

Willanç's

WIZARDRY



MAGIC STUNTS
TRICKS
CATCHES

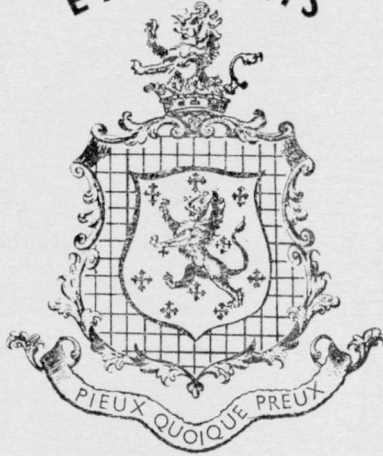
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M.I.M.C. (LONDON)

Willane's Wizardry

by

WILLANE

Member of the Inner Magic Circle
Member of the Variety Artistes' Federation
Member of the Concert Artistes' Association

Profusely Illustrated

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Yours bubblingly
Willard.

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P R E F A C E

THIS book contains endless entertainment for you and your friends, and represents part of my collection of "tricky stunts" which I have used for several years WITH GREAT SUCCESS—catches, puzzles, and tricks with which all magicians should be familiar. While many of them can be, and have been, performed on the stage, none requires any great amount of skill. For all that, each one should be tried over privately many times before you attempt to perform it to your friends. Neglect this necessary precaution and you will soon find how easy it is to produce a fiasco with even the simplest trick.

You must also remember that a trick, in itself, is simply the vehicle upon which your personality is carried. If you practise until the working of the trick is automatic your whole attention can be given to "presentation and timing." It is not *what you do*, but *how you do it*, that will establish your personality. Some of the effects described may seem so trivial that you may not think them worth while. For example, "The Magic Knot," on page 36, although it appears to be very simple, is astounding in the hands of an accomplished performer. His hands do not even appear to approach each other and the knot appears as if by magic. You, too, can do these things. The key word is PRACTICE—not large, laborious doses of it, but frequent and regular short spells. Then what at first appeared so awkward soon becomes so natural that in time you wonder why you ever found it difficult.

There is sufficient material in these pages to enable you to become the "lion of the party," and every effect is worth doing—in its proper place, of course.

I should have liked to have given credit to the originators of some of the tricks, but a magic stunt seems to make a round; everyone does it for a while, and then it is forgotten for years, and no one knows who exactly invented or discovered it.

I have not attempted to disclose the inner secrets of professional magic—such secrets are useless to anyone who is not prepared to spend months and months on the most diligent practice—but this book should help you to understand something of the intricacies of modern conjuring and to appreciate a good professional performance all the more.

Finally, I make no apology for the jumbled order in which the tricks appear. I have set them down just as they occurred to me. I am a conjurer—not an author.

WILLANE.

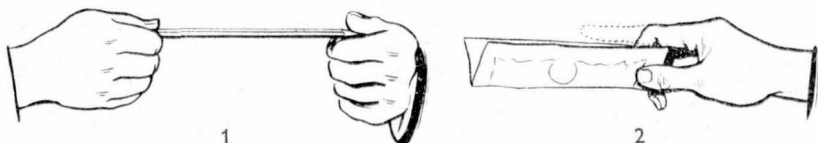
London, 1947.

*Dedicated to
My Mother,
who always thinks I'm good
even when my tricks go wrong.*

WILLANE'S WIZARDRY

TO CUT A PENCIL IN TWO WITH A POUND NOTE

There is a very ancient Chinese trick in which a chopstick is cut into halves by a piece of paper. It can be done as well with a pencil (which must be borrowed) and a Treasury note. It is best to borrow both these articles, and sometimes necessary! The pencil should be a nice long one, but any sort of note will do: ten shillings, one pound, or a "fiver." Your conversation should be of force and power through speed. You might say: "Incredible as it may seem, a piece of paper will plough through a pencil without damaging the paper." Fold the note twice and make a great point of creasing the fold to make a "sharp cutting edge." Then get the owner of the pencil to hold it very tightly by the ends as shown in illustration 1, his thumbs on top and his fingers beneath.



Hold the folded note by one end between the thumb and the middle finger as shown in illustration 2, so that while the first finger appears to be holding the note it is really free to *extend* when desired. Strike the centre of the pencil with the note, counting one, two, and on the third stroke bring the note down with considerable force and at the same time *extend the first finger* so as to strike the pencil with the finger. The pencil will break into two as though it had been cut. The first finger, of course, immediately returns to its former position, but now it really holds the note against the thumb.

The owner of the note will be so interested in examining the pencil that frequently it may be some time before he will remember to ask for the return of his note, which you have quietly placed in your pocket! He will undoubtedly believe the note cut through the pencil and will try it for himself, without success.

Do not be afraid to strike the pencil hard and "follow through," it should not hurt your finger.

THE CRACKED MIRROR

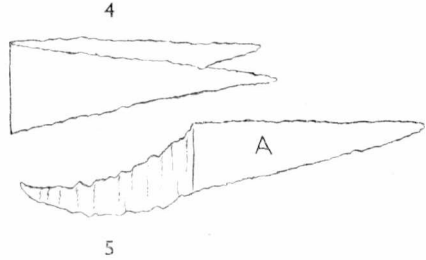
As a little practical joke you can make a mirror or a piece of plate glass appear to be cracked by drawing the cracks upon it with soap . . .

Draw the cracks as shown in illustration 3. Your host will be delighted!!!



A JAGGED TEAR

A nasty tear in the wallpaper can be imitated by taking a small piece of newspaper about 5 inches square and folding it in two. You then tear a triangular piece as shown in illustration 4 and crinkle one side, as in illustration 5, letting the crinkled portion curl round slightly. If part A is wetted and stuck on a papered wall it will give an excellent imitation of a nasty tear in the paper. Watch the owner's face! Do not use paste or gum. To spoil his paper really would also spoil the joke.



VANISHING A BORROWED COIN

A very good trick is the vanishing of a borrowed coin under a pocket handkerchief. Borrow a half-crown and hold it in the left hand about 8 inches in front of the outside breast pocket of your coat. (See



illustration 6.) Take a handkerchief in your right hand, holding it by one corner between your first and second fingers. Face the spectators and cover the coin with the handkerchief, but as you draw the corner

of the handkerchief over the coin, clip it between finger and thumb of right hand and carry it straight back to the pocket into which you drop it. (See illustration 7.) The handkerchief conceals this action from the spectators. As soon as the coin is safely in the pocket, drop the corner of the handkerchief and extend the covered left hand to increase the distance from the pocket. Now utter a magic word, such as *Carramba*, which is an old Spanish cuss-term, and whip away the handkerchief to show that the coin has disappeared.

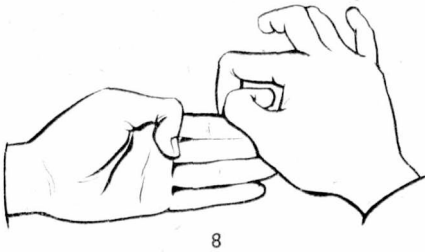
Tell the owner that the coin will reappear in precisely twenty-two hours and two minutes, but if he insists on having his money back, give him two and sixpence *in coppers*.

TO REMOVE YOUR THUMB

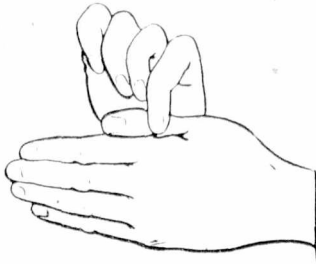
This trick especially delights children and makes some ladies shudder.

Hold your left hand, fingers extended and palm towards yourself, about shoulder high, the thumb close against your hand and bent at right angles at the first joint. Bend your right thumb in the same way and place the tip of the forefinger against the knuckle. (See illustration 8.)

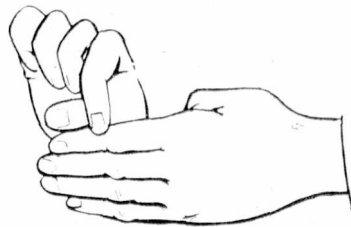
Now place the two thumbs together so that, from the front, it appears that you have simply taken your left thumb between the finger and thumb of the right hand. The left forefinger hides the join between the two thumbs, as shown in illustration 9.



8



9



10

To remove the thumb, slide your right thumb and finger along the left forefinger for about 2 inches, keeping close against it (see illustration 10), and then, without pausing, slide it back again. Remove your right hand, extend your left thumb, and wriggle it about as if to restore the circulation.

AN IMPROMPTU VANISH

Here is a very good trick to perform when in company with at least half a dozen other people. Any small article is borrowed, such as a cigarette lighter. It is held in the left hand at the finger tips and a handkerchief is thrown over it. Announce that you are going to make the lighter disappear. Say to the owner of the lighter: "FEEL IF IT IS REALLY THERE!" and allow him to feel the lighter through the handkerchief. Let a second person feel the lighter in the same way. Turn to a third person and ask him to feel it also, and as he puts his hand out, say: "FEEL UNDERNEATH THE HANDKERCHIEF." When he places his hand beneath the handkerchief PUT THE LIGHTER INTO HIS HAND, and unless his mentality is very slow in reacting he will take it from you. You are then in a position to "vanish" the lighter as you desire.

The author has never had a failure with this, and you will not find it necessary to take the man into your confidence beforehand. Press the lighter into his hand, and if he has his wits about him, he will get the idea. A particularly bright individual may even rise to the occasion sufficiently to slip the lighter into the owner's pocket, to the latter's profound astonishment subsequently.

AMPLIFYING SOUND

To set a fork ringing and place the noise in a glass seems particularly astonishing, but this is how it may be done.



Between courses at a dinner, pick up a fork and remark: "ISN'T IT STRANGE THAT A WINEGLASS AMPLIFIES SOUND. LISTEN CAREFULLY." Pluck the tips of the two middle prongs of the fork with your right finger and thumb so that it rings in a similar manner to a tuning-fork. Immediately pretend to take the sound, as though you were holding it between finger and thumb, and drop it into the glass. As you do so, the faint ringing note suddenly becomes much more audible!

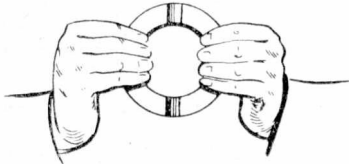
Strangely enough, there are many people who will accept the explanation you have suggested, but, of course, sound cannot be handled. The true secret is that at the moment you pretend to drop the sound into the glass, you press the handle of the fork on the table with your left hand (see illustration 11), thus causing the table to act as a sounding board, making the note ring out.

The illusion will be strengthened if your ear is inclined towards the glass, with your eyes looking upwards. It is only a small point but it is a big factor in misdirection.

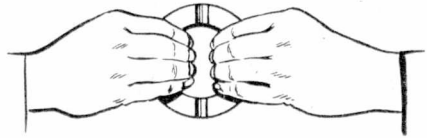
ILLUSIONS OF BENDING

Any small object that reflects light, such as a polished metal ash tray, can be used to create an interesting little illusion. As you remark: "WONDERFUL THINGS THEY MAKE OF RUBBER THESE DAYS," you apparently bend the ash tray backwards and forwards.

Of course, the tray does not really bend. For the correct position of the fingers, study the illustrations 12 and 13 and, while holding the object still, move the hands and fingers to simulate the bending movements. The reflection of the fingers in the polished surface of the tray increases the illusion of bending.

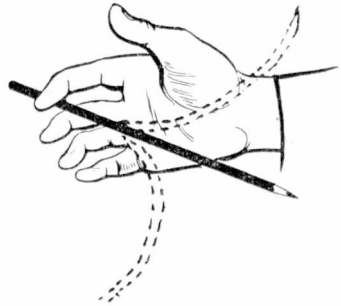


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A similar illusion can be created with a pencil. Hold the pencil loosely, as shown in illustration 14, and rock the hand gently straight up and down, and the pencil will appear to bend just as if it were made of rubber.



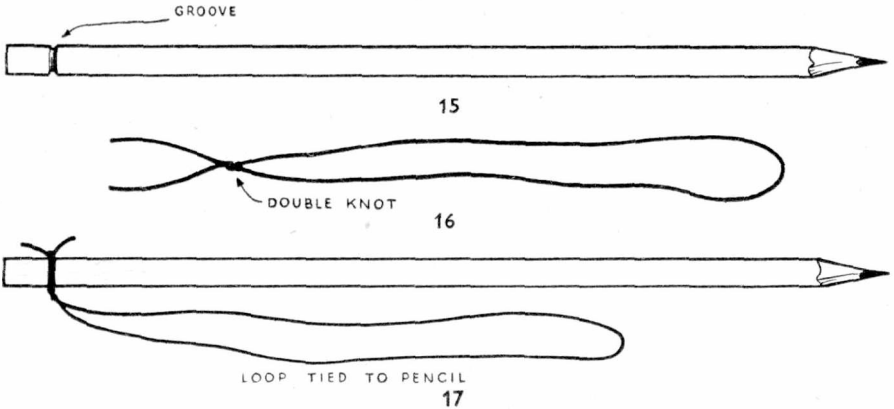
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HOW HIGH IS A TOP HAT ?

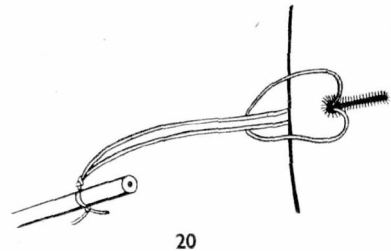
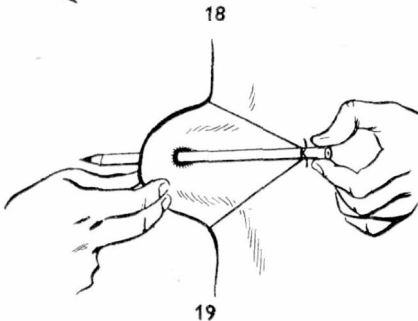
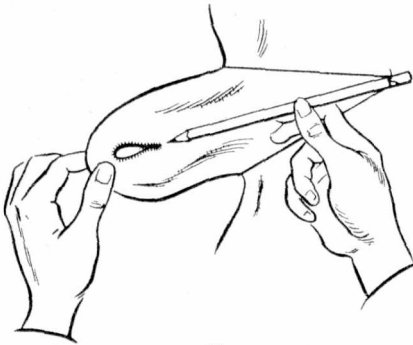
Very few people can answer this question. Ask someone to indicate, on the leg of a chair, the height of an opera hat, and it will be found, on placing the hat on the floor, that it will not reach to anywhere near the height estimated. Actually the hat is barely 5 inches in height. Its shape is responsible for the illusion.

THE LOOPED PENCIL

A pencil, with a loop of string attached, is fastened in a spectator's buttonhole, and he is challenged to remove it without untying or cutting the string. This is an excellent trick which is well worth preparing.



First, cut a groove round the pencil about half an inch from the end (illustration 15). Then take a piece of thin string and make a loop which is slightly shorter than the pencil (illustration 16). Finally tie the string in the groove round the pencil and cut off the ends to make a neat job (illustration 17).



With practice the pencil can be fixed in the spectator's buttonhole so rapidly that he cannot follow the method of doing it, but at first it will be best to ask him to close his eyes while you fix it. With your finger and thumb passed through

the loop of string, grasp his coat at the buttonhole and lift it up. Pull the pencil downwards so as to draw the loop of string over a portion of the coat, as shown in illustration 18. Push the free end of the pencil through the buttonhole, as in illustration 19, and release the coat, when the pencil will be tied in the buttonhole, as shown in illustration 20.

The pencil may be fixed in the bottom buttonhole of the waistcoat, if you prefer, when it is necessary only to slide the loop over the point of the waistcoat up and well beyond the buttonhole, and then slip the free end of the pencil through the buttonhole.

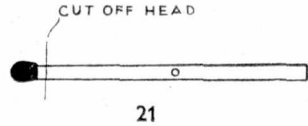
Unless you know the secret, it is impossible to remove the pencil from the garment without untying or cutting the string. The only way to do it is by reversing the movements above described.

You are advised not to pass this trick over, it will puzzle people for hours and in many cases, days on end.

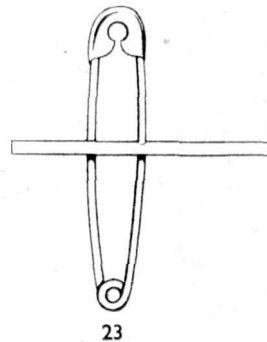
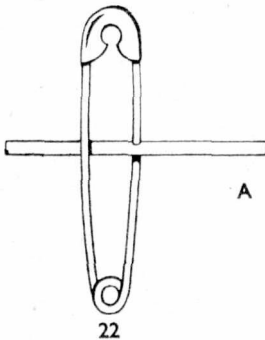
A BAFFLING LITTLE ILLUSION

This can be made with a match and a lady's hairpin or a safety pin.

A large-sized safety match is required, and its head should be cut off so that neither end can be distinguished from the other (illustration 21). Precisely in the centre of the match a hole should be drilled so that it will slide on to the pin (see illustration 22). The match must fit on the pin closely, but not too tightly.



Hold the pin in the left hand and smartly strike the end of the match marked A, when the match will appear to pass clean through the pin to the position shown in illustration 23.



What really happens is that the opposite end, striking against the other side of the pin, rebounds so quickly that the eye cannot follow it, and thus produces the illusion. It is one of the best of all the little pocket tricks, and is well recommended.

THE JUMPING BANDS

An excellent pocket trick can be performed with two small elastic bands. An elastic band, placed around the first and second fingers, jumps to the third and fourth, and back again. A second band is twined round the tips of the fingers to keep the first band in place, and still the trick is repeated.

Begin by placing the band round the first and second fingers, as shown in illustration 24. Show both sides of the hand, so that the band can be seen fairly to encircle the fingers. Grasp the band at the point X, stretch it and release it. Stretch it again and, as you release it, close the fingers so that the tips go inside the band (illustration 25), and *immediately* turn the hand over so that this fact cannot be seen. Illustration 26 shows the view of the back of the hand; the band still appears to be simply round the first two fingers. Press on the band with the tip of the thumb at the point marked A, and release it, when it will fly to the position shown in illustration 27. Open the hand and show both sides again and, while the back of the hand is towards the spectators, put the tip of the thumb under the band and stretch it as shown in illustration 28. Close the hand again, inserting the tips of the fingers into the band, and it will again *appear* to be in the position shown in illustration 27. Move the little finger slightly, and the band will fly back to the first and second fingers.



24



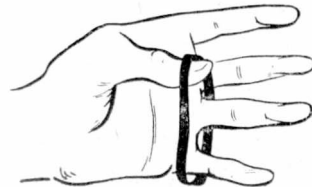
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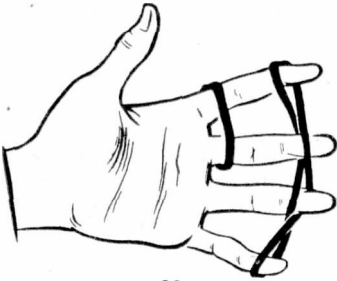
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With the first band round the first and second fingers, take the second band and entwine it round the tips of the fingers, as shown in illustration 29. This appears to prevent effectively the band from escaping, yet, curiously enough, if you repeat the movements above described, without any alterations, the first band will continue to jump from finger to finger.



30

TO PLACE A BURNING CIGARETTE ON A HANDKERCHIEF WITHOUT DAMAGE

If a penny is wrapped tightly in even a lady's delicate handkerchief, the lighted end of a cigarette can be pressed hard against it, without damaging the fabric. The metal conducts the heat away from the fabric too quickly for it to burn. (See illustration 30.)

TO RAISE THE DEAD

A "dead" fly which has fallen into your glass of beer can sometimes be "restored to life" when sprinkled with warm ash from your cigarette. Your spectators will be amazed to see it fly away merrily.

A TRICK QUESTION

It is strange to see how many people trip up over the following. Ask a friend to give you the answers to three simple calculations :

"If 50 cigars are sold for 50s., how much is that each?"

He will answer : "1s. each."

Continue : "Correct. Now if 100 are sold for 50s., how much is that each?"

He will reply : "6d. each."

"Correct. If 75 were sold for 50s., how much is that?"

He will probably reply : "9d. each," but that is incorrect—the answer is 8d. each.

ANOTHER

Tell a friend you will test him out with multiplication tables :

“WHAT ARE TEN TIMES TEN?” you will ask him. He will reply, “100.”

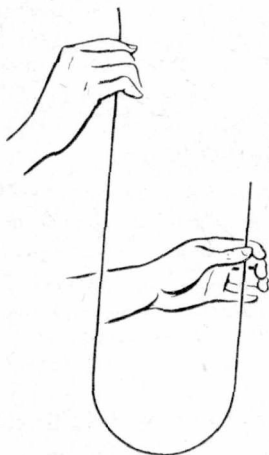
“WHAT ARE TWELVE TIMES TWELVE?” He will reply, “144.”

“WHAT ARE ELEVEN TIMES ELEVEN?” Curiously enough, he will usually reply either “132” or “122.”

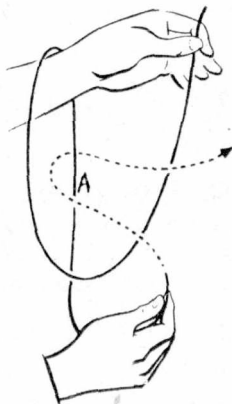
TO TIE A KNOT IN A PIECE OF STRING WITHOUT LETTING GO THE ENDS

Much fun can be had by demonstrating this. It requires a little practice, but if you will diligently do it a few dozen times, adjusting the string to the correct positions, as shown in the illustrations, you will then be able to do it smoothly and automatically.

The string should be about 4 feet long, and it is held by the thumb and fingers of each hand, near the ends, as in illustration 31. Take the string



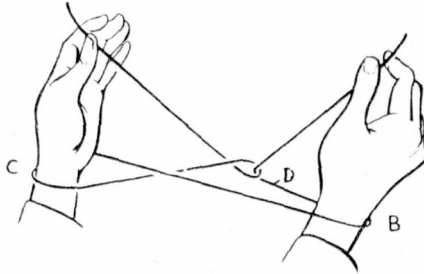
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32

over the left arm to reach the position shown in illustration 32. Take the right-hand end through the loop (still illustration 32) around the hanging part marked A and straight out, bringing the part marked A away over the right wrist. The result will be a kind of cat's cradle position as shown in illustration 33. Here is where the trick move comes. Drop the wrists slightly so that the loops B and C slide off the hands and at the same time clip the portion marked D between the right third finger and the palm

of the hand and release the hold of the right first finger and thumb. Separate the hands and, as soon as the loops have slipped off the wrists,



33

grasp the right end again between first finger and thumb. A knot will form in the string over towards the left hand.

The author strongly recommends this trick, which is well worth the practice required. Once you have learnt the moves you should be able to perfect it in two or three days if you will give it fifteen minutes every day. You will find the portion marked D can be worked to a more convenient position, nearer your right finger and thumb. (The drawing here is exaggerated for clearness.)

A PSYCHIC TRICK

The following is a very good party trick which, although old, has not been performed much of recent years. It is a billet reading act which gives great scope for the imagination of the performer.

A number of slips of paper, about 3 inches by 1 inch, are handed out to the company, who are requested to write questions on the papers and to fold them up. It is wise to tell them not to let one another see what they write. One of the company is then asked to collect all the papers in a hat and to shake the hat thoroughly so as to mix them up. The performer takes one of the papers and, without unfolding it, holds it to his forehead for a moment, and dramatically answers the question written upon it. This is repeated until all the questions have been answered.

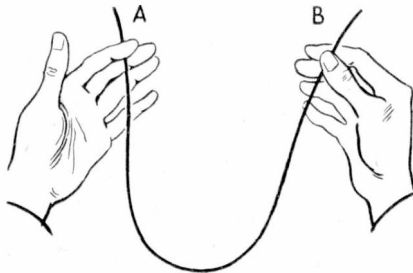
This trick is much more effective in practice than it appears to be in print. It is in the way the answers are given that the entertainment lies, and in this the performer must use his imagination and his natural wit. Direct answers should be avoided unless they will raise laughs. For example, a question might be: "How can I get rich?" The reply should be in this fashion: "The writer of this question is ambitious, or is it greed? No, I THINK HE IS ASKING THE WAY, he wants a SHORT CUT—Yes, he wants something—quickly." (Pause.) "His answer comes, HE MUST WORK, NOT DREAM." The performer then opens the paper and reads: "How can I get rich?"

But you are waiting to know how to do it. If you are a beginner in conjuring you had better use a "stooge," that is, somebody working with you. He need know only part of how the trick is done. "Stooges" are not desirable in conjuring, as a rule, and are never used by experts, but it is not within the scope of this book to teach sleight-of-hand and secret reading, so "stooge" it must be. You arrange beforehand what question he shall write and also arrange that he will turn up one corner of his folded paper so that you will be able to recognise it. All the papers handed out should be the same size and should be folded twice and well creased and then opened out again, so that they will all naturally be folded in the same way and be undetectable from each other.

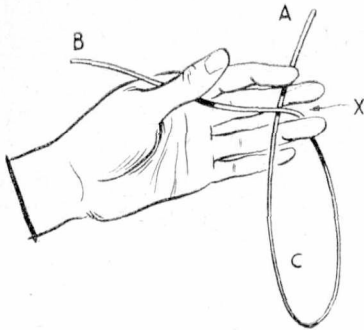
When the papers have been collected in the hat and thoroughly shaken up, you are ready to begin to answer the questions. All you have to remember is to leave your "stooge's" paper, which you can recognise when you come to it by the turned corner, until last. Commence by taking any other paper and placing it against your forehead. Then slowly, and falteringly, *answer the "stooge's" question*. You then open the paper, and apparently read the question written upon it. Actually you repeat from memory the "stooge's" question, giving the impression you are reading it from the paper and at the same time you remember the *real* question that is written on the paper. You now take a second paper from the hat and hesitatingly answer the question you have just read. You open the paper to check up, pretend to read out the previous question and remember the new one. As you answer the questions you put the papers, one on top of the other, into your left hand. The last paper to be taken from the hat is the "stooge's," and this you place underneath the pile of papers. All the questions are then in the order in which they were answered and can be left for inspection by anyone who is curious.

THE KNOT THAT CANNOT BE TIED

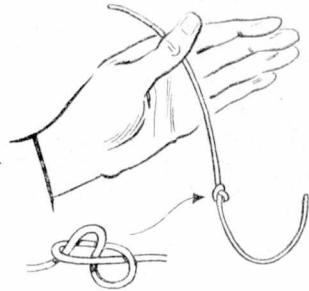
With a piece of soft cord or rope, or a large silk scarf or handkerchief twisted into a rope, you can present "the knot that cannot be tied."



Hold the rope by the ends, the left-hand end A between the first and second fingers, the right-hand end B between first finger and thumb, both hands being palm upwards, as in illustration 34. Place the right-hand end B between the tips of the left second and third fingers and in the crotch of the thumb, as in illustration 35, holding the rope between the thumb and the side of the right forefinger. Place the right hand through the loop C and grasp the end A. Hold the portion X clipped between the tips of the left second and third fingers and the end B between finger and thumb and pull end A through the loop, when a



35



36

false knot will be formed. The left second and third finger tips should release their hold of the portion X as the false knot is formed, so that the knotted rope is held as in illustration 36.

This knot will suddenly disappear when the ends of the rope are pulled. With practice you can form the (false) knot so that if it is pulled to the left it will tighten, yet when pulled to the right it will disappear; consequently, if a knot (to match) is obtained secretly by the right hand you can appear to take the knot from the cord, and hand both for examination.

PAPER MAGNETISM

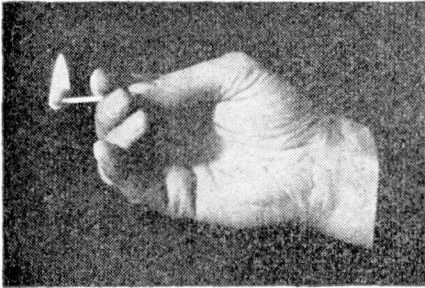
Most people are aware that a sheet of brown paper, well brushed with a clothes brush, is charged with static electricity, so that if a bunch of keys is dropped in the centre and the paper raised off the table by its ends, a spark can be produced by a spectator placing his knuckles in close proximity to the keys; but it is not usually known that a piece of paper will adhere to the wall if it is just held in the hand while the shoes are wiped violently on a mat. (In humid countries it is necessary to warm the paper first.)

(If unsuccessful, try a different grade of paper.)

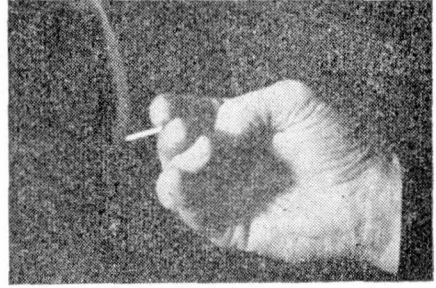
INSTANTANEOUS EXTINGUISHING OF A MATCH

After lighting a cigarette you can blow out the match by holding it at arm's length in the right hand and blowing down the left sleeve.

The secret lies in the way you hold the match. Clip it as firmly as possible between the top joints of the first and second fingers and, as



37



38

you blow down the left sleeve, give a sharp flick to the end of the match with the tip of the right thumb. (See illustrations 37 and 38.) The sharp jerk will extinguish the flame, and the effect is very amusing. Of course, your fingers must hide the action of the thumb from your audience.

TO STOP YOUR PULSE

Turn the conversation to the mysteries of the Hindu fakirs and mention that when a fakir goes into a trance his heart beat is almost imperceptible and his pulse stops. Ask someone to place his finger on your pulse, and say that you will go into a trance for a few seconds. As you lean back in your chair and close your eyes, the person holding your pulse will find, to his astonishment, that it has stopped beating.

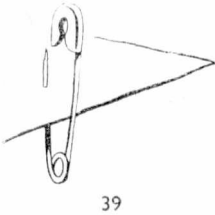
There is nothing dangerous about this. The pulse beat comes from an artery which runs right down the arm. If you place a tennis ball or a wad of paper underneath your armpit and press your arm against your side, the pressure will stop the flow of blood through the artery and cause your pulse to cease its beat.

SAFETY PIN AND HANDKERCHIEF ILLUSION

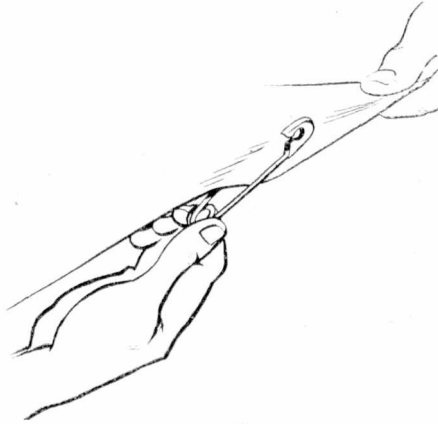
A capital little trick is performed with a safety pin and a pocket handkerchief. The handkerchief should be borrowed from a spectator, who is asked to hold it by one corner. The performer *fastens* the pin in the edge of the handkerchief and holds the other corner. The handkerchief is tightly stretched and, with a quick movement, the pin is

slid 6 inches or 8 inches along. A tearing noise is heard, yet the handkerchief is not damaged and the pin does not appear to have opened.

The diagrams (illustrations 39 and 40) show exactly how the thing is done, and should be studied closely. The angle at which the pin is held is the important point. After the move, a slight upward movement gets the pin into a correct position. Should your spectator wish to try



39



40

this, allow him to borrow your pin, but put your own handkerchief safely away. (Please note : The illustration 39 shows the pin open. This is in order to illustrate the position clearly. Close your pin between illustrations 39 and 40.)

SETTING LIGHT TO A LUMP OF SUGAR

After-dinner tricks are always popular, so here is another one. Place a lump of sugar on a plate, and challenge anyone to set fire to it. When all have failed, you can set it burning merrily if you drop a little cigarette ash on to one corner and apply a match to the ash. The ash appears to act like a wick and will burn for a very long time.

THE MISSING "BOB"

Can you spot the fallacy in the following? Three men had a dinner at a restaurant, for which the waiter brought a bill for 30s. Each man put down a 10s. note, which the waiter took to the cash desk. The cashier noticed an error in the bill, which should have been for only 25s., and gave the waiter 5s. to return to the diners. The waiter decided to put 2s. in his pocket and gave each of the men 1s. back. The men had therefore paid 9s. each, making a total of 27s. ; the waiter had 2s. in his pocket—where was the final 1s. ?

THE MEMORY FEAT

For an audience of any size this makes an ideal trick, for, although it appears to be purely the result of an extraordinarily well-trained memory, it is, in fact, a trick.

The effect is that a member of the audience is requested to assist and is given a sheet of paper and a pencil. The performer explains that he requires a list of twenty different objects which are to be chosen by the audience, and asks them to call out any objects they desire. When the first object is named, the assistant is requested to write the figure 1 on his list and the name of the object against it. The second object called out he writes against the number 2, and so on until the list is completed with twenty objects.

The performer now proceeds to recite the entire list of objects from number 1 to number 20 and then repeats them backwards. Any member of the audience may then mention a number and the performer immediately states the name of the object against that number. He is also able to give the number against any object named.

The routine is most entertaining and, if the performer has any aptitude for impromptu wit, it can also be very funny. The principle of the trick is the fact, not always realised, that some things are more easily retained in the memory than others. Among these are absurd and ridiculous things. For example, if you visited a certain street and on your arrival saw a man standing on his head with his hat on his feet, you would always recall your visit to that street, *and would associate that street with the absurd spectacle of the inverted man.* This principle of the association of ideas is put to practical use by first learning a list of "key words." You can compile your own if you wish, but the list given below will be easy to learn.

For example, "gun" will mean number 1 to you, line will mean number 9, tree number 3, and so on. (Aids to remember are in parentheses.)

1. Gun (rhymes).
2. Tooth (rhymes).
3. Tree (rhymes).
4. Door (rhymes).
5. Hive (rhymes).
6. Sticks (rhymes).
7. Heaven (or Sky) (rhymes).
8. Crate (rhymes).
9. Line (or Cord or String) (rhymes).
10. Nigger (ten little niggers).

11. Pair (or Pear) (two 1's are a pair).
12. Elves (rhymes).
13. Horseshoes (lucky number 13).
14. Boots (size 14).
15. Bananas (fifteen on a bunch).
16. Dog.
17. Kiss (sweet seventeen, never been kissed).
18. Soldier (calling-up age).
19. Dining (Plate of Food) (rhymes).
20. Score (A Game).

Now, when the first object is called out by the audience (we will assume it to be a "dish"), and while the assistant is writing it on his list against number 1, you must quickly make a mental picture, associating dish with number 1 (which is a gun). The more ridiculous the picture, the more easily you will remember it. Shall we imagine in this case a *gun on a dish*, because the hunter has shot nothing and his wife is serving up the gun, steaming hot, for a meal. You must, however briefly, see this picture in your mind, not merely think of it. Once this is done, you can dismiss it, and later you will recall *dish* when you think of gun, or *vice versa*.

You then ask for object number 2. We will suppose a "chair" is called out. You immediately associate chair with two (which is tooth). You form a mental picture of a chair and tooth or teeth, false ones, oversize ones, biting end up, on a chair on which you have just sat. The picture has been formed while the assistant was writing "chair" against number 2, and thus you carry on until the list has been completed.

You will then be able to repeat the whole list of objects forwards or backwards, or name any object against any given number. The trick is very easy to work, and if you wish to be blindfolded it is more impressive, besides making it easier for you to concentrate. One of the great advantages of this trick is that it can be performed before the same audience any number of times without revealing the secret and, strange to say, you will not get confused from a previous performance. But remember, it must be practised considerably before you will get speed.

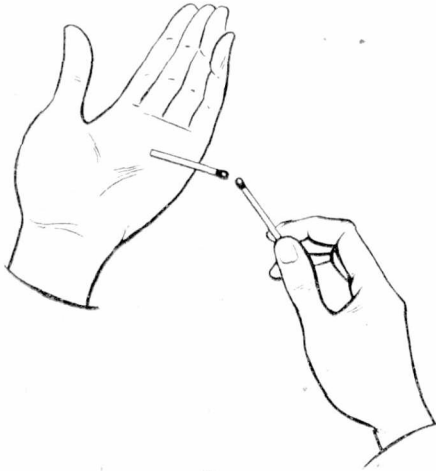
Do not fail to master this trick, it is worth the price of this book. You can master it in a few hours.

HE MAY OMIT 11s. 11d.

Tell your friend to imagine he holds 8s. 11d. in his left hand and five separate shillings in his right hand, and instruct him to count aloud as though transferring one shilling at a time from the right hand to the left hand. Thus he will count 9s. 11d., 10s. 11d., 12s. 11d., 13s. 11d., finishing up with 14s. 11d.

THE MAGNETIC MATCH

The performer talks about static electricity, and offers to demonstrate a curious effect with two matches. He places one match on the palm of his



41

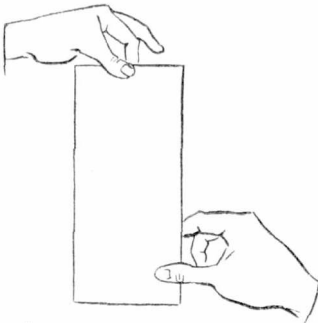
hand with the head protruding over one side, and vigorously rubs the head of the other on his sleeve to induce electricity. He places the head of this match against the head of the other, and the first match jumps right up in the air with a click.

The match that is "elected" must be held very firmly between the first finger and thumb, as shown in illustration 41, with the nail of the second finger pressed against the end. As the match is touched against the one lying on the palm, the second finger-nail is pressed hard against the match and slid

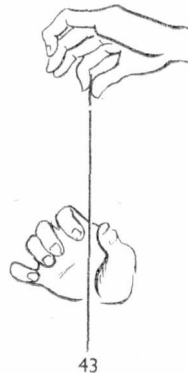
off the end. This produces a little "kick" in the match, which is magnified as it travels along the stick, and makes the other match jump up several inches.

CAN YOU CATCH IT ?

You can test your friend's reaction with a one pound note. Hold the note (a new one is best) by one end between finger and thumb and ask your friend to hold his finger and thumb on either side of it, not quite touching the note, but ready to grasp it. (See illustration 42.) Tell him that he is to catch the note when you drop it. He will think it is easy, yet when you release the note it will slip right through his fingers and



42

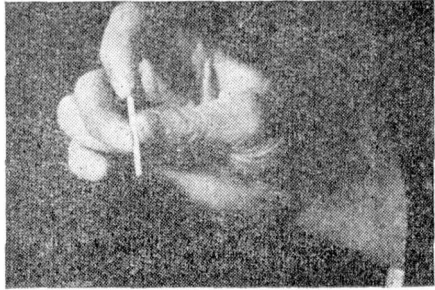


43

he will fail to catch it. (Illustration 43 shows side view.) It is better to commence by making your friend "hold" nearer the centre than is shown in the illustrations.

THE FLYING MATCH

This trick should be used with care. Practise with unlighted matches until you have learnt to make them fly straight. The effect is that the performer strikes a match and, as he applies it to his cigarette, it flies out of his fingers, sailing 7 feet or 8 feet into the air and turning over and over as it does so.



44

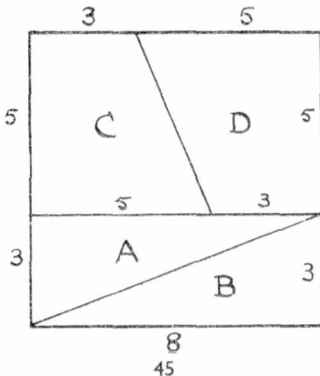
Hold the match as shown in illustration 44, between the second finger and thumb with the first finger on the end, the thumb pressing strongly against the side of the match. Pull smartly inwards with the first finger and the match will flick away with considerable force.

THE EXTRA INCH

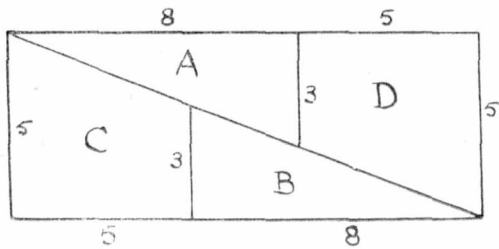
This excellent trick, one of those curiosities which seems to have become forgotten, may be called "The Mystery of the Extra Inch."

Cut a piece of card 8 inches square, mark it out as shown in illustration 45, and cut it into four pieces accordingly. Arranged as a square the pieces measure 8 inches by 8 inches, which equals 64 square inches.

Re-arrange the pieces as shown in illustration 46 and measure again. It now measures 13 inches by 5 inches, which equals 65 square inches. Where does the extra square inch come from?—or does it?



45



46

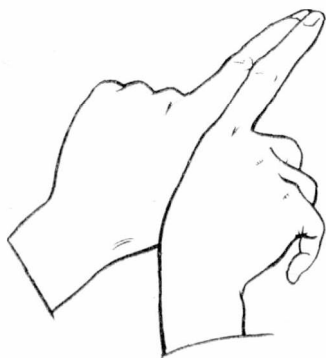
AN INOFFENSIVE PRACTICAL JOKE

The performer has a piece of cotton hanging on his coat, of which he appears to be blissfully unaware. Presently, a lady says: "Excuse me, there is a piece of cotton on your coat," and obligingly removes it. Imagine her embarrassment when the piece of cotton appears to be endless, stretching to a yard or two.

Thread the end of a reel of cotton through a needle. Place the reel in your inside coat pocket, run the needle through the coat, and remove the needle, leaving a few inches of cotton hanging on your coat. Sooner or later some kind person will notice it!

MAKING A PERSON LIGHTER

A purely psychological trick has been the cause of much discussion recently. We shall not enter into any discussion as to *why* it works, but confine ourselves to explaining how you should proceed to *make* it work.



47

Let one person sit on a chair while four other people place their closed fists together, the backs of their hands upwards, and extend their forefingers only. (See illustration 47.) One person is now instructed to place his two extended forefingers under the seated person's left armpit, a second person to place his fingers under the right armpit, a third person to place his under the left knee, and the fourth to place his fingers under the right knee. The performer tells them that it is impossible for them to lift the seated person with their fingers only, held in this position, and invites them to try. They are told to "try as hard as you like, but you will not succeed." (It is important here to convince them of the impossibility of lifting such a heavy weight with the forefingers only.)

The performer says he will make it possible for them to lift the seated person in the prescribed manner. The performer places his open hand on the subject's head and each of the other persons places his hands alternately on the performer's. The hands are kept for a moment in this position, pressing lightly on the subject's head, while the performer tells the four experimenters that when he says "Go!" they are at once to take up their former positions, with their extended forefingers, and to try to lift the subject again. The performer states that for a short time the subject will be much lighter, and they will be able to lift him.

At the word of command, the four people place their forefingers under the subject and lift him several feet off the chair (illustration 48) and then replace him, yet all will admit that they do not seem to have exerted much strength.



48

The whole trick depends upon the ability of the performer to convince the four experimenters, in the first place, that it is impossible to lift the subject under the prescribed conditions and, further, to convince them that it is possible after the placing of the hands on the head. It is a perfect example of the power of suggestion.

LIGHTED MATCH IN THE MOUTH "STUNT"

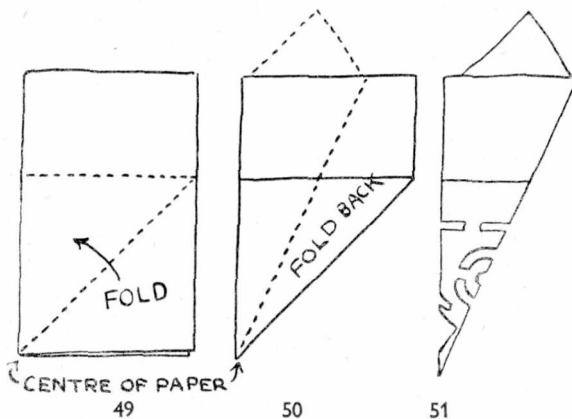
When the conversation turns to the war, as it often does, you can remark that you never had any trouble going about in the black-out, and ask if anyone would like to know your secret. You say: "I always used to eat lights, that's what they feed cats on, you know—so that they can see in the dark. I'll show you. Here's a box of them." And you take out a box of matches. You strike a match and eat it with great relish.

The secret is this; let the match get well alight so that the actual head has ceased to burn. Pop it in and close your mouth *immediately*, and the flame will be extinguished. Then tuck the match into your cheek, so that it lies alongside your teeth. You are then free to "eat" another one if you care to do so.

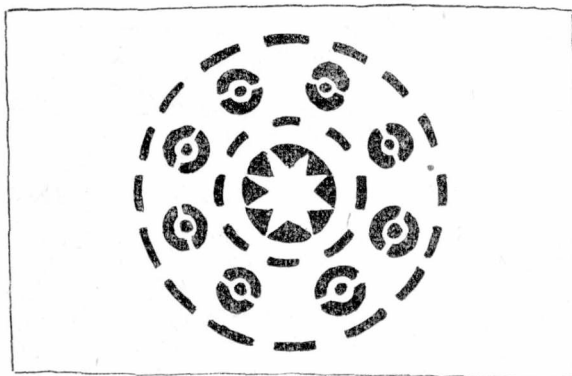
This is a very funny effect and there is no danger of burning the mouth.

PAPER TEARING

The famous paper-tearing trick so often done by "buskers" who perform to theatre queues is not so difficult as it seems. Take a sheet of thin, white paper, or newspaper, and fold it into four. Then fold it



twice, diagonally, as shown in illustrations 49 and 50. Tear the paper as shown in illustration 51 and, on opening it, you will have the design depicted in illustration 52.



52

An amusing follow up to this is to tear another and more elaborate design while holding the paper behind your back. You take a second sheet of paper, ready folded; unfold it and display it, and fold it up again. Then you hold the paper behind your back and tear it, dropping the pieces on the floor. While you are tearing you tell a funny story. Finally, you reveal the pattern, which can be as intricate as you desire,

and can even be the badge or emblem of a club where you may be performing.

This intricate pattern was carefully made beforehand and then folded up and placed in a clip hidden under the back of your coat. The piece of paper you display is completely torn up into little pieces and dropped on the floor before you produce the "finished article."

The amusing part is that some of your audience will accept this as exceptionally fine paper-tearing, while others may see the joke, and laugh. Thus you score both ways.

THE LAST MATCH

X A two-handed game which *you can always win* can be played with matches. The rules of the game are few and simple. Twenty-one matches are placed on the table and each player alternately removes one, two, or three matches, as he desires, but never more than three, and the person who picks up the last match loses the game.

You can be sure of winning if you remember the following :

If he takes one you must take three.

When he takes two you must also take two.

When he takes three you must take one,

and eventually your opponent will be left with the last match.

After you have had a few games, your opponent will want you to start first.

Remember when you have the first move :

Commence by taking *one*, keep count of all the matches taken, and make sure of taking the fourth, eighth, twelfth or sixteenth match, and then *follow the rules given for when your opponent has first move.*

It is possible that your opponent may also know this game, in which case you can still win by concealing an extra match in your hand. This will upset his calculations and convince him that you are a past master at the game !

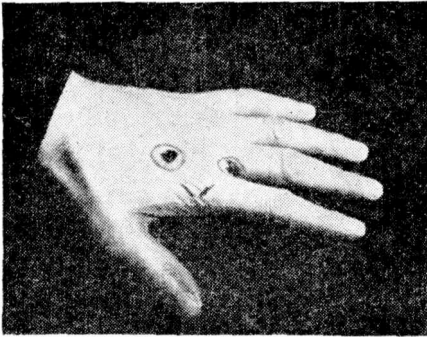
Of course, if he has also read this book, the result may be different, and we can only suggest "pistols for two and coffee for one."

AN EASY "SUGGESTION" TRICK

Ask a person to stand near a wall, so that his right side is about 6 inches away from it, and to press the back of his hand against the wall. Keep him doing this for about a minute and then tell him to drop his hand loosely to his side, and draw him away from the wall, explaining that his arm will then slowly rise.

His right arm will slowly rise out from his side in a most uncanny manner, caused partly by "suggestion" and partly by the nervous reaction of the muscles.

THE TALKING HAND



53

than study Mr. Craggs' treatise, which is considered to be the last word on the subject), but for party purposes I can promise you plenty of fun if you follow these instructions. They are based on the description given in *The A.B.C. of Ventriloquism*. Learn the patter and practise to use contrasting voices—your own when you are speaking and a high-pitched one when the hand is talking—whilst keeping your lips reasonably still at that time, and you will create quite a pleasing illusion. Remember to practise looking in different directions when the hand is speaking, and to act your part, looking pleased or angry as the occasion demands.

First borrow a lipstick from one of the ladies and, holding your left hand as shown in illustration 53, draw two eyes and a nose. (If you can borrow some black for the eyes and nose the effect is better.) Smear the red lipstick round the top of the thumb and the edge of the first finger, and wind a folded handkerchief round the top of the hand, and you have quite a good comic face (illustration 54). A little ginger wig or a hat made to fit the hand, instead of the handkerchief, will prove a good investment. Just as you are finishing the face, you say: "I am going to introduce you to a little fellow. I don't know his name"; and (addressing the hand) you ask: "What's your name?"

A dialogue then follows:

- P. representing Performer.
 H. representing Hand.
 P. "Hullo!"
 H. "Ullo!"
 P. "What's your name?"
 H. "Charlie Jones."
 P. "You should say 'Sir' when addressing me."
 H. "Well . . . Sir Charlie Jones, then."

My friend, Douglas Craggs, the Royal Command Ventriloquist, described in his book, *The A.B.C. of Ventriloquism*, a charming and amusing interlude in which the ventriloquist paints one of his hands with grease-paint to make it resemble a doll, and then proceeds to carry on a conversation with it. Of course, it would not be possible to teach you ventriloquism within the confines of this small book (if you wish to learn that fascinating art, you cannot do better



54

- P. "Any more like you at home?"
 H. "Eh?"
 P. "I mean, have you any brothers?"
 H. "Yes. Two."
 P. "Two brothers—that's fine! What do they do?"
 H. "Well, one is in the Civil Service."
 P. "That's interesting. What does the other one do?"
 H. "Oh! He doesn't do any work either, Sir."
 P. "And what do you do?"
 H. "I go to school."
 P. "Good! What do you learn?"
 H. "Geography."
- P. "Ah! I can test you out. I'll ask you a question."
 H. "No thank you, Sir."
 P. "Yes, I certainly will. Now where is the capital of England?"
 H. "The capital of England?"
 P. "Yes."
 H. "Let me see. The capital of England."
 P. "Yes. I'm waiting."
 H. (Brightly.) "In America"
 (pause)—"all in dollars, too."
 P. "Now don't be ridiculous."
 And so on.

Make up your own patter to suit your style and keep practising. You will soon find how easy it is to cause great merriment with the little "figure"—you can place a lighted cigarette in its mouth which gives it a very realistic appearance. However, the whole dialogue should not exceed a couple of minutes.

(*Excellent patter for this trick is found in the "A.B.C. of Ventriloquism."*)

TOUCHED BY THE "SPOOKS"

A most uncanny effect can be produced, for which a spectator is unable to account. The performer must isolate the spectator and himself from the rest of the company, so that when the spectator is touched, the action cannot be attributed to any other member of the gathering.

The performer explains that he will place his two forefingers on the spectator's eyes and first of all demonstrates this by extending the forefingers of *each hand* and placing them gently on the spectator's eyelids, which will naturally close as the fingers approach them. This is done once or twice and the spectator may open his eyes each time as the fingers are withdrawn. This is done to establish the fact that two hands are used by the performer without his actually saying so.

The spectator is told to close his eyes once more and, as the performer's fingers approach the eyes, a change is made, for this time the performer extends the second finger as well as his forefinger so that with one hand, say the right, he can place a finger on each eye, which to the spectator seems the same as before and, while the right fingers are pressing on the eyes, the left hand is able to give the spectator a tap behind the neck. When the right hand leaves the eyes, the second finger is put down and, as the left hand will have reached a similar position, with the forefinger extended, the spectator sees exactly what he did before—that is, two index fingers being withdrawn from his eyes, and will be entirely at a loss to account for the sly tap he received on the back of his neck.

A CARD TRICK WITHOUT CARDS

It is not proposed to include any card tricks in this volume, but as this trick, while *about* cards, is not done *with* cards, it is felt that it will not be out of place.

The performer first writes the name of a card on a piece of paper, without letting anyone see what he writes, and places the paper, face down, in the centre of the table. Let us suppose, for the purpose of this description, that he writes the name of the five of Diamonds, although he may write the name of any card he desires. He then proceeds to address one of the spectators on these lines. "You are aware that there are fifty-two cards in a pack, half red cards and half black cards. Which will you take out, the red or the black?"

If the spectator says "Black," the performer quickly says, "Good. That leaves me the red cards."

If the spectator says "Red," the performer says, "Very well, red it shall be."

In either case he continues: "Now there are two kinds of red cards, Hearts and Diamonds. I want you to name one; which shall it be, Hearts or Diamonds?"

If the spectator says "Hearts," the performer says, "Right. Hearts and Diamonds, take away Hearts, and that leaves the . . . ?" And the spectator says "Diamonds."

If the spectator says "Diamonds," the performer, without giving him time to think, says, "Right. Diamonds is your choice."

The performer continues: "Now we will consider the numbers. In Diamonds we have thirteen cards, one to seven and eight to thirteen. What do you say, the first seven or the last five?"

If the spectator says, "The first seven," the performer quickly replies, "The one, two, three, four, five, six or seven."

If the spectator says, "The last five," the performer replies, "That leaves me the first seven, that is one, two, three, four, five, six and seven."

The performer continues: "Will you please name the first four or the last three?"

If the spectator says, "The last three," the performer immediately says, "That is the five, six and seven of Diamonds."

If the spectator says, "The first four," the performer replies, "That will leave us the five, six and seven of Diamonds."

The performer continues : " Please name one of those three cards."

If the five is named, the performer decisively says : " That is your choice then, the five of Diamonds," But should the spectator name the six, the performer says : " That leaves us then with the five and seven. Now take the five or the seven, whichever you please," and whatever he replies is interpreted to leave the five as the final choice. The performer says : " You have chosen one card out of the fifty-two by eliminating all the others. Before we started I wrote the name of one card on that piece of paper. If you examine the paper, you will find that the very card you have chosen is the card I foretold."

The trick is very simple to perform and depends entirely on the ability of the performer to keep the spectator making his " choices " so rapidly that he has no time to think about them. But you should never repeat this trick before the same spectators.

MIND CONTROL

The following is a scientific phenomenon, and when presented correctly will cause endless discussion.

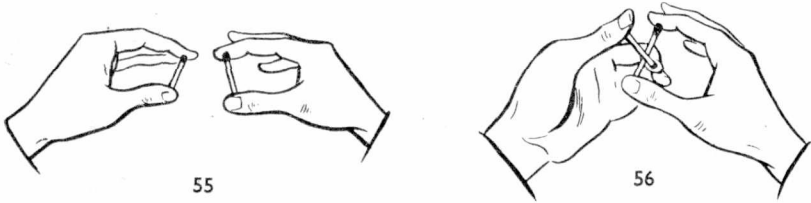
Several clear glass wine bottles are exhibited. Suspended in pendulum fashion by a length of cotton from the cork of each bottle is a small weight (a very small screw or nut is excellent). The bottles may be examined by the company as much as they desire, after which they are arranged in a row upon the table. The spectators sit round the table in spiritualistic fashion, with their hands resting on the table top. The spectators choose any bottle they desire and are requested to concentrate their minds upon the pendulum within that bottle. The performer tells them that their combined concentration of thought will make the chosen pendulum swing as long as they concentrate upon it, yet the other pendulums will remain stationary. After a brief period, the chosen pendulum will begin to swing.

The spectators may then choose a second pendulum and concentrate upon it. After a while, the first pendulum will come to rest and the second will begin to swing. The effect is unbelievably uncanny.

The table used should be light, and not too firm. The spectators themselves unconsciously set the pendulum swinging by the reaction of their minds, through their hands which rest on the table. The threads of the pendulums are of different lengths so that the small, unconscious rhythm given to the table by the concentrated thought of the spectators will swing only one pendulum at a time, all the other pendulums being out of time with this rhythm.

THE PENETRATING MATCH

An excellent trick is performed with two matches held between the first fingers and thumbs, as shown in illustration 55. Notice that the fingers rest on the *heads* of the matches. The two matches are knocked against each other once or twice, and then, suddenly, they are seen to be in the position shown in illustration 56, one match having, apparently, passed through the other. The matches are shown to be interlocked and it seems impossible to separate them without dropping them, yet, a moment later, the hands are separated, one match seeming to pass straight through the other.



Provided you use the "Swan Vesta" type of match, and your fingertips are moist, you will find that, after holding the matches in the position illustrated for a few moments, the heads of the matches will adhere to the fingers so that you may remove one thumb without the match dropping. It is necessary only to remove the thumb while one match passes the other, as shown in illustration 57.



57

But simple though the secret is, the trick should be well studied, as it is usually spoiled by would-be magicians because they do not study the angle at which the matches are held. At the moment one match is to pass through the other, the back of the hand that holds the free match should be towards the spectators, so that it is impossible for them to see that the end of the match has left the thumb. If attention is given to this point, the little trick makes a perfect illusion.

This trick can be done with two cigarettes, which is much more effective. The method of holding them, however, is different and requires considerable practice to accomplish it smoothly and without damage to the cigarettes.

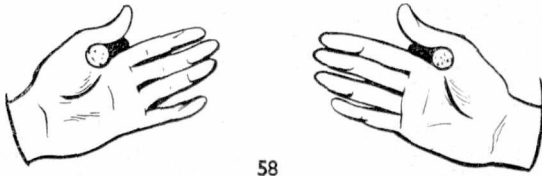
They are each held between the thumb and second finger, so that the first and third fingers can grip the sides of the end of one cigarette when it is required to release a thumb. The action is covered, of course, by the hand, in the same manner as in the releasing of the match.

A MANIPULATIVE PUZZLE

The following puzzle with two corks will provide amusement quite out of proportion to its simplicity.

Place a cork in each crotch of the thumbs, as shown in illustration 58, grasp the cork in the left hand by its ends between the right first finger and thumb, and the cork in the right hand in the same way with the left forefinger and thumb, and draw them apart.

The secret lies in the way the corks are grasped. The hands must be brought together so that one hand, say the left, is palm upward, while the other is palm downward. The two thumbs thus come to rest upon the ends of the corks on the inner sides of the hands, while the two forefingers encircle the thumbs to make contact with the opposite ends. The hands come apart with a slight twist. The corks may be replaced by reversing these movements.



58

A little practice will make this so easy that you will be able to do it so smoothly and quickly that it is impossible to see how it is done.

“JUST CHANCE”

There is a trick that has been very popular with professional magicians during recent years. The effect is that three sealed envelopes are shown and two spectators each choose an envelope quite freely, leaving the third for the performer. The spectators open their envelopes and find inside each a piece of paper. The performer opens his envelope and finds a £1 note.

Here is a simplified version of this trick that *you* can perform. Take four small envelopes and place small pieces of paper with the words “Hard Luck” in three of them and a £1 note in the fourth. Seal the envelopes and place the one containing the note in your upper right-hand waistcoat pocket. To perform the trick, you first hand the three envelopes to a spectator and ask him to shuffle them together as much as he desires. While he is doing this, you empty the inside breast pocket of your coat, pull out the lining to show it is empty, and replace it. You then ask the spectator to place the three envelopes in your pocket. You then say: “I want two gentlemen to choose an envelope entirely by chance, and that is why I have the envelopes placed in my empty pocket. Now, sir, will you put your hand into my pocket and take out one of the

envelopes—any one?" When he does so, instruct him to hold it up in the air so that everyone can see it. Address a second person, saying: "Will you, sir, place your hand in my pocket and take one of the two envelopes that remain?" When he begins to draw the envelope out of your pocket, say: "Change your mind if you like and take the other one," thus emphasising the freedom of the choice. Ask him to hold up his envelope, and then say: "Well, that leaves me with this one," and you place your hand under your coat and bring out a third envelope, but, *instead of taking the envelope from your coat pocket, you take the one you had previously placed in your waistcoat pocket.* The two pockets lie side by side, and the trick is undetectable. The spectators are then asked to open their envelopes and they find inside the messages reading "Hard Luck." The performer opens his envelope and takes out the £1 note, "And that," he says, "is just chance."

BITING AND CRACKING A PLATE

Remarking, "I'm so hungry I could eat this plate," the performer places the edge of it in his mouth and worries it with his teeth. Suddenly, a loud crack is heard, and all the spectators will think the plate is broken.

Before picking up the plate, you clip a penny between your first and second fingers (illustration 59), and you hold the plate so that the free edge of the penny rests against it. Then, when you move your first finger a little, the penny clicks hard against the side of the plate, producing a noise as though the plate had broken. (See illustration 60.)



59



60

If beforehand you draw a line across the back of the plate with a lead pencil, you can show the plate, apparently cracked right across, and "restore" it by rubbing it with a napkin.

This trick is also effective if done with a tumbler, as though in drinking you have accidentally bitten a piece from the glass. In this case a crack is heard and you, appearing very embarrassed, remove a piece of glass from your mouth, which, of course, you placed there beforehand. The piece of glass can be a three-cornered piece of mica or perspex.

TO PASS ONE TUMBLER THROUGH ANOTHER

Although this feat requires considerable practice, it is a very effective illusion.

Hold the first tumbler as shown in illustration 61, the first finger and thumb being half-way over the top edge. Hold the second tumbler immediately above and let it drop straight inside the first. As number 2 enters number 1, release the first and catch the second between finger and thumb. The right hand swoops down past the left and catches the first tumbler again. The effect is just as though the second tumbler passed through the first.



61

This little juggle requires a great deal of practice, and it is better at first to use plastic or metal cups instead of tumblers.

A DINNER TRICK

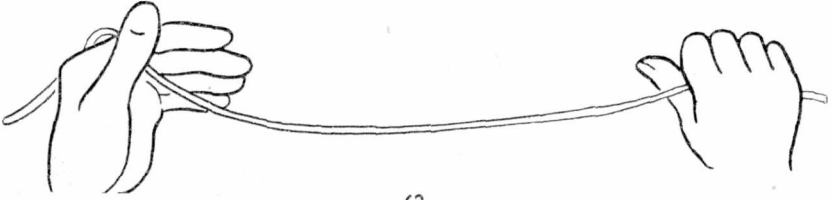
An amusing and entertaining trick can be performed with a number of articles, such as the following, which should be placed on the table before you in any order. A jug, a fork, a spoon, a pencil, an ash-tray, a shilling, a cigarette, and a salt-cellar. Notice that jug is spelt with three letters, fork with four, spoon with five, and so on, up to salt-cellar with ten letters.

Say to one of the company: "I want you to think of one of these articles and I am going to read your mind and discover the one of which you are thinking. I want you to spell the name of the article to yourself, spelling one letter every time I tap on an article with my finger, and when you come to the last letter I shall tap on the article that is in your mind. For instance, if you think of the jug I shall tap like this"—here you tap on any articles—"and you will spell J to yourself, like this, and you will spell U, and when you spell G to yourself I shall tap on the jug. You follow? Then think of any of these articles. Have you done that? Then every time I tap, spell one letter of the article's name silently to yourself. When you come to the end, say 'Stop,' and you will find that I am tapping on the article of which you are thinking." This is done, and the performer is successful, and the trick may be repeated with another person.

The secret is simple. On the first two taps you touch any article, but on the third tap you must touch the jug (three letters), on the fourth the fork (four letters), on the fifth the spoon (five letters), and so on. Therefore it does not matter which article the person is thinking of, your final tap will be on the last letter.

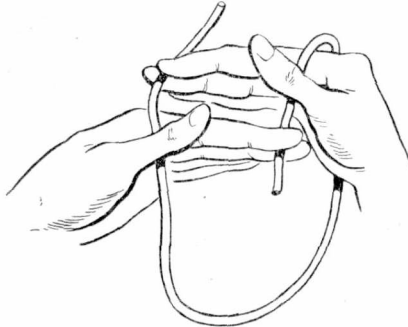
THE MAGIC KNOT

A splendid way of making this is as follows : Hold the rope between the two hands, as shown in illustration 62. Notice that the hands face in different directions and that the rope is held by the thumbs against the sides of the palms. Bring the hands quickly together and grasp the ends of the rope between the first and second fingers of each hand, as shown in illustration 63. Separate the hands, and a knot will appear in the centre of the rope.



62

With practice this can be done so rapidly that it is impossible for the spectators to see how the knot is formed, and it seems to appear in the centre of the rope as if by magic.



63

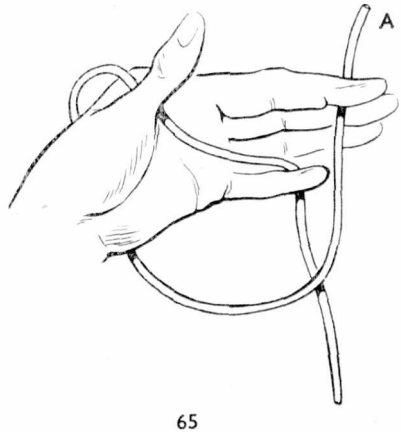
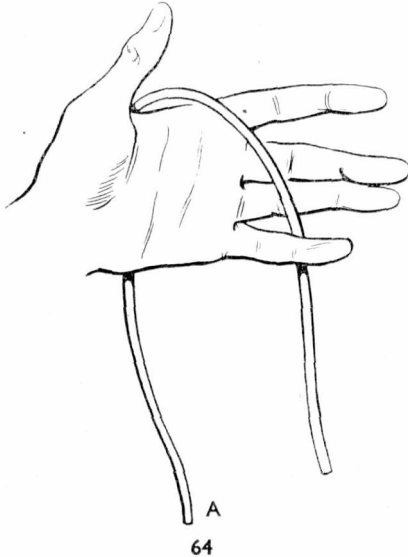
A TRICK FOR THE TEA TABLE

Take a piece of lump sugar and ask a spectator to name any letter of the alphabet. Write this letter on one side of the sugar, using a soft or indelible pencil and writing rather heavily. Take the sugar in your right hand, between your first finger and thumb, pressing your thumb heavily upon the pencilled letter. A reversed impression of the letter will be transferred to your thumb. Drop the lump of sugar into your tea, and then transfer the impression from your own thumb to the palm of the spectator as you take his hand in yours. Ask him to hold his hand over the cup for a few seconds, after which, to his surprise, the reproduction of the letter will be on his own palm.

If performed in a mysterious way, this is very effective.

AN INSTANTANEOUS KNOT

Hold the rope as shown in illustration 64, lying between the thumb and the side of the hand and clipped between the third and fourth fingers. Turn the hand over and swing the rope so that the end A swings up and can be grasped between the first and second fingers, as in illustration 65. Throw the loop off the wrist, and swing the hand to pull the end A through the loop and form the knot.



After considerable practice this can be done so quickly that the knot seems to be formed by simply shaking the rope.

REMOVING A THUMB NAIL

A trick which consists of removing the thumb nail must be performed only with discretion. I have seen strong men faint on more than one occasion. The thumb nail is nothing more than a coating of melted candle grease applied with a brush.

A THORN IN THE FLESH

Another trick in the gruesome category is that of asking a friend to remove a small thorn from your thumb. He is surprised to find the thorn is several inches long. The secret? A length of horsehair, an inch of which is introduced under the skin of the thumb so that only the end shows. The rest of the hair is hidden from view by the fingers.

ANY DAY CALLED FOR

The writer considers this not only a trick, but a useful personal and business accessory, and the reader is strongly advised to take the little necessary trouble to memorise, at the beginning of each year, a set of KEY NUMBERS from which, given the date, the day can be immediately calculated.

These are the KEY NUMBERS for the year 1947 :

January 3	April 2	July 2	October 3
February 6	May 4	August 5	November 6
March 6	June 0	September 1	December 1

From the foregoing one can determine such a question as : " On what day will December 5th, 1947, fall ? " (Please note—author's birthday.) The method is as follows :

Add the *Date* to the *Key Number* and divide by 7 and the " overs " represent the day of the week, Sunday being the first day, Monday the second, and so on.

So we proceed with the question :

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{(Date)} \quad \dots \dots \quad 5 \\
 \text{(Key Number)} \quad \dots \quad 1 \\
 \hline
 \text{Total} \quad \quad \quad 6
 \end{array}$$

Divided by 7 = 0 + 6 over (ignore the 0).

Therefore the answer is the *sixth* day of the week, which is *Friday*.

What day is October 29th, 1947?

Answer : $29 + 3 = 32 \div 7 = 4 + 4$ over (ignore the 4 and the 4 over represents the fourth day, which is Wednesday).

Again : What day is November 9th, 1947?

Answer : $9 + 6 = 15 \div 7 = 2 + 1$ over (ignore the 2 and the 1 over represents the first day, which is Sunday).

If the figure over is 0, this represents Saturday.

With a few days' practice, this can be done very rapidly.

HOW TO WORK OUT KEY NUMBERS FOR ANY YEAR IN THIS PRESENT CENTURY, EXCEPTING 1900.

Each year requires a different set of Key Numbers, but they are quite easy to work out for any year between A.D. 1900 and A.D. 2000. The following BASIC figures are required :

January and October 1	June 5
May 2	September and December 6
August 3	April and July 0
February, March, November 4	

Let us work out the *Key Numbers* for *January and October, 1949*.

First write the year	..	49	
Then divide by 4	..	12	(disregard the overs)
Add BASIC figure	..	1	
		—	
Total		62	

Divided by 7 equals .. 8 and 6 over.

Disregard the 8 and take the 6 to be the *Key Number* for *January and October, 1949*.

Again: What is the Key Number for September, 1949?

The year	..	49	
Divide by 4	..	12	(disregard the overs)
Add BASIC figure	..	6	
		—	
Total		67	

Divided by 7 equals .. 9 and 4 over.

Disregard the 9 and take the 4 to be the *Key Number* for *September, 1949*.

By this method one can easily work out the *Key Numbers* for a forthcoming year, so that they can be committed to memory for twelve months' useful service. But for *Leap Years* deduct 1 from the totals of *January* and *February* only.

Leap Years occur when the year is divisible by 4 (1900 being an exception to this rule).

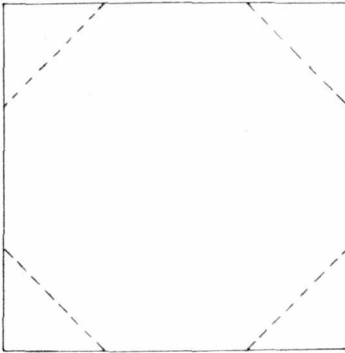
KEY NUMBERS for the Years 1948, 1949, 1950:

	1948	1949	1950		1948	1949	1950
January	4	6	0	July ..	4	5	6
February	0	2	3	August ..	0	1	2
March ..	1	2	3	September	3	4	5
April ..	4	5	6	October..	5	6	0
May ..	6	0	1	November	1	2	3
June ..	2	3	4	December	3	4	5

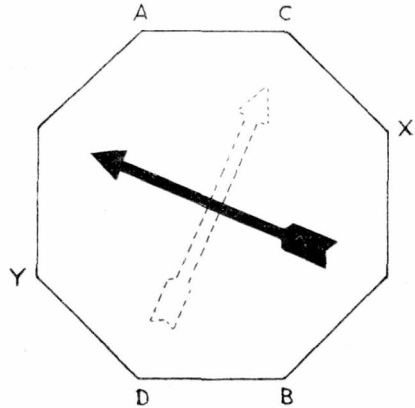
As a trick, ask your audience to give any date in the year and you immediately name the day.

THE CHINESE COMPASS

A baffling little illusion, in which an arrow appears to change its direction, can be made from a piece of card 2 inches square.



66



67

First mark the card so that the corners can be cut off (illustration 66), which will leave an octagon. Then draw an arrow on one side in the position shown in the drawing. Now, on the reverse side, draw an arrow as indicated by the dotted line (illustration 67). The result will be that if the card is held between the left thumb and forefinger by points A and B, the card can be pivoted over and the underside arrow comes to the top, pointing exactly as the first arrow did.

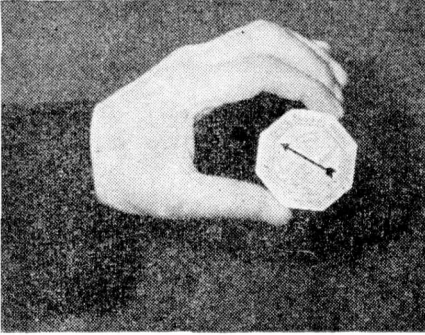
Pivot the card face up again and shift your hold to C and D in the left hand. The arrows will then point at right angles.

Pivot face up once more, shift your hold to X and Y, and when the card is pivoted over the arrows will appear to point in opposite directions.

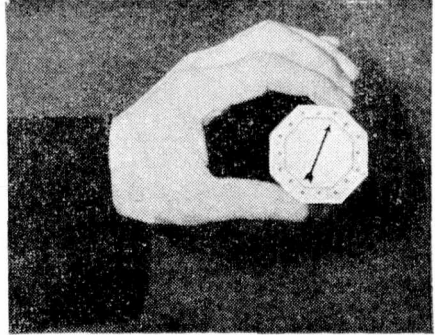
I have used these discs, for publicity as a Music Hall artiste, for some time, and they have never failed to create intense interest, so to help you with the presentation, here is some patter :

“Have you ever seen a Chinese compass? Well, here is one. It is very effective because there are two arrows, one on top and one underneath. You will notice” (pivot over) “they always point in the same direction.” (Demonstrate by pivoting over a few times—and make sure to have card face up—and then make first shift.) Continue: “But, of course, it has its disadvantages if the Chinese wish to go due East” (show compass pointing to left), “then they have to steer due North” (pivot over and underside arrow comes up pointing at right angles),

“ but,” continue, “ it has one very great advantage over other compasses ” (pivot card face up once more and make final shift), “ it not only shows where they are going but ” (pivot over) “ it shows them where they have been.”



68



69

(Illustrations 68 and 69 show the “ hold ” in the second position before and after pivoting.)

THE DEAF SPOT

How many people are aware that we all have a “ deaf spot ” ? Perhaps this may not be a correct description, but it makes an amusing trick. You need something to “ click ”—a lighter or a couple of coins.

Having secured your victim, instruct him to shut his eyes and keep them closed.

You commence by “ clicking ” about 12 inches from one ear. Your subject will point out the spot correctly. You say, “ Correct,” and try again, this time about 12 inches over his head. He will continue to point to the right spot ; you then try 12 inches from his other ear, with the same result, but when you eventually “ click ” 12 inches under his nose or maybe slightly to one side, or even behind his neck, he will point to an entirely different direction with the utmost confidence. Of course, you will continue to say “ Correct ” and do it several times, much to the amusement of the spectators. This trick is so old that few people remember it. Yet I have seen it performed before an audience of several hundred people, who laughed hilariously at the subject’s sense of direction from the one spot only.

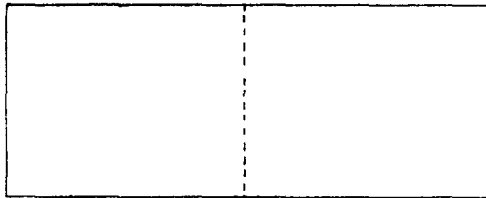
For public performance the subject should be well blindfolded, so that he cannot see down, and be careful that you use methods to misdirect him.

TO BEND A CIGARETTE WITHOUT BREAKING ITS PAPER

Take a cigarette from a packet and place it in your mouth and after having moistened the end, remove it from your mouth as you say : " Can you bend your cigarette like this ? " Replace the cigarette in the mouth, but the other way round, and light the moistened end ; after two or three strong puffs you can bend it to any shape and still smoke it.

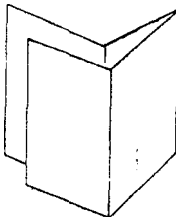
A TRICK BOOK

A fascinating puzzle of easy construction, the Trick Book is so arranged that there are eight pages, six of which are easily found, whilst pages seven and eight take a considerable time to discover.

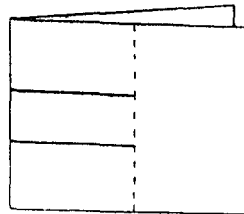


70

To commence, take a piece of paper (12 inches long and $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide) and fold in halves, thus forming a crease in the centre. (See illustration 70.) Then fold in halves again (as in illustration 71) so that you have the paper divided into four equal creased sections. Now, with the paper folded in halves, take a pair of scissors and make two parallel cuts from the centre fold to the creases (as in illustration 72). Open the paper and cut from A to B (as shown in illustration 73). A tongue is thus



71

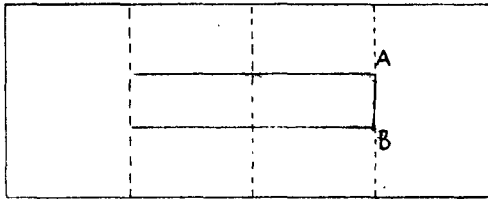


72

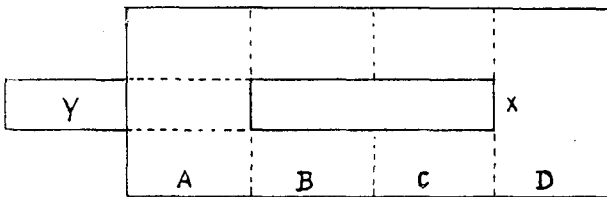
formed which must be folded back behind the left section. (See illustration 74.) You will notice that the spot where the tongue was finally cut is marked X in illustration 74. Here we will letter the sections as A, B, C, D, and the tongue as Y. But, before you go any further,

write page 1 on the rear of section A and page 2 on the front of section A; this will serve as a guide when the book is completed.

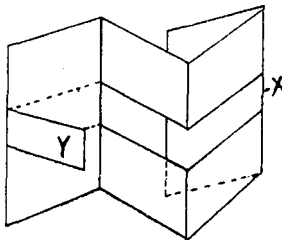
To continue, D folds behind C, then C and D together fold behind B. (See illustration 75.) Tongue Y can now be brought over A and, with a piece of adhesive paper, joined back to its original place X. (In other words, the adhesive paper, adhesive side up, should be stuck under Y, passed through the slit which is formed, then, when the "book" has been turned over, stuck down on to X.)



73



74



75

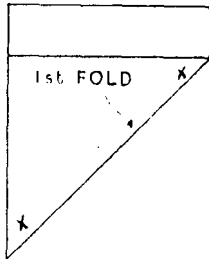
The pages should be numbered next, page 1, which you have already indicated, being the front. Pages 2 and 3 are found by opening in the normal way. Page 4 is on the back. To find pages 5 and 6, open what has so far been the spine or back of the book and number these two pages accordingly; but pages 7 and 8 can be found only after opening pages 6 and 7 and folding them right back as though cover to cover, and reopening from the centre.

You can write or draw on the pages after the book is completed, and you will have an interesting puzzle for a visitor.

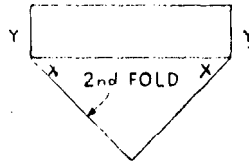
A CLEVER PAPER TRICK

This has a patter story, which you can alter to suit your own style. First obtain a sheet of paper, size approximately 10 inches by 8 inches, and fold as shown in the illustrations.

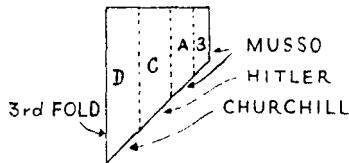
First fold as illustration 76, then X on to X, making second fold, as in illustration 77, then Y on to Y, making as in illustration 78.



76



77



78

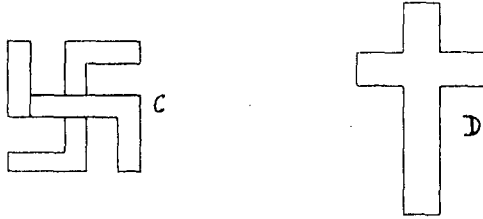
When you have folded the paper, you commence your story something like this :

“ Churchill, Mussolini and Hitler stood on the threshold of Heaven, when Peter appeared. ‘ Have you a ticket ? ’ said Peter to Mussolini. ‘ No, ’ replied Mussolini, so he begged a piece from Churchill, who generously gave him two snips.” Here you snip (or tear) off A and B and, as you unfold the pieces, you continue your story, arranging them thus :

HELL (A & B)

“ And Mussolini was sent downstairs. Peter then turned to Hitler. ‘ Have you a ticket ? ’ ‘ No, ’ replied Hitler, who turned to Churchill and was given one snip.”

Here you snip off C and, as you continue your story, you unfold the pieces and arrange them thus :



“ ‘ No,’ said Peter, ‘ we cannot recognise that sign here.’ So downstairs went Hitler.

“ Churchill turned to walk away. ‘ One minute,’ said Peter, ‘ let me see your ticket.’ ”

Here unfold the remaining piece, D.

“ He was immediately welcomed.”

CURIOUS FIGURES

Ask a spectator to write down a sum of money (under £12) in pounds, shillings and pence.

Tell him to reverse the amount and subtract the smaller from the greater.

Then he is to reverse the result and add.

He will be surprised to find that you had predicted his final answer as you produce a slip of paper with the amount thereon.

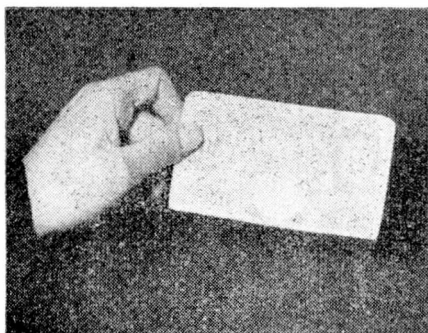
$$\begin{array}{r}
 \text{£} \quad \text{s.} \quad \text{d.} \\
 \text{Example: } 10 \quad 18 \quad 9 \\
 \quad \quad \quad 9 \quad 18 \quad 10 \text{ reverse and subtract.} \\
 \hline
 \quad \quad \quad 0 \quad 19 \quad 11 \\
 \quad \quad \quad 11 \quad 19 \quad 0 \text{ reverse and add.} \\
 \hline
 \quad \quad \quad 12 \quad 18 \quad 11 \\
 \hline
 \end{array}$$

You try, the answer is always the same.

(Note : Experiment with ordinary figures instead of £ s. d.)

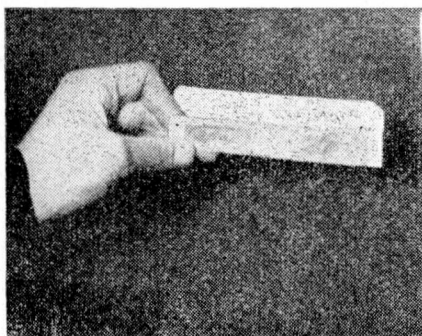
THE UPSIDE DOWN NOTE

This simple little trick will completely baffle many people. Produce a £1 note and hold it the correct way up (see illustration 82), drawing attention to the fact that you do not turn it upside down.

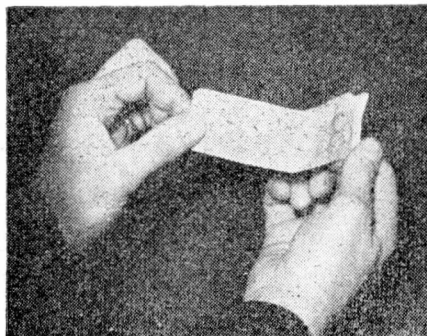


82

Fold it lengthwise, as shown in illustration 83.



83

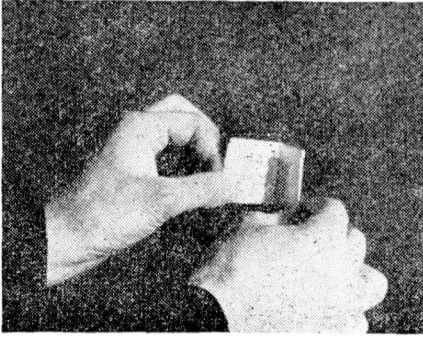


84

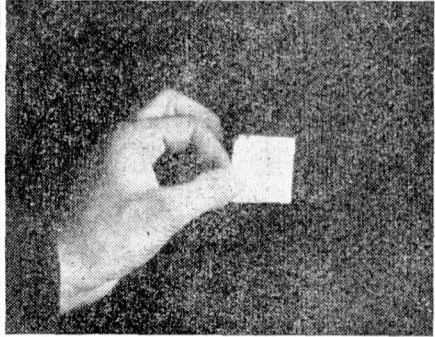
Then fold it a second time, as shown in illustration 84, and note this second fold, the right-hand side folds *back*.

Then fold it a third time, as shown in illustration 85. This time the right-hand side folds forward until it is as in illustration 86.

If the note is now unfolded in a normal manner, that is to say, like turning the leaves of a book, it will be upside down.



85



86

In actual practice, when making the second fold, fold it back rather more than half-way. You will then be able to hand it to spectator, as he will almost invariably unfold the note so that it is upside down when he has finished.

EASY MONEY

An old lady deposited £100 in a savings account. After a little while it became necessary to withdraw £40, then £30, later a further £19 and finally £11.

She kept her accounts in the following manner :

<i>Withdrawals</i>	<i>Balance</i>
£40	leaving £60 for future spending
£30	£30 " " "
£19	£11 " " "
£11	£nil " " "
Total	£101

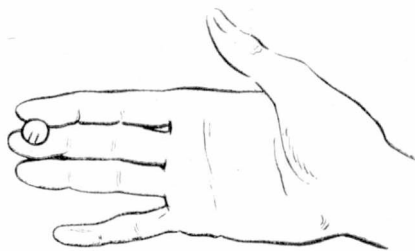
and thereafter always considered the Bank "did her" for £1.

BAD MANNERS BUT A GOOD TRICK

A very good table trick can be done with three little pellets of bread made from the soft part of your roll. Two of the pellets you place in your left hand and the third you put into your mouth and swallow. You blow on the back of your left hand and, when you open the hand, there are three pellets again. This can be repeated as often as you wish.

You have previously, when nobody was watching, made a fourth pellet, which you conceal in your hand at the tips of the first and second fingers, as shown in illustration 87. Place the other three pellets on the table. Show your left hand and make it into a loose fist. Pick up one of the pellets and drop it into your hand. Pick up a second pellet and drop that also into your hand and, at the same time, let the concealed

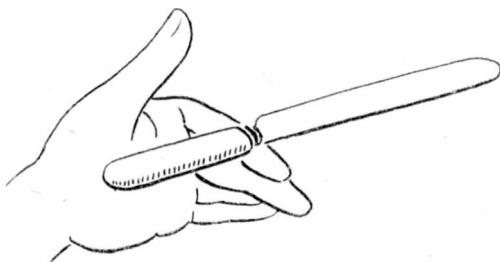
pellet fall into the hand with the others. Pretend to place the third pellet in your mouth, but really grip it by the tips of the fingers again and keep it concealed. Open your hand to show the three pellets and you are ready to start again. When you think you have done enough, you can really place the pellet into your mouth and swallow it, thus destroying all incriminating evidence.



87

DIVINING THE COIN

A very puzzling trick may be performed with a table knife, three cups and a penny. While the performer is out of the room, one of the spectators places the penny under any one of the cups. The performer returns and, taking the knife, balances it upon his finger, as shown in illustration 88. He holds the knife over each of the cups in turn and, when he comes to the cup under which the penny is hidden, the knife dips down as though attracted by the coin.



88

The secret lies in the fact that a short length of hair (about 2 inches) is attached to the penny with a dab of beeswax or gum, or even soap. Provided the trick is not performed on a white tablecloth, this hair will be quite invisible to the spectators, but easily seen by the performer, *who is looking for it*. When the cup is placed over the coin, the end of the hair will protrude at one side. If you balance a knife on your finger in the manner shown in the illustration, you will find that you can make it dip, see-saw fashion, by turning your finger the smallest, imperceptible bit. (See illustration 88.)

THE BUS TICKET AND WALNUT

The well-known London magician, Wilfrid Jonson, the author of *Mr. Smith's Guide to Sleight of Hand*, performs a neat pocket trick with an ordinary bus ticket.

He will pick up a bus ticket from the floor and ask someone to make a note of its number. He then tears the ticket into four pieces, rolls them into a ball, and places them in his left hand. On the fingers of his hand, as shown in illustration 89, he rests a walnut. He opens his hand a little and the walnut slips inside. After a moment he opens his hand again, and there is the nut, but the ticket has disappeared. He gives the nut to someone to crack by stamping on it on the floor. And *inside the nut is the ticket, completely restored.*

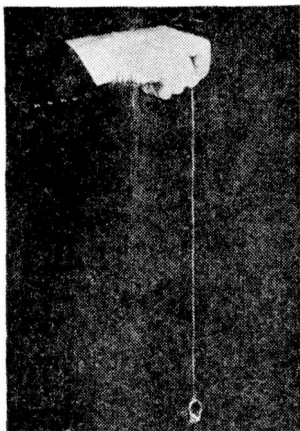
Some little preparation is necessary, but the effect is well worth the trouble. You first obtain two bus tickets with consecutive numbers,



89

say AE 3375 and AE 3376, and, with a sharp knife and Indian ink, you alter the 5 of the first ticket to make a 6, so that you have two tickets with the same number. You open a walnut by pushing a knife between the two shells and remove the kernel. You smear the edges of the shells with glue and roll the *unaltered* ticket into a ball, and place it between the shells. Around the shells you snap an elastic band and you leave them until the glue has set. This nut, with the ticket inside, you place in your pocket with the altered ticket. When a suitable opportunity occurs you drop the ticket on the floor. You steer the conversation round to magic and, "noticing" a bus ticket on the floor, offer to do a trick with it. Have the number of the ticket noted. As nobody knows what is going to happen, it will not be inspected very closely and the alteration will not be seen. Tear the ticket into four pieces and screw them into a ball. Pretend to place the ball into your left hand, but clip it between your right fingers and keep it in the right hand. Leave this ticket in your pocket when you take out the nut. Show the nut, place it in your left hand, and proceed with the effect as described.

THE SEX DETECTOR



90

An experiment somewhat similar to that of the pendulums in the bottle, but much more simple, is that known as the "Sex Detector."

A borrowed wedding ring is tied to 12 inches or 14 inches of cotton, making a pendulum. A spectator is requested to take the end of the cotton between finger and thumb and to hold it out, about 2 feet from his body, and let the ring swing freely. He is invited to notice that the ring will swing in any direction or even in a circular motion.

You tell the spectator that if a lady's hand is placed a few inches under the ring, it will swing in a cross palm direction, while, if a man's hand is placed under it, it will swing at a right angle to that motion and, finally, if a lady and gentleman clasp their hands beneath the ring, it will swing in a circular

movement. The spectator will be astonished to find that this is true and will be entirely unaware that it is his own subconscious mind that is swinging the pendulum through his hand (illustration 90).

Stress should be laid on the fact that a wedding ring is used, thus preparing the spectator's mind and leading it in the desired direction.

A COIN VANISHES

This is an elementary vanish and, for beginners, is ideal as no sleight of hand is required. It consists of a coin on elastic, but it is effective in the extreme.

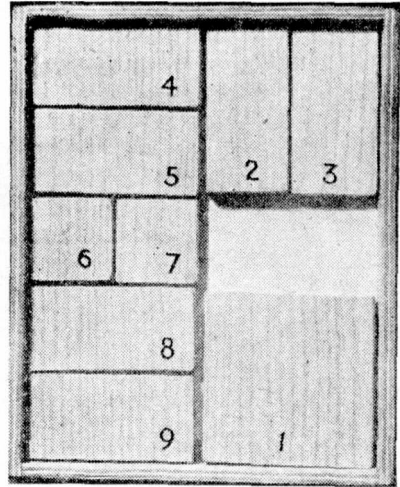
Take a length of elastic and tie one end on to a safety pin and the other end to a coin in which a hole has been drilled near the edge. (A half-crown is less suspicious than a penny.) The length of the elastic can be determined by fixing the pin near the hanger tape inside the coat and allowing the coin to hang about half-way down the sleeve.

The elastic can be stretched so that the coin can be held by the finger and thumb over the hole, whilst the hand covers the stretched elastic.

The coin is now laid on a table, so that only the forefinger covers the hole and the elastic. If the finger is raised and the hand smartly "covers the coin," the vanish is complete.

SQUIZZLE

About thirty years ago, when abroad, I saw a puzzle which greatly interested me. Soon afterwards I produced it in this country, in a varied form, where it had phenomenal sales under the name of "Squizzle." It was in a form of a puzzle which consisted of sliding blocks of wood. It is easy to make and, in my opinion, is most fascinating. It seemed to interest young and old, male or female. I received hundreds of letters from all over the country asking for the solution, and even some from Universities, telling me there was no possible solution. Yet, to my personal knowledge, several children of about ten years of age found the solution in about ten minutes. I recommend this to you; make, or get it made, and keep in the house for your visitors.



91

You require nine flat pieces of wood cut to these sizes:

One measuring 3 inches by 3 inches;

Six measuring $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 3 inches;

Two measuring $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches;

and a tray to hold them, arranged as shown in illustration 91.

The pieces should be well smoothed, especially the corners, so that they will slide past each other with ease, and the puzzle is to manœuvre block 1 into the space occupied by blocks 2 and 3, by sliding only one block at a time. It can be done in less than thirty seconds.

The first time you succeed may be an accident, but you *will* do it because it will fascinate you even if it annoys you.

(The solution is given at the end of this book, but you will be well advised to refrain from using it.)

THEY CAN'T REMEMBER THIS

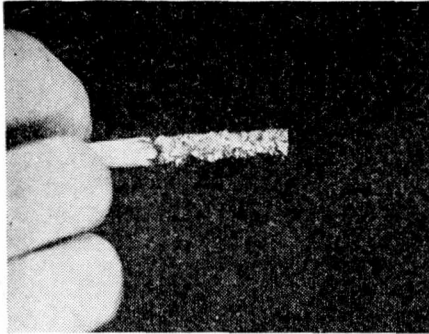
Learn to say the following sentence and repeat it to a friend, challenging him to repeat it. He will be unable to do so correctly.

"Good morning, Madam," to Eve said Adam.

"Good morning, Sir," to him said her.

THE TIDY SMOKER

When you are smoking a cigarette and do not knock off the ash, so that you have more than an inch of ash, the people you are with will begin to notice it. When you go on smoking and the ash is nearly 2 inches long and still does not drop off, they will begin to wonder.



92

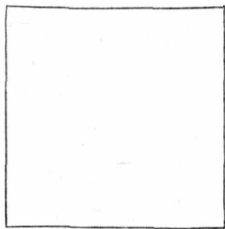
But if you first push a long needle down the centre of the cigarette, you can finish your smoke without dropping any ash.

NAPKIN FOLDING TRICK

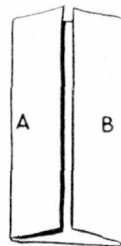
The following is a strong stunt, but care must be used to handle the matter delicately. When the conversation at the dinner table turns to clothing coupons, you can transform your table napkin into a pair of lady's brassières.

The folds are as follows :

First lay the napkin flat (illustration 93), then fold the right and left edges to the centre (illustration 94).

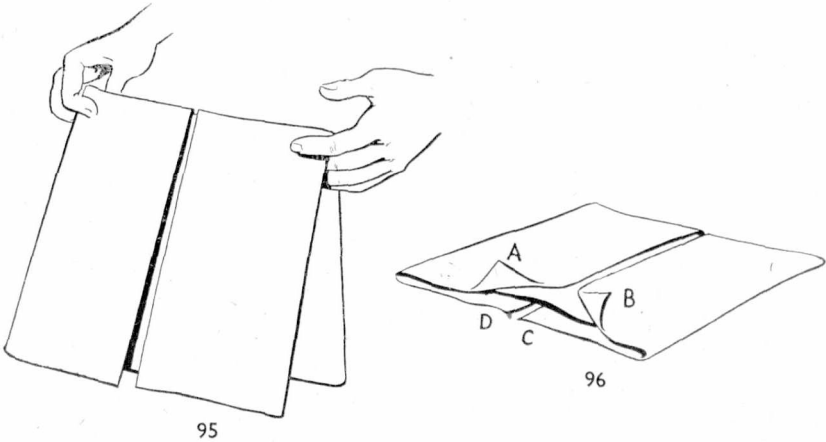


93



94

Then lift the napkin under A and B like this (illustration 95), and lay it down again.



Now the four corners are very close together, and in illustration 96 we will call the corners A, B, C, D.



97

Corners A and D must be taken with the left hand and B and C with the right hand, but do not grasp the centre folded portion; this can easily be pushed away while you get your holds and, as the two hands separate, the napkin is brought up to the chest, demonstrating the *brassière* (illustration 97).

AN ADDITION TRICK

Hand a spectator a piece of paper and ask him to write a row of figures. Performer then takes the paper and writes a prediction on the back. This he does not allow the spectator to see.

The spectator is then requested to write a second row under his first row, under which the performer writes a third row. The spectator is then requested to write a fourth row and the performer quickly writes a final row and hands paper back to spectator to "add up." When this is done, to his astonishment, he finds the answer already written on the back of the paper.

To write the prediction the performer must see the spectator's first row and deduct 2 from his last figure and write a 2 in front of his first figure.

For example :

Let us assume the spectator writes the figures 162306.

Then the performer predicts 2162304.

Now after the spectator has written his second row of any figures, the performer writes the third row, taking care to place under each of the figures of the second row a figure which totals, with the one above it, to 9.

The spectator then writes any figures.

The performer again writes a further line which totals (with the ones immediately above) to 9's again.

So that in effect you have :

First a row of any figures.

Then two rows which total 9's.

Then two more rows which total 9's.

To complete the example :

Spectator's figures	..	..	162306	}	Totalling 9's.
Spectator's second figures	..	..	372514		
Performer's figures	..	..	627485	}	Totalling 9's.
Spectator's third figures	..	..	492861		
Performer's figures	..	..	507138		
			Total		
			2162304		

HOW LARGE IS A SIXPENCE ?

Produce a £1 note and, pointing to the index number, ask how many figures a sixpenny piece will cover. Then check with the coin . . . Surprising, isn't it ?

A similar question can be asked :

"How many pennies stacked on each other would equal the height of a sixpenny piece on edge ?"

Most people will answer five or six, whereas eleven are required.

TO VANISH A CIGARETTE

Stand with your left side to a spectator with your left hand open and your right hand holding a cigarette (pencil fashion). Tap on the left hand, counting "one." Raise the right hand with the cigarette so that it is momentarily hidden by the side of your face. Bring it down again, counting "two" as it strikes your open left palm and raise it again, this time fixing the cigarette over your right ear and bringing the right hand down smartly, leaving the cigarette behind, and striking the left hand on the count of "three," at the same time closing the left hand.

PLUCKING A BUTTON FROM A SPECTATOR'S COAT

This can be imitated by having a spare button with its loose threads attached. Your left thumb covers the genuine button and also partly covers the edge of the "fake" button, thus holding it to the coat.

With an action simulating that of wrenching off the button with the free hand, while the other hand apparently holds the coat, but really hides the genuine button, a shock can be given to the owner of the coat—but it must be "magically" restored the next second; this, not out of kindness, but to prevent the discovery of your secret. This trick is suitable only for one who is sufficiently advanced in magic, as playing for position may sometimes need a little sleight of hand and misdirection. (If this trick suits you, don't forget to carry two or three buttons of various shades.)

A SILLY TRICK

This is one of those silly tricks which everyone will appreciate, except your assistant, who will be at a loss to know how you did it. Ask a spectator to take a card from your fanned pack, which is face down—look at it, and place it back on top of the pack. You then hold the pack behind your back and, unknown to the assistant, but in view of the remaining audience, you calmly turn the card face upward. Holding the pack in your left hand, behind your back, you draw your assistant towards you with your right hand by his left coat lapel so that you have manoeuvred his right ear into a convenient position near your face. You then whisper something quite inaudible to him, and at the same time your left hand, which is holding the cards, encircles his neck in a perfectly natural and intimate way, thus affording the opportunity to peep over his left shoulder and look at the card.

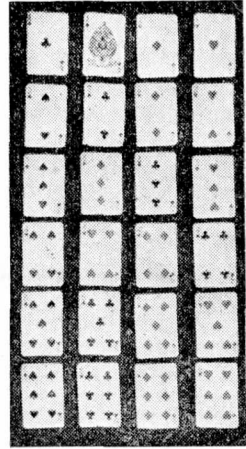
He will not know that you have done this and, after he has told you that he did not catch what you said, you can again whisper into his ear, this time the name of his card. His puzzled look will amuse the onlookers.

“ TRENTE ET UN ”

I do not know the name of this game, but it was first shown to me by Mr. Jack Salvin, the well-known sleight-of-hand expert, of London. It is hardly a card trick, but playing cards can be well used to designate the numbers. It has been used extensively in Australia by confidence men as a means of extracting money from unsuspecting players. It is in the form of a game in which twenty-four cards are used.

Take from a pack the four Aces,
 ” ” ” four 2's,
 ” ” ” four 3's,
 ” ” ” four 4's,
 ” ” ” four 5's,
 and the four 6's,

and lay them out as shown in illustration 98.



98

The game is for two players and each player turns a card over alternately, adding the numbers together until 31 is reached, which is the winning number. If a player exceeds 31 he has lost.

There is, of course, a series of key numbers which will ensure the operator winning every time and, no matter which player commences first, the operator always wins.

In brief, the operator must aim to score 3, 10, 17 and 24. Then the opponent has no chance.

Now, if the operator commences by turning 3, whatever the opponent turns will not prevent the operator from scoring 10 on the next turn, and thus the opponent cannot score 17, 24 or 31.

If the opponent should commence by turning over any number above 3, then the game is lost at the beginning, as the operator can score the key number 10 on the next turn over.

But if the opponent turns 3 or less to commence, then the operator must play low and endeavour to reach a key number as soon as possible.

Now, in the “confidence trick,” small amounts are staked, and it is not long before the opponent realises that the operator always commences with a 3 and that he always reaches the certain (key) numbers in every game, and this is where the “confidence man comes in,” for, at a convenient moment, he explains to the “dupe” the whole system and, after a little mathematical calculation, the “dupe” realises that he, too, must win if he can turn the first card.

Before you read any further, it would be well to get acquainted with the system already explained, and you will come to the same conclusion that, with the knowledge of the key numbers, the first player, if he turns a 3, must be the winner.

In actual practice the "dupe" is allowed to ponder over the question for a day and is later allowed to win, and eventually induced to stake a large sum on what he considers to be a certainty—only to lose it over a very simple unseen fact.

This fact is demonstrated here by the following moves :

1st.	"Dupe"	turns over	3.	
2nd.	Operator	" "	" "	3, making 6.
3rd.	"Dupe"	" "	" "	4, " 10.
4th.	Operator	" "	" "	4, " 14.
5th.	"Dupe"	" "	" "	3, " 17.
6th.	Operator	" "	" "	3, " 20.
7th.	"Dupe"	" "	" "	4, " 24.
8th.	Operator	" "	" "	4, " 28.

The "dupe" has lost for the obvious reason. He has no 3 left with which to make the required 31.

Remember to "educate" your opponent by always commencing with 3.

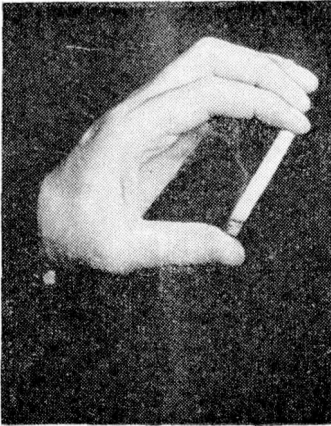
As the game continues, he will first realise he has lost when you continually score 24 ; then as you score 17 he will realise he cannot reach 24. Then he will realise that whoever turns up 10 must be in a position to reach 17, and it gradually boils down to the fact that 3 is a certain winner, and it is only after he is so confident of winning that you must resort to making him "run out of numbers he requires." If he avoids using the card which you are forcing, then he will leave the opening clear for you to reach a key number. A little practice will convince you.

A JOKE IN THE "UNPLEASANT" CATEGORY

Explaining that you have an amputated finger of one of your friends, you produce a small cardboard box and, after carefully removing the lid, show a finger lying in cotton wool.

The box is prepared with a hole in the bottom, through which your left forefinger enters as you hold the box in your left hand, prior to lifting the lid. Cotton wool stained with red ink will produce the unpleasant "blood" effect. The cotton wool should be glued to the inside of the box.

TO REST YOUR FINGER ON THE GLOWING END OF A CIGARETTE

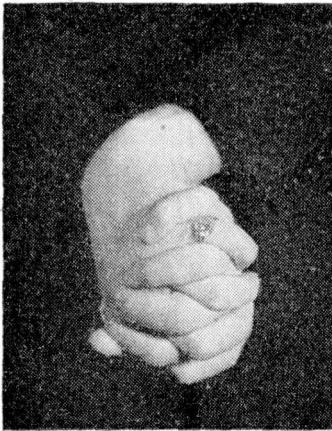


Draw hard from your cigarette, thus producing a good burning end, and blow away the ash. You will then have a pointed glow. If a little saliva is applied to this glowing point, a protective lump of carbon will be formed. After a few more puffs this end can be touched without fear of injury. (See illustration 99.)

99

FORGETTING ONE'S OWN DIGITS

Ask a friend to cross his wrists, then turn the hands palm to palm and clasp the hands by interlacing the fingers tightly. (See illustration 100.) Bring the hands in towards the body, then as upright as possible. (See illustration 101.) Whilst your friend's hands are in this position, point to any one finger (but do not touch it) and tell him to move it. He will move the wrong one.



100

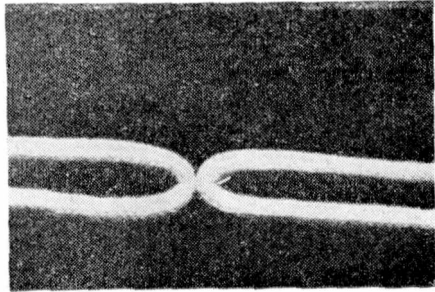


101

THE MYSTIFYING ROPES

This makes either a stage or a party trick. The effect will be described first.

Effect. Two pieces of rope are shown and two spectators are asked to come forward, to act as assistants. The ropes are first tied on the back of a chair, then several handkerchiefs are tied on the ropes. A further spectator is asked to sit on the chair and the ropes passed around him and tied in front of him. Yet, when they are pulled, they appear to pass through his body, becoming untied from the chair, and the handkerchiefs dropping off. The ropes can be immediately examined.

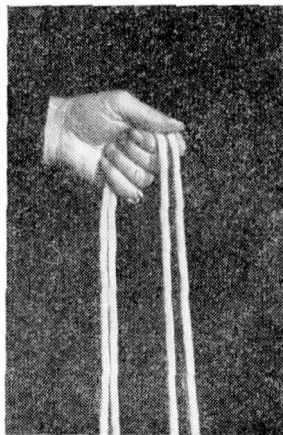


102

Method. The ropes, when first produced, are not so innocent as they appear. They should each be about 12 feet long and are tied in the centre by a piece of cotton. (See illustration 102.)

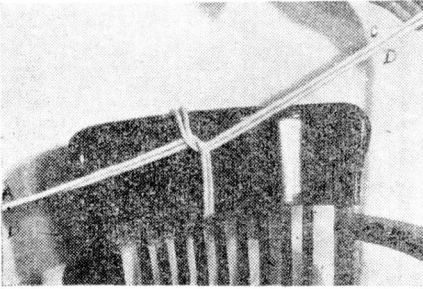
Consequently, if the join is kept under cover by the hand until the ropes are tied on the chair (illustrations 104-105) the ropes will appear to be in two lengths, A - C and B - D.

Handkerchiefs are now tied on, as shown in illustration 105. The handkerchiefs are then slid to the centre of the ropes close to the knot

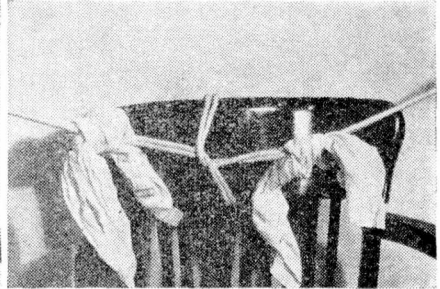


103

on the chair. A spectator is asked to be seated on the chair, the ends of the ropes A - B and C - D are then taken by the performer and tied in front of the spectator ; and here is where the critical part of the trick occurs. As the performer hands the ends back to the two assistants, he hands back not the same pairs which up to the moment have been A - B and C - D, but changes two ends so that the spectators have A - C and



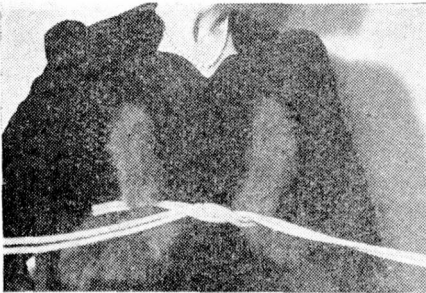
104



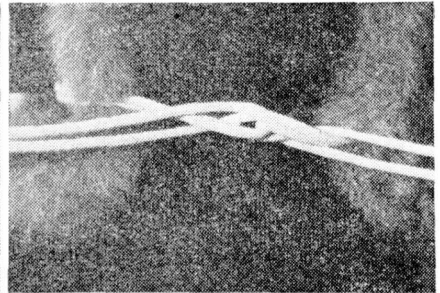
105

B - D as pairs respectively. The cotton has only to be broken and the ropes, when pulled, will appear to have come through the spectator's body, leaving no knots on the rope.

Illustration 106 shows how the knot is tied.



106



107

Illustration 107 shows the appearance of the knot AFTER two ends have been "switched."

DICE TRICK

An easy trick can be done with two or more dice.

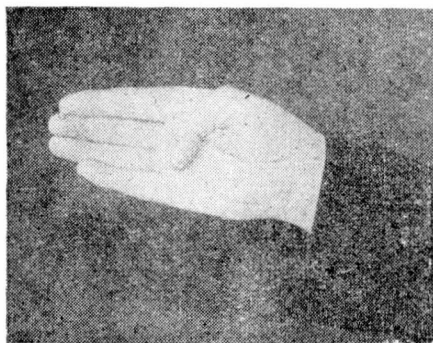
Effect. Performer asks spectator to throw some dice and is able to name the total, not of the visible, but of the under numbers.

Method. Not everyone knows that the opposite sides of dice add to 7. Thus, seeing the upper numbers, the under ones are easily calculated.

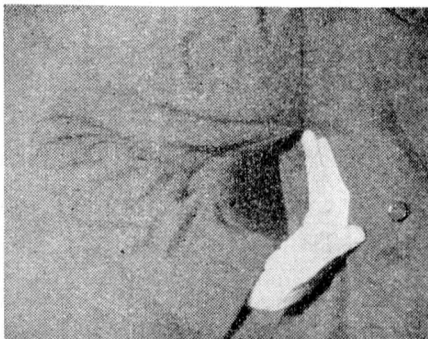
THE FOLLOW UP. Performer states that he will turn his back and this time will give not only the under numbers, but the total of the upper and under ones together. After the dice are thrown, the performer immediately states the total. This, of course, must not be repeated, because the answer will always be the same. Each dice totals 7, therefore four dice total 28. If you must repeat, remove one of the dice.

UNDERNEATH THE ARMPITS

Ask a friend to curl his thumbs round so as to press the tips on to his palms, as near the centre as possible. With his thumbs in this position (see illustration 108) he is to place his hands under his armpits (see illustration 109). Demonstrate this yourself and see that his wrists are well curved and that the elbows stick out sideways. Tell him now to



108



109

remove his thumbs, and after which he is to replace them. As he does so it will send a sharp pain up his wrists.

A BALANCING FEAT

A wineglass, half filled, can be made to balance in a practically impossible position by placing a matchstick under the tablecloth so that the "front edge" of the base of the wineglass tilts down, thus causing the "back edge" to tilt up nearly an inch. The liquid must be very steady and both hands are needed to get the correct balance, which when obtained, the hands can be removed. If a thread is attached to the match, it can be drawn away, thus avoiding suspicion.

TO SPIN A COIN ON AN INVERTED TUMBLER

This is a feat that draws considerable attention, but requires "knack." The tumbler must have a flat bottom on which a sixpence is laid. By breath it can be lifted and set spinning and maintained spinning continuously.

To practise, hold the tumbler (inverted) in the left hand and place the sixpence on the bottom with the other hand in such a way that it tends to spin in an anti-clockwise direction, at the same time gently blowing slightly to the right. When the coin spins vertically, a very fine jet of breath will keep it spinning at an enormous rate. Of course, you will commence by blowing it off the glass scores of times, but eventually you will be able to keep it in position, partly by the tilting of the tumbler and partly by the breath control. When once you have succeeded in keeping it spinning, the knack will come and remain with you. Then you can commence to practise lifting it without the help of your right hand. This is more difficult and the jet of air must be directed more centrally. Once the coin is lifted, the jet of air is slightly diverted to the side. The distance from the mouth to the glass is only a question of 2 to 3 inches. The trick can only be accomplished with patience and practice, and the glass must be wiped dry after each trial.

I must admit, however, that although it will greatly astound your friends, many people will consider that the initial practice required is out of all proportion to the effect. Anyway, try it, you may be one of the lucky ones.

THE EYESIGHT TEST

This can be quite amusing for a small group. You suggest that one of the company is suffering from poor eyesight and should have his sight tested, and you offer to do this.

You then write in heavy block letters on a piece of paper the following letters, which you hand him :

- (1) EDBKIOXH.
- (2) RJPLAFQ.
- (3) CHOICE READING.

and ask him if he can read (1), (2) and (3) clearly. After he has replied in the affirmative, you take the paper from him, look suspiciously at his eyes (here you turn the paper *upside down* and also back to front and hold it up to the light) and instruct him to close his right eye and read No. 1 out with his left, explaining that you will try it another way. This he will be able to do quite easily. So you request him to close his left eye and read No. 2 with his right. Here he will either stumble or tell you the letters are upside down. You reply : " I thought so, never mind, let's try both eyes on No. 3."

He will tell you that the left word is all right, but that the right one is upside down. You naturally put the blame on his right eye, and tell him to consult an oculist.

You can do this another way if at the dinner table. Have the letters prepared on three pieces of card and lay each one down on the table, then instead of holding them up backwards, just place a table knife beyond the letters, at right angles, so that the blade reflects the letters. The result is the same.

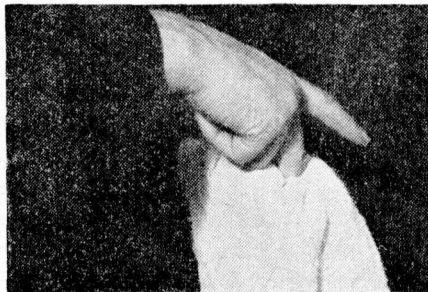
PENETRATING A HANDKERCHIEF WITH A STICK

Effect. A handkerchief is placed over the left fist and the right forefinger makes a pocket in the centre, into which the end of a walking stick is inserted. The stick, however, appears to pass right through the bottom of the pocket and out the other side. The handkerchief is slowly opened out, showing *no hole*.

Method. The secret lies in the pocket. The handkerchief is placed fairly over the left hand, which is closed lightly as though holding a stick up vertically. Notice that your left thumb rests on your left forefinger. After your right forefinger has been inserted and a pocket formed in the centre of the handkerchief and *before this forefinger is removed*, the right

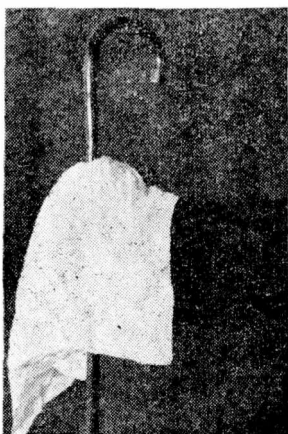


110



111

second finger is extended (so that your left thumb is now between the two fingers of the right hand). (See illustration 110.) Now, if your second finger be allowed to travel round the left thumb and enter the gap between your left thumb and forefinger, it will take a portion of the handkerchief with it, thus forming a second but bottomless pocket. Consequently, if the right forefinger is withdrawn, your left hand remains grasping your right second finger through the material. (See illustration 111.) It is this false pocket through which you pass the stick (see illustration 112), and after the "penetration" the handkerchief can be slowly opened out, showing the creases but no hole.



112

These movements should be blended into the effect of making one pocket and, with practice, the action of using the second finger is covered by what appears to be a natural twisting movement, as though to help in forming a pocket, and the withdrawing of the forefinger first is only a momentary action. This is an example of all good tricks; simple, though difficult to describe, but requiring a fair amount of practice so that eventually the "cheating part" can be done so neatly that the spectators cannot observe it. Follow the directions, word for word, over and over again, with the handkerchief and stick in hands.

OVERFILLED

A tumbler, filled to the brim with water, will still take a handful of coins before a drop spills. They must be placed in very carefully, one by one. If pins are available they will serve the purpose better, for in addition to the water, nearly a glassful of pins can be added.

SOLUTION TO "SQUIZZLE"

Move the pieces in the following order :

198 (7 down and to left), 1325467132576 (4 left), 57645 (6 up and right), 327632 (6 left and down), 235416798 (7 down and left), 983216798 and 321 (6 right and down), 451.

CONCLUSION

Here, dear readers, I shall pause. If you appreciate the contents of this little book, then practise diligently and you will find it a good investment. I have endeavoured to describe the tricks simply and without "padding." You will no doubt improve them and find more fitting patter that will suit your own style and personality. When you have done this, you will have solved the greatest problem in presenting tricks.

If you are still "wanting more," and I hear about it, there is only one thing for me to do—it will probably cost you the price of another book. So good luck and good conjuring to you.

W.

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