant’s attitude the left hand obtains possession of the suspended sucker from under the coat and advances it under the kerchief, pressing it securely to the base of the glass. With the hand still there the silk is raised by the right hand sufficiently high to disclose the glass resting on the left, though care must be taken to prevent the rubber being seen.

The glass is now left entirely in the assistant’s hand. The corners of the silk are secured and flicked aside simultaneously with the request to the assistant to “let go.” The glass by its own weight instantly falls and swings behind under the momentary “cover” of the flash of the handkerchief. Pass the silk through the closed hand, display empty, and return.

Though daring in conception and requiring as it does a bold address in execution, this novelty will be found a great acquisition to any repertoire in which a glass of liquid is employed. And as a finale to such an item can always be relied upon to—using an Americanism—“leave them guessing.”

**Note.**—The inventor of the above trick was the late Professor Whyman, in whose hands it always puzzled magicians. He was very proud of it, and imparted the secret to only a very select few. The inventor used a sheet of newspaper instead of the borrowed handkerchief as suggested by the Author. The paper allows more cover, and should it be so desired, glass can be pocketed under cover of wrapping it up, paper retaining shape of glass when glass is safely in pocket.

For those who have not the nerve to do this with the borrowed handkerchief, use the paper; you will get ample cover.—H.W.



# Original "Twists" on Card Manipulation.



IN all his card work the writer studiously avoids the "back and front" palm as a mere exhibition of dexterity, preferring to utilize its enormous value in the more subtle moves of the card trick proper, where its employment is least expected—if at all—and its secret assistance rendering the resulting effects practically miraculous.

For the tricks hereafter described no novelty is claimed, but the manner of presentation is entirely original.

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## CARD SWALLOWING EFFECT.

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IN the course of card manipulation a silk handkerchief is thrown over the left hand and arm, falling gracefully down from the supporting point of the second finger.

A single card is taken at hazard and apparently placed in the mouth, rendered into a state of pulp, then ostensibly blown under the handkerchief where its form is instantly seen to appear. On taking off the handkerchief the card is actually discovered to be held by the fingers of the left hand.

**Requirements.**—Smart address and skill, that's all!

**Presentation.**—Falling from the upraised point of the second finger of the left hand the folds of the handkerchief should not hide all of the arm. The card, in advancing it towards the mouth, is rapidly turned down into the palm and retained there. The fingers and thumb slowly extended to silently convey the

impression of the hand being empty. Pantomime mastication, and blow towards the left hand at the same time extending the first and second fingers, thus providing two points from which the silk falls. This convincing subterfuge declares the arrival of the card by a perfect indication of shape.

The right hand still containing the palmed card sweeps under the handkerchief, and without apparent movement the card is transferred to the left in removing the silk.

Great care must be observed that no brilliant lights are at the back of the performer, otherwise the transparency of the silk may "give away" the deception.

**Remarks.**—First introduced by the writer at Leicester, 1887.

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## NEW RISING ENVELOPE AND CARD.

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**P**RIOR to a display of card tricks an envelope is passed for public examination that its ordinary character may be thoroughly vindicated. After its return to the performer's hands he places it upon a small holder which supports it in an upright position on a small centre table that it may remain in full view.

A selected card is vanished to rise on command from the empty envelope. First the flap of the envelope slowly rises, and on the wizard approaching it the card floats gently from the interior direct to his fingers some two feet above.

**Requirements.**—A slender-looking metal stand with heavy base, mounted at the top with a strong clip (a tie clip will do) to retain the envelope in a steady manner.

A duplicate card prepared with full-width flange.

An ordinary envelope of fairly large size. A thread across the stage—or between screens, as in the rising card effects—about six feet from stage. An assistant to work thread.

**Presentation.**—On receiving back the envelope, the right hand holds the prepared card clipped behind the fingers. Under

cover of the envelope it is reversed and slipped in position under the flap but *not inside* the envelope itself, with the natural movement of taking it.

A casual extension of the right arm to prove the isolation of the stand, the flange of the card under the flap of the envelope is hooked over the slackened thread, while the envelope *only* is secured by the clip, with "address" side toward the audience. The card is retained on the thread under flap by the assistant regulating the pull.

A "forced" card may be vanished in any manner, though a very dramatic effect is obtained if it be "palmed" into the muzzle of a pistol. On firing, the card raises the flap and springs high into the air to fall to the ground. Even if the card falls face down the flange is never noticed before the worker reaches it. If the pistol is not used the quieter command forms the cue for the assistant to slowly pull his end of the thread, thus first gently raising the flap until the performer's hand is in position over it, when a further pull lifts it direct to the fingers.

**Remarks.**—First performed by the writer at the Kursaal, Montreux, Switzerland, 1907.

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## ESCAPE FROM A SEALED PACK.

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**Effect.**—An unopened pack is handed to the spectators and six are requested to select with deliberation any single card. These may be marked if desired. The remaining cards are obtained by the magician, shuffled, and the chosen cards returned, again shuffled, and the complete pack handed to a volunteer to count their number. Two rubber bands (or tape and wax) are next handed the assistant for inspection, with the request that he personally secures the pack. Returning to his platform the performer calls for a single card to leave the sealed pack, and displaying his right hand empty on either side a second afterwards a neutral card is discovered at his finger tips.

Those having selected cards are requested to name them, but before they have time to reply the wizard names each card taken as he produces them in sequence at the ends of his fingers.

On a re-count of the sealed pack the number escaped are required to balance the original 52.

**Method.**—The number or value of the selected cards is a matter of indifference. The performer receives back each card separately and passes to the bottom, repeatedly shuffling the pack. The entire cards are given face down for the count. When the rubber bands or tapes are offered for examination, the conjuroi momentarily takes the counted pack, for the convenience of his assistant, and *palm off the bottom seven cards*, the bottom one being neutral. On retiring to a distance the seven cards are back palmed and returned again to palm after having satisfied the audience as to the *innocence* of the hand. The neutral card is first produced to illustrate the case of their invisible escape, and to occupy the hand concealing the remainder until produced, and as the cards lie face upward on the palm it is a simple matter to read off the selected and marked cards in the exact rotation of their return.

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## THE WANDERING ACES.

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The four Aces are withdrawn from the pack and returned separately in different positions. Four neutral cards are then taken from the top of the pack, and the remainder handed to someone for security.

One by one the indifferent cards are vanished, the hand shown empty; then the cards again appear at the finger tips, and prove to be the Aces. On examination, the four neutrals are found to have returned, while the Aces are actually missing from the pack.

**Method.**—Four Aces are backed by any other cards. The original pack, after the Aces are placed within it, is exchanged for another pack prepared by the withdrawal of the Aces, and the substitution at the bottom of the four backed cards. This pack is shown face toward the public on taking the four cards for manipulation, then handed to the assistant. The cards are turned completely round, on recovering from the back of the hand, thus shewing the Ace faces on their reproduction.

## PRODUCTION OF ANY CARD CALLED FOR.

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As a variation of the familiar "Up the Sleeve" production, after the first or second card someone is asked to specify any card by name. That particular card is instantly taken from the arm-pit, after proving the right hand quite empty.

The effect produced on the audience is simply astounding.

**Method.**—In commencing, nine cards only are palmed off and left in the armpit in the following order:—

Neutral card.	Ace of Spades.
Ace of Clubs.	Knave of Spades.
King of Clubs.	Ace of Hearts.
Ace of Diamonds.	Queen of Hearts.
King of Diamonds.	

The next two or three cards remaining on the top of the pack should be memorised.

More often than not, in the writer's practical working, a choice will fall among the cards named above, when a rapid count is easily made by finger and thumb under the coat, and the card produced. Usually several name cards aloud so no difficulty need be feared of *contretemps*, as the selection then rests with the worker to emphasise the choice of any he is prepared for. Only work the trick once.

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## TO SECURE A CARD FREELY SELECTED AND FREELY RETURNED.

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It may not be new, but it is very desirable to remember, in any case where a *clever* person refuses a forced card, to make use of "the Bridge."

Give any one the entire new pack to select from, hand to another to shuffle. When returning to the original victim bend the pack in either direction and ask him to re-insert his card where he likes, and shuffle. The fingers of an adept can then readily ascertain its position, and any single handed pass secure the card

without the right hand ever approaching the left containing the returned pack. It is well worth while to "best" the obstinate, for on a successful issue in adverse circumstances, experience teaches they are usually the first to proclaim the entertainer's skill.

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## NEW RECOVERY OF SELECTED CARD.

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A charming effect is secured by passing the desired card to the top of the pack, and while facing the audience, bend the pack as for the "hand to hand" spring, releasing the cards slowly with strong pressure, allowing them to fly in a graceful shower over the room, until the last one only remains between the fingers and thumb.

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## The Jack as "l'Enfant Terrible."

BY F. W. CONRADI,

Director of Academy for Magic Art, Berlin.

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TO do this trick you require one of the cards in triplicate, say the Jack of clubs, and the position of these three Jacks in the pack arranged as follows:— The first on top of the pack, then an indifferent card and then the second of the Jacks. The third Jack is second from the bottom. After this preparation you introduce the trick as follows:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen:—Up to the present I have shown you tricks which I had carefully thought out and practised for a long time. I am now going to do a trick which is quite 'impromptu,' and was suggested to me in coming along here. I have a little boy at home, who is about nine years old, called 'Jack,' a veritable 'enfant terrible.' He is always in mischief, and when

perhaps you think him safely stored away in the nursery he is in the topmost branches of a tree. He is always where you least expect him to be, and I have been thinking out a little problem which I shall present to you now. First of all, will you take a card please, Madam?"



You make the pass, bringing the first Jack to the middle and force samē on to the lady, let her look at the card and return to the same place, when making the pass again you bring it back to the top. At the same time 'ruffle' the cards and show the bottom one, which, we will say, is the seven of spades.

"Is this your card, Madam? What? No? A bad beginning. However, we will put this card upon the table and try again."

You turn the cards face downwards, and in the act of drawing the bottom card—apparently—out, to lay it down, you pull the seven of spades back, and instead, put the third Jack of clubs down. You then 'slip' the top card, which is the first Jack of clubs, to the bottom, and also the next card, which we will suppose to be the nine of diamonds. The position of the remaining two

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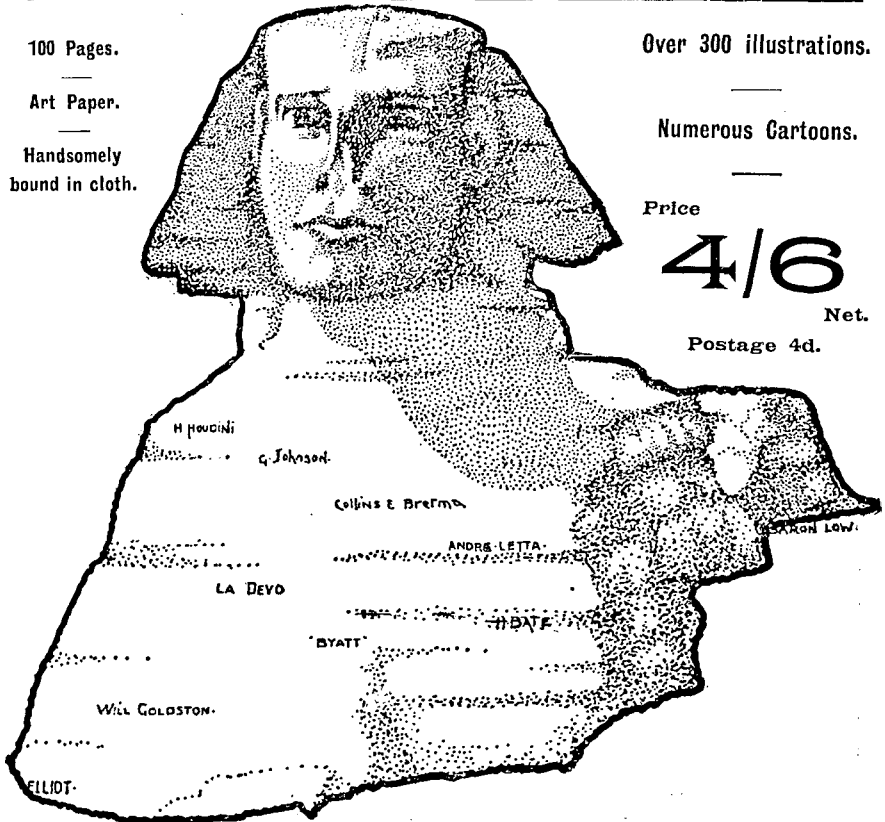
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