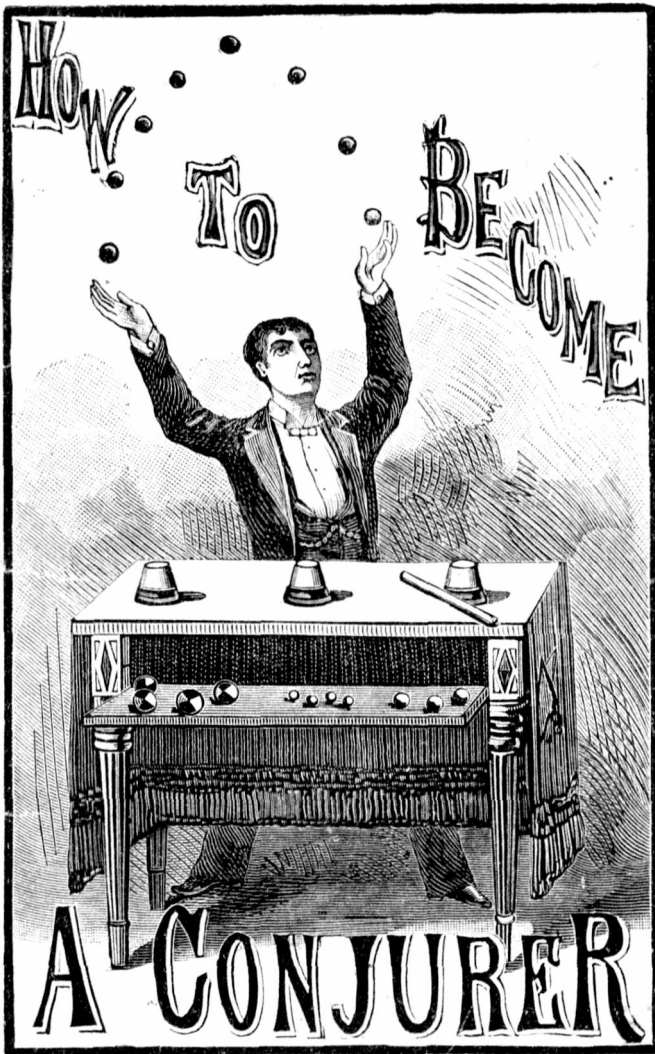
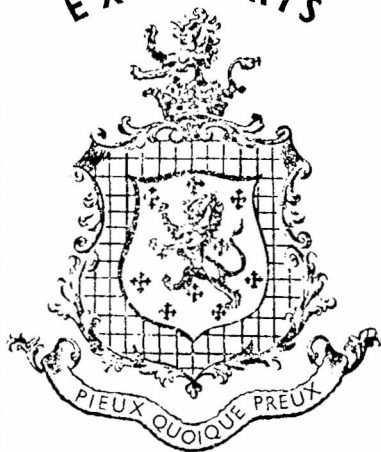


A. ANDERSON



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HOW TO
Become a Conjurer.

**Containing Tricks with Dominoes,
Balls, Hats, etc.**

FULLY ILLUSTRATED

BY A. ANDERSON.

NEW YORK:
FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher,
31 AND 33 NORTH MOORE STREET,

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1894, by
FRANK TOUSEY,
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How to Become a Conjuror.

BEFORE proceeding to the practice of the magic art, it will be well to give a short description of two or three appliances, which are of such constant use that they may be said to form the primary stock-in-trade of every conjurer. These are—a short wand, a specially adapted table, and certain secret pockets in the magician's dress.

The Magic Wand.

This is a light rod, twelve to fifteen inches in length, and about three-quarters of an inch in diameter. To the uninitiated its use may appear a mere affectation, but such is by no means the case. Apart from the prestige derived from the traditional properties of the wand, it affords a plausible pretext for many necessary movements, which would otherwise appear awkward and unnatural. Thus, if the performer desires to hold anything concealed in his hand, by holding the wand in the same hand he is able to keep it closed without exciting suspicion. If it is necessary, as frequently happens, to turn his back upon the audience for an instant, the momentary turn to the table, in order to take up or lay down the wand, affords the required opportunity.

The Magician's Table.

The first necessity of the amateur aspiring to amuse his friends with a pre-arranged *seance*, is a proper table. The table necessary for an average drawing-room exhibition differs from an ordinary table in two points: its height, which is about six inches greater than usual; and the addition of a hidden shelf or ledge at the back. It should have turned legs of some hard wood, stained and polished, and these, if it is desired to make the table portable,

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should be *screwed* into the four corners, so as to be readily taken off and put on again. In length it may be three to four feet, and in breadth eighteen inches to two feet. At the back should be fixed, about six inches below the level of the top of the table, a projecting shelf, six to eight inches in width, and extending nearly from end to end. This shelf should be covered with thick woolen cloth, in order to deaden the sound of any object falling on it.

The manner of fixing the shelf is optional. In some tables it is made to slide in and out like a drawer; in others to fold on hinges against the back of the table, or itself to form the back. This latter is the most convenient mode, as the opening made by the flap when let down gives access to the interior of the table, which forms a convenient receptacle for necessary articles. Over the table should be thrown an ordinary cloth table-cover, of such a size as to hang down about ten or fifteen inches at the front and sides, but not more than an inch or so on the side away from the audience. To prevent its slipping, the cloth may be fastened on this side with a couple of drawing-pins. The precise height of the table should be determined by the stature of the performer. The shelf should be just so high from the ground as to be level with the knuckles of the performer as his arm hangs by his side; and the top of the table, as already stated, about six inches higher than this. It will be found that this height will enable the performer secretly to take up or lay down any article thereon without stooping or bending the arm, either of which movements would suggest to the spectators that his hand was occupied in some manner behind the table. One of the first tasks of the novice should be to acquire the power of picking up or laying down any article on the shelf without making any corresponding movement of the body, and especially without looking down at his hands, for if the audience once suspect that he has a secret receptacle behind the table, half the magic of his tricks is destroyed.

An oblong box, 12 or 14 inches in length by three in depth, well padded with wadding, and placed on the shelf, will be found very useful in getting rid of small articles, such as coin, oranges, etc., as such articles may be dropped

into the box without causing any sound, and therefore without attracting attention.

In default of a table regularly made, for the purpose, the amateur may adapt an ordinary table for use as a makeshift. A common library or kitchen table having a drawer on one side, and raised on four bricks or blocks of wood to the requisite height, will answer the purpose very fairly. The table must be covered with a cloth; the drawer, pulled out about six inches on the side remote from the audience, forming the shelf. Again a very good *extempore* conjuring table may be manufactured with the aid of a good-sized folding bagatelle-board. Place the shut-up board on a card or writing-table (a few inches shorter than the board), in such manner that there may be left behind it (on the side farthest from the audience), a strip of table six or seven inches in width. This will form the shelf. Throw an ordinary cloth table-cover over all, letting it hang down a foot or eighteen inches in front, and tucking its opposite edge under the hinder edge of the board, whose weight will prevent it slipping. If the cloth is too large, it must be folded before placing it on the table.

The Magician's Dress.

The costume of the magician of the present day is ordinary "evening dress." The effect of the feats performed is greatly heightened by the close fit and comparative scantiness of such a costume, which appears to allow no space for secret pockets or other place of concealment. In reality, however, the magician is provided with two special pockets, placed in the tails of his dress-coat. Each is from four to six inches in depth and seven in width, and the opening, which is across the inside of the coat-tail, slanting slightly downwards from the center outwards, is so placed as to be just level with the knuckles of the performer, as his hand hangs by his side. He can thus, by the mere action of dropping either hand to his side, let fall any article instantly into the corresponding pocket, or take anything from thence in like manner. If the performer at the same moment slightly turns his other side

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to the spectators, he may be perfectly secure from detection.

Some performers have also a couple of small pockets made in the trousers, one behind each thigh. These are generally used for purposes of production only, the pockets in the coat being employed in preference for getting rid of any article. Many professors, in addition to the above-mentioned, have a spacious pocket, opening perpendicularly, inside the breast of the coat, under each arm, for the purpose of what is called "loading," *i. e.*, bringing a rabbit, or other article, into a hat, etc. Other pockets may be added, as the fancy of the performer may dictate.

An elastic band, about an inch in width, should be stitched around the lower edge of the waistcoat on the inside. When the waistcoat is in wear, the band makes it press tightly round the waist, and any object of moderate size—a card, or pack of cards, a handkerchief, etc.—may be slipped under it without risk of falling. Used in conjunction with the pockets above described, the vest, thus prepared, affords a means of instantaneously effecting needful "changes;" one hand dropping the genuine article into the pocket on that side, while the other draws the prepared substitute from under the waistband; a slight turn of the body, towards the table or otherwise, sufficing to cover the movement.

Tricks with Dominoes and Dice.

To arrange a Row of Dominoes face downwards on the Table, and on returning to the Room to turn up a Domino whose points shall indicate how many have been moved in your absence—This is a capital drawing-room feat. You place a row of twenty dominoes face downwards upon the table, avoiding as far as possible the appearance of any special arrangement, but nevertheless taking care that the points of the first domino (commencing from the left) shall amount to twelve, the points of the second to eleven, and so on, each decreasing by one point till you reach the thirteenth, which will be the double-blank. The points of the remaining seven are a matter of indifference. You now propose to give the company a specimen of your powers of

clairvoyance, and for that purpose leave the room, first requesting the company to remove during your absence any number of dominoes (not exceeding twelve) from the right to the left hand of the row, in other respects retaining their order. On your return you advance to the table, and address the company to the following effect: "Ladies and gentlemen, as I have already told you, I have the privilege of possessing the clairvoyant faculty, and I am about to give you a specimen of my powers. Now it would seem at first sight sufficiently surprising that I should be able merely to tell you the number of dominoes which have been moved in my absence, but that might be easily effected by confederacy, or many other very simple expedients. I propose to do much more than this, and to show you not only that I know the number that you have just displaced, but that I can read the dominoes before you as readily in their present position as though they were lying face upwards. "For instance, this domino, (touching one of the row with your finger or wand) "represents the number which have been moved in my absence. Will some one please to say what that number was?" The answer is, we will suppose, "Seven." "Seven," you repeat, turning over the domino you have touched. "You see that I was right. Would you like me to name some more? They are all equally easy. This, let me see—this is a two; this is nine; this is a double-six; this is a double-blank;" turning over each domino to show that you have named it right.

This feat, which appears perfectly miraculous to the uninitiated, is performed by the simplest possible means. All that you have to do is to count secretly the row of dominoes as far as the thirteenth from the left-hand end, or (which is the same thing) the eighth from the right hand end, the points of which will invariably be the same as the number moved from the right to the left of the row. You do not know, until the domino is turned up, what that number actually was, but you must by no means let the audience suspect this. You must boldly assume to know the number, and from that knowledge, aided by some clairvoyant faculty, to have selected a domino whose points shall represent that number. Thus, having select-

ed the proper domino, you call upon the audience to state the number moved, after which the turning up of the selected domino is regarded by the audience merely as a proof that you were correct in the previous knowledge for which they, without the smallest foundation, give you credit. After this domino has been turned up, it is easy, knowing the original order of the thirteen of which it forms one, to name two or three on either side of it. In most instances you will only know the total figure of a given domino, as two or three different combination of points will give the same total. (Thus a total of seven may be represented by either six and one, five and two, or four and three.) But there are two or three dominoes of which, if you know the total, you know the points also. Thus a total "twelve" must be always "double six," a "blank" always "double blank," a "one" always "blank one." By naming one or two of these, as if hap-hazard, you will prevent the audience suspecting, as they otherwise might, that your knowledge is limited to the *total* of each domino.

It is obvious that this is a trick which cannot be repeated, as the necessary rearrangement of the dominoes would at once attract attention. You may, however, volunteer to repeat it in a still more surprising form, really performing in its place the trick next following, one of the best, though also one of the simplest, in the whole range of the magic art.

To allow any Person in your absence to arrange the Dominoes in a Row, face downwards, and on your return to name blindfold, or without entering the Room, the end numbers of the Row.—You invite the audience to select any one of their number to arrange the whole of the dominoes face downwards upon the table. This he may do in any manner he pleases, the only restriction being that he is to arrange them after the fashion of the *game* of dominoes—viz., so that a six shall be coupled with a six, and a four with a four, and so on. While he does this, you leave the room, and, on being recalled, you at once pronounce, either blindfold, or (if the audience prefer it) without even en-

tering the room, that the extreme end numbers of the row are six and five, five and two, etc., as the case may be.

This seeming marvel depends upon a very simple principle. *It will be found by experiment that a complete set of dominoes, arranged in a row according to domino rules (i.e., like numbers together), will invariably have the same number at each end.* Thus if the final number at one end of the row be five, that at the opposite end will be five also, and so on; so that the twenty-eight dominoes, arranged as above, form numerically an endless chain or circle. *If this circle be broken by the removal of any domino, the numbers on either side of the gap thus made will be the same as those of the missing domino.* Thus, if you take away a "five-three," the chain thus broken will terminate at one end with a five, and at the other with a three. This is the whole secret of the trick: the performer secretly abstracts one domino, say the "five-three;" this renders it a matter of certainty that *the row to be formed with the remaining dominoes will terminate with a five at the one end and a three at the other, and so on with any other domino of two unequal numbers.*

The domino abstracted must not be a "double," or the trick will fail. A little consideration will show why this is the case. The removal of a double from the endless chain we have mentioned produces no break in the chain, as the numbers on each side of the gap, being alike, will coalesce; and a row formed with the remaining dominoes under such conditions may be made to terminate in any number, such number being, however, alike at either end. A domino of two different numbers, on the other hand, being removed, "forces," so to speak, the series made with the remainder to terminate with those particular numbers.

To Change, invisibly, the Numbers shown on either Face of a Pair of Dice.—Take a pair of ordinary dice, and so place them between the first finger and thumb of the right hand (see Fig. 1), that the uppermost shall show the "one," and the lowermost the "three" point, while the "one" point of the latter and the "three" point of the former are at right angles to those first named, and concealed by the ball of the thumb. (The enlargement at *a* in the figure

shows clearly the proper position). Ask some one to name aloud the points which are in sight, and to state particularly, for the information of the company, which point is

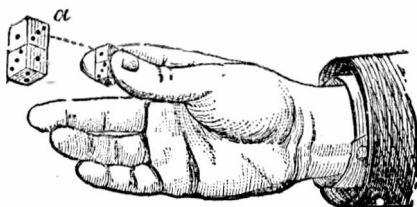


Fig. 1.

uppermost. This having been satisfactorily ascertained, you announce that you are able, by simply passing a finger over the faces of the dice, to make the points change places. So saying, gently rub the exposed faces of the dice with the forefinger of the left hand, and, on again removing the finger, the points are found to have changed places, the "three" being now uppermost, and the "one" undermost. This effect is produced by a slight movement of the thumb and finger of the right hand in the act of bringing the hands together, the thumb being moved slightly forward and the finger slightly back. This causes the two dice to make a quarter-turn vertically on their own axis, bringing into view the side which has hitherto been concealed by the ball of the thumb, while the side previously in sight is in turn hidden by the middle finger. A reverse movement, of course, replaces the dice in their original position. The action of bringing the hands together, for the supposed purpose of rubbing the dice with the opposite forefinger, completely covers the smaller movement of the thumb and finger.

After having exhibited the trick in this form once or twice, you may vary your mode of operation. For this purpose take the dice (still retaining their relative position) horizontally between the thumb and second finger, in the manner depicted in Fig. 2, showing "three-one" on their upper face; the corresponding "three-one," or rather "one-three," being now covered by the forefinger. As the

points on the opposite faces of a die invariably together amount to seven, it is obvious that the points on the under side will now be "four-six," while the points next to the

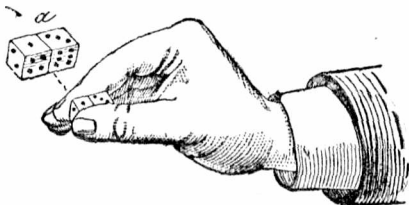


Fig. 2.

ball of the thumb will be "six-four." You show, alternately raising and lowering the hand, that the points above are "three-one," and those below "six-four." Again going through the motion of rubbing the dice with the opposite forefinger, you slightly raise the thumb and depress the middle finger, which will bring the "six-four" uppermost, and the "three-one" or "one-three" undermost. This may be repeated any number of times; or you may, by moving the thumb and finger accordingly, produce either "three-one" or "six-four" apparently both above and below the dice.

The trick may, of course, be varied as regards the particular points, but the dice must, in any case, be so placed as to have similar points on two adjoining faces.

To Name, without seeing them, the Points of a Pair of Dice.—This is a mere arithmetical recreation, but it is so good that we cannot forbear to notice it. You ask the person who threw the dice to choose which of them he likes, multiply its points by two, add five to the product, multiply the sum so obtained by five, and add the points of the remaining die. On his telling you the result, you mentally subtract twenty-five from it, when the remainder will be a number of two figures, each representing the points of one of the dice.

Thus, suppose the throws to be five, two. Five multiplied by two are ten; add five, fifteen, which, multiplied

by five, is seventy-five, to which two (the points of the remaining die) being added, the total is seventy-seven. If from this you mentally deduct twenty-five, the remainder is fifty-two, giving the points of the two dice—five and two. But, you will say, suppose the person who threw had reversed the arithmetical process, and had taken the points of the second die (two) as his multiplicand, the result must have been different. Let us try the experiment. Twice two are four, five added make nine, which, multiplied by five, is forty-five, and five (the points of the other die) being added to it, bring the total up to fifty. From this subtract twenty-five as before. The remainder, twenty-five, again gives the points of the two dice, but in the reverse order: and the same result will follow, whatever the throws may be.

The Cups and Balls.

The subject of the present chapter may be said to be the groundwork of all legerdemain, being, we believe, the very earliest form in which sleight-of-hand was exhibited. At the present day it is not very often seen, save in the bastard form known as "thimble-rig," and used as a means of fleecing the unwary upon race-courses and at country fairs. It is, however, well worthy the attention of the student of modern magic, not only as affording an excellent course of training in digital dexterity, but as being, in the hands of an adept, most striking in effect. It is by no means uncommon to find spectators who have received more elaborate feats with comparative indifference, become interested, and even enthusiastic, over a brilliant manipulation of the cups and balls.

The prestige of the illusion is heightened by the simplicity of the appliances used, consisting merely of three tin cups about three inches high, each in the form of a truncated cone, with a rim or shoulder round the base (see Fig. 3), the ordinary wand, four little cork balls, three-quarters of an inch or a little less in diameter, and blackened in the flame of a candle, three larger balls of about an inch and a quarter in diameter, and four more of such a size as to just fill the goblet. These last are generally

stuffed with hair, and covered with cloth. The number of balls may vary according to the particular "passes" which the performer desires to exhibit, but the above will be found sufficient for most purposes. The performers of the olden time were accustomed to use the *gibeciere*, or apron with pockets, already mentioned, and to perform at a table having no specialty, save that it was a little higher than those in ordinary use; but at the present day the apron is entirely discarded, the shelf of the table answering the same purpose. The arrangement of the table and apparatus is shown in Fig. 3.

The whole art of cut-and-ball conjuring resolves itself into two elements—(1), the exhibition of a ball under a cup where a moment previously there was nothing; and (2) the disappearance of a ball from beneath a cup under which the audience have just seen it (or believe that they have seen it) placed. The routine is as follows:—

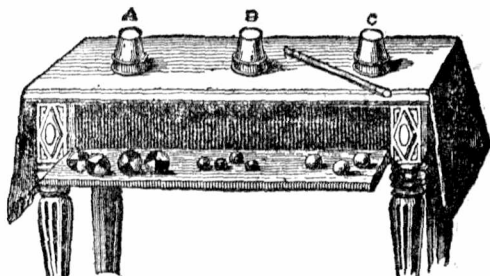


Fig. 3.

A cup is lifted, to show that there is nothing beneath it, and again replaced, mouth downwards, on the table. A ball is taken in the right hand, transferred to the left, and thence ordered to pass under the cup. The hand is opened, the ball has vanished, and, on the cup being lifted, is found beneath it. Again, the ball, first exhibited in the right hand, is thence openly transferred, either directly under the cup, or first to the left hand, and thence to the cup. All having seen it placed beneath the cup, it is now commanded to depart, and on again lifting the cup, it is

found to have vanished. It will hardly be believed, until proved by experiment, of what numerous and surprising combinations these simple elements are capable.

The sleight-of-hand requisite for the cups and balls is technically divisible into four different acts or movements, viz.—1. To “palm” the ball. 2. To reproduce the palmed ball at the end of the fingers. 3. To secretly introduce the palmed ball under the cup. 4. To simulate the action of placing the ball under the cup. The modes of effecting these objects will be discussed in due order.

1. TO PALM THE BALL. *First Method.*—We use the generic term “palm” for the sake of convenience, though

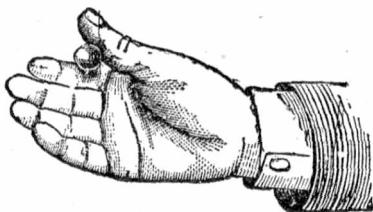


Fig. 4.

in this first method, which is that most generally used, the ball is really concealed between the second and third fingers, and not in the palm. Take the ball between the first finger and thumb of right hand; slightly bend the fingers (see Fig. 4), and at the same moment roll the ball

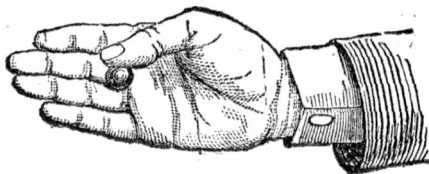


Fig. 5.

with the thumb across the first and second fingers, till it rests between the second and third fingers (see Fig. 5),

which should slightly separate to receive it, again closing as soon as it is safely lodged. The ball will now be as shown in Fig. 6, and it will be found that the hand can be opened or closed with perfect freedom, and, indeed, be used in any manner, without being in the least hampered by its presence. The student should practice palming the

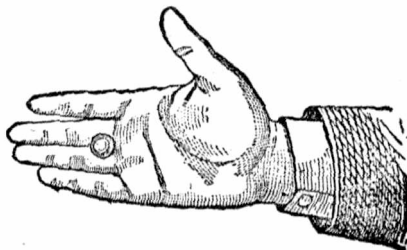


Fig. 6.

ball in this manner both in the act of (apparently) transferring the ball to the left hand, and in that of (apparently) placing it under a cup lifted by the left hand for that purpose.

Second Method.—The second method is to actually “palm” the ball, in the same manner as a coin. For this purpose the ball is, as before, taken between the first finger and thumb of the right hand, but is thence made by

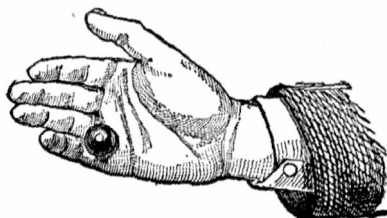


Fig. 7.

the thumb to roll between the tips of the third and fourth fingers, which immediately close into the palm, and,

again opening, leave the ball behind them. With a little practice, two balls in succession may be palmed in this way, and then a third by the first method.

Third Method.—The third method is that which was adopted by the celebrated Bosco, a most accomplished performer with the cup and balls. Being accustomed to use balls of a larger size than those above described, and therefore too bulky to palm by the first method, he used to hold them by means of a slight contraction of the little finger. (See Fig. 7.) The necessary movement of the fingers to place the ball in position is nearly the same as by the first method.

2. *To Reproduce the Palmed Ball at the End of the Fingers.*—The mode of doing this will vary according to the method by which the ball is palmed. If according to the first or third method, the ball is simply rolled back to the finger-tips with the ball of the thumb, exactly reversing the process by which it was palmed. But if the ball

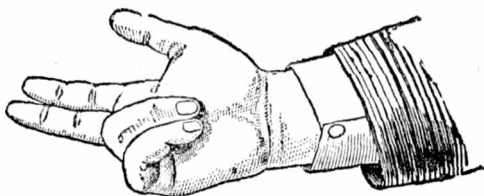


Fig. 8.

was palmed by the second method, it is, for the time being, not get-at-able by the ball of the thumb. In this case the first step is to close the third and fourth fingers upon the ball (see Fig. 8), and therewith roll it to the position shown in Fig. 7, when the thumb is enabled to reach it, and to roll it to the finger-tips in the manner just described.

3. *To Secretly Introduce the Palmed Ball under the Cup.*—This is always done in the act of raising the cup

(with the right hand); for the ostensible purpose of showing that there is nothing underneath it. The chief thing to be attended to is the position of the right hand (in which we are supposing a ball to be palmed by one or other of the methods above mentioned) in raising the cup. This should be done with the hand spread almost flat upon the table, and grasping the cup, as low down as possible, between the thumb and the lowest joint of the forefinger. In the act of raising the cup, the fingers naturally assume the position shown in Fig. 9, whereby the ball is brought

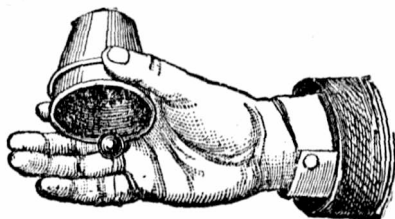


Fig. 9.

in close proximity to, and slightly under, the edge of the cup. If the ball be palmed by the first method, all that is necessary in order to release it is a slight backward movement of the second, and a forward movement of the third finger, made just before the cup again touches the table. This will be found to drop the ball immediately under the cup. If the ball be palmed by the third method, its introduction under the cup is a still easier matter, as by the act of raising the cup it is brought directly underneath it, and is released by the mere act of straightening the third and fourth fingers. If the ball is palmed by the second method, it becomes necessary, before taking hold of the cup, to close the third and fourth fingers slightly (see Fig. 8), and bring the ball to the position shown in Fig. 7. From this point the operation is the same as if the ball had been originally palmed by the third method.

It is sometimes necessary to introduce a ball between two cups. It will be remembered that each cup is made with a cylindrical rim or shoulder. The purpose of this

shoulder is that, when two cups are placed one upon the other (see Fig. 10), there may be a space between them sufficient to receive a ball or balls. To further facilitate the introduction of the ball, the top of each cup is made, not flat, but concave. When it is desired to introduce a ball between two cups, that object is effected as follows:—

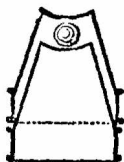


Fig. 10.

Having the ball ready palmed in the right hand, the performer takes up a cup in the same hand, and with it covers the second cup, at the same moment introducing the ball beneath it in the ordinary manner, but with the addition of a little upward jerk, rather difficult to describe, but easily acquired with a little practice. The ball is thereby thrown to the top of the uppermost cup, and, in again falling, is received by the concave top of the lowermost cup.

4. *To Simulate the Action of Placing a Ball under a Cup.*—This may be done in two ways. The first is to raise the cup with the left hand, apparently placing the ball underneath it with the right, but really palming it. Care must be taken that the edge of the cup shall touch the table at the very moment that the fingers of the right hand are removed. The second and more common method is to apparently transfer the ball to the left hand, palming it in the transit, and then bringing the closed left hand close to the cup on the table, raise the cup with the other hand, and immediately replace it with a sort of scraping movement across the fingers of the now opening left hand.

When the student has thoroughly mastered the various operations above described, he will have little to learn save the combination of the various Passes, a matter of memory only. There are, however, one or two subordinate sleights with which he should make himself acquainted before proceeding publicly to exhibit his dexterity.

To Produce a Ball from the Wand.—The wand is supposed to be the reservoir whence the magician produces

his store of balls, and into which they vanish when no longer needed. The mode of production is as follows :—The performer, holding the wand in his left hand, and drawing attention to it by some remark as to its mysterious power of production and absorption, secretly takes with his right hand, from the shelf or elsewhere, a ball, which he immediately palms (preferably by the first method). Daintily holding the wand by either end with the left hand, in such manner as to show that the hand is otherwise empty, he slides the thumb and fingers of the right hand (the back of which is naturally towards the audience) lightly to the opposite end, at the same moment rolling the ball with the thumb to the ends of the fingers, as already described. (See Fig. 11.) The ball thus comes

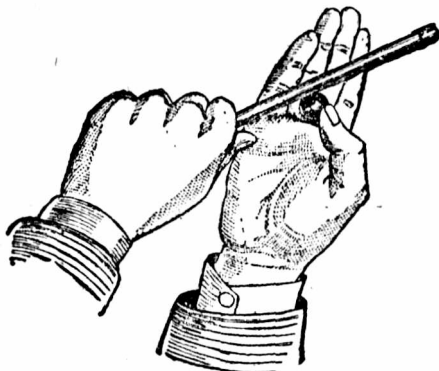


Fig. 11.

in sight just as the hand leaves the wand, the effect to the eyes of the spectators being that the ball is, by some mysterious process, squeezed out of the wand.

To Return a Ball into the Wand.—This is the converse of the process last described. Taking the wand in the left hand, as before, and the ball between the thumb and second joint of the forefinger of the opposite hand, the performer lays the end of the wand across the tips of the fin-

gers, and draws the hand gently downwards along it, at the same time palming the ball by the first method.

To Pass One Cup through Another.—This is an effective sleight, but by no means difficult of acquirement. Taking one of the cups, mouth upwards, in the left hand, and holding another in a similar position in the right hand, about a foot above it, the performer drops the right hand cup smartly into that in the left hand (which latter should be held very lightly). If this is neatly done, the lower cup will be knocked out of the hand by the concussion, while the upper one will be caught and held in its place; the effect to the eye of the spectator being as if the upper cup had passed through the other. The lower cup may either be allowed to fall on the ground or table, or may be caught by the right hand in its fall.

The successive appearances and disappearances of the balls underneath the cups are known by the name of "Passes;" the particular combination of such passes being governed by the taste and invention of the performer. The series most generally in use is derived from a work dating from the last century, by Guyot; and Guyot, we believe, borrowed it from a German source. The series given below, which will be found very effective, is derived mainly from that of Guyot, as improved by Ponsin, a later and very ingenious writer on the art of prestidigitation.

The cups and balls require, even more than conjuring generally, a running accompaniment of *talk*. Each Pass should have its own "*boniment*," or "*patter*," carefully prepared and frequently rehearsed. It would be impossible to give, within any reasonable limits, appropriate patter for each of the Passes. This each performer must arrange for himself, so as to suit the style and character in which he performs; as it is obvious that the low comedy style of a mountebank at a country fair would be utterly unsuitable in an aristocratic drawing-room, and *vice versa*. We shall, however, give a specimen or two in the course of the various Passes. The burlesque introduction next following is a paraphrase of a similar address quoted by Robert-Houdin;

Introductory Address.—"Ladies and Gentlemen,—In an age so enlightened as our own, it is really surprising to see how many popular fallacies spring up from day to day, and are accepted by the public mind as unchangeable laws of nature.

"Among these fallacies there is one which I propose at once to point out to you, and which I flatter myself I shall very easily dispose of. Many people have asserted, and, among others, the celebrated Erasmus of Rotterdam, that a material object can only be in one place at one time. Now I maintain, on the contrary, that any object may be in several places at the same moment, and that it is equally possible that it may be nowhere at all.

"I must beg you to observe, in the first place, that I have nothing in my hands—except my fingers; and that between my fingers there is nothing save a few atoms of the mysterious fluid which we call the atmosphere, and through which our jolly old Earth spins so merrily along. But we must leave the commonplace regions of astronomy, and return to the mysteries of hermetic science.

"I have before me, as you will have noticed, three little cups or goblets. The metal of which these are composed is an amalgam of costly minerals, unknown even to the most profound philosophers. This mysterious composition, which resembles silver in its solidity, its color, and the clearness of its ring, has over silver this great advantage, that it will at pleasure become impalpable as air, so that solid bodies pass through these goblets as easily as they would through empty space. I will give you a curious illustration of this by making one goblet pass through another." (This the performer does in the manner already described, and after a moment's pause continues, taking up his wand in his left hand, and secretly palming a ball in his right). "This little wand, you are probably aware, ladies and gentlemen, goes by the name of Jacob's Rod. Why it is so called I really don't know; I only know that this simple-looking wand has the faculty of producing various articles at pleasure. For instance, I require for the purpose of my experiment a little ball. My wand at once supplies me." (He produces a ball from the wand, and lays it on the table).

With this or some similar introduction, the performer proceeds to exhibit.

Pass 1. Having Placed a Ball under each Cup, to draw it out again without Lifting the Cup.—Having produced a ball from the wand as last described, and having laid it on the table, the operator continues: "Allow me to show you once more that all the cups are empty" (he raises them one by one and replaces them), "and that I have nothing in either of my hands. I take this little ball" (he picks it up with his right hand and apparently transfers it to the left, really palming it in the right), "and place it under one of the cups." Here he raises the cup with the right hand, and simulates the action of placing the ball under it with the left. "I draw another ball from my wand" (this is really the same ball, which remained palmed in the right hand), "and place it in like manner under the second cup." He goes through the motion of transferring it to the left hand and thence to the cup, as before, but this time actually does what on the former occasion he only pretended to do, and leaves the ball under the middle cup. "I produce another ball" (he half draws the wand through his fingers, but checks himself half-way). "I think I heard some one assert that I have a ball already in my hand. Pray satisfy yourselves" (showing the palms of his hands, the fingers carelessly apart) "that such is not the case. A lady suggested just now, by the way—it was only in a whisper, but I heard it—that I didn't really put the balls under the cup. It was rather sharp on the part of the lady, but you see she was wrong. Here are the balls." So saying, the performer lifts up the middle cup with his left hand, and picking up the ball with his right, holds it up that all may see, immediately replacing it under the same cup. The last movement is simulated only, the ball being in reality palmed in the supposed act of placing it under the cup. "We have now a ball under each of these two cups. We only want one more, and—here it is"—apparently producing a third ball (really the same again) from the wand. "We will place it under this last cup." He actually does so. "Now, ladies and gentlemen,

we have three cups and three balls, one under each cup. So far, I admit that I have not shown you anything very surprising, but now comes the puzzle, to take the balls from under the cups. Perhaps some of you sharp gentlemen will say there isn't much difficulty in that. Lift the cup and pick up the ball!" He suits the action to the word, lifting up the third goblet with the left hand, and picking up the ball with the right. "A very good solution, but it doesn't happen to be the right one. The problem is to draw out the balls without lifting the cups." Here he replaces the cup, apparently placing the ball beneath it, but really palming it, as already described in the case of the middle cup, and then returns to the first or furthest cup; touching the top of the goblet, he lets the palmed ball drop to his finger tips, and immediately exhibits it, saying: "This is the way I take the balls out of the cups. The ball being no longer needed, I return it into the wand." This he does, as described at page 19, immediately afterwards, if desired, handing the wand for examination. "In like manner I draw out the second ball" (he repeats the same process with the middle goblet), "and pass that also into my wand. I need not even handle the goblets. See, I merely touch this third goblet with my wand, and the ball instantly appears on the top." The company, of course, cannot see any ball on the end of the wand, but a ball is nevertheless taken thence by the process described, of letting the palmed ball drop to the tips of the fingers, as they come in contact with the wand. "I pass this also into my wand. Stay, though, on second thoughts, I shall want a ball for my next experiment, so I will leave it here on the table.

We have given a somewhat elaborate description of this first Pass, in order to give the reader some idea of the various feints and artifices employed in relation to the cups and balls. It would be impossible from considerations of space, to do this as to each of the Passes, and the reader must therefore remember that the descriptions following give merely the essential outlines, which must be worked up to dramatic effectiveness by the ingenuity of the individual performer. Where practicable, we shall allow the few words put into the mouth of the performer to indicate the actions accompanying them, only giving special "stage

directions" in cases where the performer does *not* suit the action to the words. For the sake of distinctness, we shall indicate the goblets (reckoning from the left hand of the performer) as A, B, and C. (See Fig. 3.).

Pass 2. To make a Ball Travel invisibly from Cup to Cup.—"Now, ladies and gentlemen, if you watch very closely, you will be able to see the ball travel from one cup to another. I take the ball" (transfers it apparently to left hand) "and place it under the cup (C). You see that there is nothing under this one" (B). In raising B with the right hand he introduces under it the palmed ball. "I shall now command the ball which I have just placed under the first cup (C) to travel under this one (B). Attention! and you will see it pass." He makes a motion of the wand from the one cup to the other. "There it goes! This cup (C), as you see, is empty, and under this one (B) is the ball. I will replace it under this same cup" (B). He in reality palms it, "There is nothing under this cup" (A). He secretly introduces the ball under A. "Now observe again. Pass! Did you see it? No? well, I don't much wonder at it, for I can't always see it myself. Here it is, however" (lifts A), "and this cup (B) is empty." He replaces the cups on the table, and lays the ball beside them.

Pass 3. Having placed a Ball under each of the end Cups, to make them pass successively under the Middle Cup.—Before commencing this Pass, the performer, while placing the goblets in line, or otherwise engaging the attention of the audience with his left hand, takes from the shelf with his right, and palms, a second ball. He continues, "For my next experiment, ladies and gentlemen, I shall require two balls. I need hardly remark that I could instantly supply myself from the wand; but there is a curious faculty about the balls themselves; they have a constant tendency to increase and multiply. For instance, without having recourse to the wand, I can instantly make this one ball into two" (he takes up the ball on the table

in his left hand, taking care so to hold it that all may see that there is nothing else in his hand), "and the most curious part of the matter is, that though mathematicians insist that the whole is always greater than its part, in this case each of the parts will be found precisely equal to the whole." As he speaks, he takes the ball from the left hand with the fingers of the right, at the same time dropping the palmed ball into the left hand, and now taking care to so hold his *right* hand as to show that it contains the one ball only. He then again replaces this ball in the palm of the left hand, where it lies side by side with the second ball. Rubbing the left palm with the second and third fingers of the right, with a circular motion, he gradually lifts the fingers, and shows the single ball apparently transformed into two, both of which he places on the table.

"You will observe that there is nothing under this cup (C). I will place under it this ball" (he really palms it); "neither is there anything under either of these two cups" (B and A). He lifts the cups one with each hand, and secretly introduces the palmed ball under B. "I take this second ball, and place it under this cup" (A). He really palms it. "We now have a ball under each of these two cups" (A and C). "I draw the ball out of this one" (C). He touches the top of the cup, and produces the ball last palmed at his finger-tips. "I order it to pass under this middle cup" (B). He apparently transfers it to the left hand, really palming it, and then makes a motion with the left hand, as if passing it into B. "It has passed, you see!" He raises B with his right hand, showing the ball under it, and in replacing it secretly introduces the second palmed ball. "Now I order the ball in this cup (A) to pass in like manner." He waves his wand from A to B, and then lifts B. "Here it is, and these two outer cups" (turning them over with the wand) "are perfectly empty,

Pass 4. Having placed two Balls under the Middle Cup, to make them pass under the two Outer ones.—"You have just seen these two balls pass under the middle cup; now, by way of variety, we will make them pass out of it,

I will take the two balls, and place them under the middle cup." He really so places one only, palming the other. "You observe that there is nothing either under this (A), nor under this (C)." Here he secretly introduces the palmed ball beneath C. "Now I order one of the balls under the middle cup to pass under one of the outer cups. Let us see if it has done so" (lifts middle cup with left hand). "Yes, here is only one left." He takes it up and shows it with right hand, then makes the gesture of replacing, but really palms it. "Let us see where it has gone to" (lifts A with right hand, and in replacing it secretly introduces the palmed ball under it). "It is not under this one. Then it must be under this." He lifts C. "Yes, here it is. Now I command the other ball in like manner to leave the middle cup, and pass under the other (A). Pass! Here it is, you see, and this one (B) is entirely empty."

Pass 5. To pass three Balls in succession under one Cup.—"So far, ladies and gentlemen, what I have shown you has been mere child's play." He drops the right hand carelessly to the shelf, and picks up two more balls, one of which he holds between the fingers, and the other in the palm. "The real difficulty only begins when we begin to work with three balls. Now which of these two balls" (taking up the two balls from the table) "is the largest? This one, I fancy, has the advantage, so I will pinch a little off to make a third ball." He goes through the motion of pinching the ball with the fingers of both hands, at the same moment letting fall the ball in the palm to the tips of the fingers of the right hand. "Yes, this will do. It isn't quite round, but that is easily rectified." He rolls it between the fingers. "That is better. Now watch me closely, ladies and gentlemen." He places the balls upon the table, with the exception of the fourth, which remains concealed between the fingers. "You see that there is nothing under either of the cups." He raises all three, and introduces the fourth ball under the middle one (B). He then picks up one of the balls on the table, and apparently transfers it to his left hand, really palming it. "I command this ball to pass into the middle cup. It has passed,

you see" (raising the cup with the right hand, and in replacing it, introducing the ball now palmed). The operation is repeated in like manner, until three balls have been shown under the cup, the fourth finally remaining palmed in the right hand.

Pass 6. To Place three Balls one after the other upon the top of one of the Cups, and to make them fall through the Cup on to the Table.—At the conclusion of the last Pass the performer had brought three balls under the center cup B, a fourth remaining concealed in his hand. In lifting B to exhibit the three balls, and in replacing it beside them, he takes the opportunity of introducing beneath it this fourth ball. He next takes one of the three balls thus exposed, and placing it on the top of this same goblet (B), covering it with a second goblet (A). Making any appropriate gesture he pleases, he commands the ball to fall through the lower goblet on to the table. He then overturns (without separating) the two goblets, their mouths being towards the spectators, when the ball which he had secretly introduced will be discovered, and will appear to be that which the spectators have just seen placed on the top of the goblet (and which really still remains between the two goblets), and picks up the two goblets together, mouth upwards, with the left hand, and with the right hand takes out that which is now uppermost (B). He turns both the goblets down upon the table, placing A over the ball which he has just shown. If this is neatly done, the other ball, which has remained in A, will not be discovered, but will as it falls be covered by A, which will now have beneath it two balls. The performer now places one of the remaining balls on the top of A, covering it with either of the other goblets, and again goes through the same process till he has shown first two, and then three balls under the cup, the fourth remaining, at the close of the Pass, between the two cups last used.

Pass 7. To pass three balls in succession upwards through the Table into one of the Cups.—You concluded the last Pass (we will suppose the reader to represent for

the time being the performer) by lifting two cups together to show three balls beneath the undermost. Holding two cups in the left hand, you turn them over, mouth upwards. Taking with the right hand that which is now uppermost, you place it on the table in the ordinary position, still retaining the other, in which, unknown to the spectators, a fourth ball still remains. You continue, "Ladies and gentlemen, you may possibly imagine that there is some trick or sleight-of-hand in what I have shown you, but I am now about to perform an experiment in which that solution is clearly inadmissible. I propose to pass these three balls, one after the other, through the solid table into this empty goblet. Pray watch me carefully. I take away one of the balls" (you take in the right hand one of the three on the table), "and hold it beneath the table, thus. My left hand, as you will observe, is perfectly empty. I have only to say 'Pass!'" (You palm the ball in the right hand, at the same time giving a gentle tap with one finger against the under surface of the table, and immediately bring up the hand, taking care, of course, to keep its outer side towards the spectators; then gently shake the cup which you hold in the left hand, and turn the ball out upon the table.) "Here it is, you see. Now I will put it back in the cup" (you pick up the ball with the right hand, and drop it into the cup, secretly letting fall with it the palmed ball), "and take another ball." You repeat the process, and show two balls in the cup; then again (each time dropping in the palmed ball), and show three, retaining the fourth ball, still palmed, in your right hand.

Pass 8. To Pass two Balls in succession from one Cup to another without touching them.—You again place the three cups in a row on the table, secretly introducing under the right hand cup (C) the ball which remained in your right hand at the close of the last Pass, and then openly place the three balls on the tops of the three cups. You then proceed, "I will take this ball" (that which is on B), "and place it under this same cup" (B). You really palm it. "I take this other ball" (that which is upon A), "and place it under this cup" (A). You secretly introduce

with it the ball which you have just palmed. "I take this last" (that upon C), "and place it under this goblet (A); or, stay, I will pass it invisibly to this one" (C)—really palming it. "It has passed, you see." You lift C, and show the ball which is already there; and in again covering the ball with the cup, you secretly introduce that which you last palmed. You now have in reality two balls under each of the end cups, and none under the center one; but the spectators are persuaded that there is one ball under each cup. "We have now one ball under each cup. Now I shall command the ball that is under the center cup to pass into either of the end ones at your pleasure. Which shall it be?" Whichever is chosen, suppose C, you raise and show the two balls under it. You then ostensibly replace the two balls under C, but really replace the one only, palming the other. You then raise the middle cup (B), to show that it is empty, and in replacing it, introduce the ball you have just palmed under it. "Now I shall next order one of the two balls you have just seen under this cup (C) to go and join the one which is already under this other (A). Pass! Here it is, you observe." You raise A to show that there are two balls under it. You also raise C to show that it now only contains one ball, and leave all three balls exposed on the table.

Pass 9. To make three balls in Succession pass under the Middle Cup.—At the conclusion of the last Pass, three balls were left in view, while a fourth, unknown to the audience, was hidden under the middle cup. You proceed, picking up a ball with the right hand, "I take this ball and place it under the cup" (C); (in reality palming it). "I now order it to pass under the middle cup. Presto! Here it is, you see." You raise the middle cup to show that the ball has obeyed your command, and, in again covering the ball, secretly introduce with it that which you have just palmed. "I take this one" (you pick up another), "and place it under this cup" (A)—here you palm it as before—"and order it also to pass under the middle cup." You raise the middle cup, and show that there are now two balls under it, and, in again covering them, introduce

the ball which you last palmed. "I take this last ball and place it under this cup" (C)—palming it—"whence I shall command it to again depart, and join its companions under the middle cup. This time it shall make the journey visibly." You take your wand in the left hand, and with it touch the cup C. "Here it is, you see, on the end of my wand. You don't see it? Why, surely it is visible enough. Look." You pretend to produce the palmed ball from the wand, and exhibit it to the company. "You can all see it now." You lay down the wand and go through the motion of transferring the ball to the left hand, really palming it in its passage. "Now, then, pray watch me closely, and you will see it pass under the cup. One, two, three!" You make the gesture of throwing it through the middle cup, and open the hand to show it empty, immediately turning over the goblets to show that there are three balls under the middle and none under the outer ones.

Pass 10. The "Multiplication" Pass.—For the purpose of this Pass it is necessary to borrow a hat, which you hold in the left hand. You then place the three balls in a row upon the table, and cover each with one of the cups. It will be remembered that a fourth ball remains palmed in your right hand. You now lift up the right hand goblet (C), and place it on the table close beside the ball which it lately covered, and as you do so, secretly introduce beneath it the palmed ball. You pick up with the right hand the ball which you have thus uncovered, and go through the motion of dropping it into the hat, really palming it in the moment during which the hand is concealed inside the hat, and at the same moment simulating by a gentle tap against the inside, the sound which the ball would make if actually dropped into the hat. You next lift B in like manner, introducing the ball just palmed beneath it, and go through the motion of placing the second ball, which is thereby left exposed, in the hat. You do the same with the third cup, then return to the first (which the spectators believe to be now empty, and from which they are astonished to see you produce another ball), continuing till you have raised each cup in succes-

sion eight or ten times, and, on each occasion of lifting a cup to uncover a ball, introducing beneath it the ball which you had just previously palmed. To the eyes of the spectators, who believe that the balls are really dropped into the hat, the effect will be exactly as if new balls, by some mysterious process of reproduction, came under the cups at each time of raising them. When you think your audience are sufficiently astonished, you remark, "I think we have about enough now; the hat is getting rather heavy. Will some one hold a handkerchief to receive the balls?" When the handkerchief is spread out, you carefully turn over the hat, and the general astonishment will be intensified at discovering that it contains nothing.

There is, of course, a ball left under each of the cups, and a fourth palmed in your right hand. This latter will not again be wanted, and you should therefore, while attention is drawn to the hat, drop it upon the shelf, or into one of your pockets.

Pass 11. To Transform the Small Balls to Larger Ones.—While the attention of the spectators is still occupied by the unexpected *denouement* of the last Pass, you should prepare for this one by secretly taking with your right hand from the shelf, and palming (by either the second or third method, the first being only available for the small balls) one of the larger balls. You then address the spectators to the following effect:—"Ladies and gentlemen, you see that I have little difficulty in increasing the number of the balls to an unlimited extent. I will now repeat the experiment in another form, and show you that it is equally easy to make them increase in size. You will observe that, notwithstanding the number of balls which I have just produced from the cups, there are still plenty more to come." Here you raise C, and show that there is a ball still under it. You replace it on the table at a few inches' distance, and as you do so, secretly introduce under it the larger ball which you have just palmed. Taking up the small ball in your right hand, you say, "To make the experiment still more surprising, I will pass the ball upwards through the table into the cup." So saying, you

place the right hand under the table, dropping as you do so the little ball which you hold on the shelf, and taking in its place another of the larger balls. "Pass!" you exclaim, at the same time giving a gentle rap on the under surface of the table. You bring the hand up again as if empty. You do not touch the first cup, but repeat the operation with the second, B, and again with A; on each occasion of passing the hand under the table, exchanging a small ball for a larger one, and immediately afterwards introducing the latter under the cup next in order. The last time, however, you merely drop the small ball on the shelf, without bringing up any other in exchange. You now have, unknown to the audience, one of the larger, or medium-sized balls under each of the cups; and if you were about to end with this Pass, you would merely lift the cups and show the balls, thus apparently increased in size, underneath. We will assume, however, that you propose to exhibit the Pass next following (one of the most effective), in which case the necessary preparation must be made in the act of raising the cups; and we shall therefore proceed at once, while the balls still remain covered, to describe

Pass 12. To again Transform the Balls to still Larger Ones.—The last Pass having reached the stage we have just described, *i. e.*, a large ball being under each cup, but not yet exhibited to the audience, you secretly take in your *left* hand from the shelf one of the still larger balls. These balls should be soft and elastic, and of such a size that, if pressed lightly into the cup, they shall require a slight tap of the cup on the table to dislodge them.

Having taken the ball in the left hand, you hold it at the ends of the fingers behind the table, as near the top as possible consistently with its being out of sight of the spectators. Then saying, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, I must ask for your very closest attention," you raise C with the right hand, and with the same movement lower it for a moment behind the table, and over the ball in the left hand, which remains in the cup of its own accord. All eyes go instinctively to the ball on the table, whose increased size is a new phenomenon, and not one in a hun-

dred will, in this first moment of surprise, think of watching the cup, which is naturally supposed to have, for the moment, concluded its share of the trick. You replace the cup on the table lightly, so as not to loosen the ball, meanwhile getting ready another ball in the left hand, and repeat the operation with B. With A you make a slight variation in your mode of procedure. Taking a third ball in your left hand, you hold it as before, but, as if through carelessness or clumsiness, allow it to be seen for a moment above the edge of the table. When you raise the third cup, you move it behind the table as before, and make a feint of introducing the ball which the spectators have just seen, but really let it drop on the shelf, and replace the cup empty. A murmur from the audience will quickly apprise you that they have, as they imagine, found you out. Looking as innocent as you can, you inquire what is the matter, and are informed that you were seen to introduce a ball into the cup. "I beg your pardon," you reply, lifting up, however, not A, which you have just replaced, but C, which is the farthest remote from it. There is really a ball in this cup, but having been pressed in, and sitting tightly, it does not fall. The audience, seeing you raise the wrong cup, are more and more confirmed in their suspicion. "Not that one, the other," they exclaim. You next raise B, the ball in which also does not fall, for the reason already stated. "No, no," the audience shout, "the other cup, the end one." "You are really very obstinate, gentlemen," you reply, "but pray satisfy yourselves," turning over A as you speak, and showing the inside, which is manifestly empty, and your critics rapidly subside. Meanwhile, you drop your left hand to the shelf, and secretly take from it two similar balls. Then, addressing the audience, you say, "Surely, gentlemen, you don't imagine that, if I wanted to place a ball under a cup, I should set about it after such a clumsy fashion as this!" As you say this, you place your left hand in your left pocket, as if taking a ball from thence (as it obviously would not do to give the audience cause to suspect the existence of a secret receptacle behind the table), and bring out again the two balls, but allow only one to be seen, keeping the other concealed in the palm. Bringing the cup over the

hand, you squeeze in *both* balls as far as you can, when the innermost will remain, but the outermost, not having sufficient space, will drop out again on the table. The audience, not knowing that there are *two* balls, believe the cup, which you now replace on the table, to be empty. You continue, "No, gentlemen; when I pass a ball under a cup, you may be sure that I don't let anybody see me do so." As you speak, you take the ball on the table in your right hand, and make the movement of transferring it to your left, really palming it by the second method, and holding the left hand closed and high, as if containing it, and keeping your eyes fixed thereon, you carelessly drop your right hand till the finger tips rest on the table, when you are able to let fall the ball upon the shelf. You continue, "I will now pass this ball under either of the cups which you like to name. Indeed, I will do more; I will cause this ball invisibly to multiply itself into three, one of which shall pass under each of the cups. First, however, let me show you that there is nothing under the cups at present." You raise each in turn—"Nothing here, nothing here, and nothing here!" The balls still adhere to the sides of the cups, which, therefore, appear to be empty, but you replace each with a slight rap upon the table, and thereby loosen the ball within it. "Now, then!" You bring the two hands together, and gently rub them over each cup in turn; finally parting them and showing that both are empty, and then lifting the cups, show the three large balls underneath.

Some performers, in lifting each cup with the right hand, introduce a fresh ball, held in the left hand, as already explained. The effect is the same as in the "Multiplication" Pass already described, with this difference, that on each occasion of uncovering a ball, the ball remains on the table, which thus becomes gradually covered with an ever-increasing number of balls. Some, again, conclude by apparently producing from the cups objects much larger than they could naturally contain, such as large apples, Spanish onions, etc. This is effected in the same manner as the introduction of the large balls just described, save that in this case the object, which cannot really go into the cup, is merely held against its mouth with the third finger of the

right hand, and dropped with a slight shake, as if there was a difficulty in getting it out.

There are many other cup-and-ball Passes, but the series above given will be found as effective as any.

Ball Tricks Requiring Special Apparatus.

BEFORE proceeding to the description of the tricks which form the subject of this Chapter, it may be well to mention one or two principles of sleight-of-hand, not yet noticed, which have a special application to ball tricks, and are also useful with regard to oranges, apples, eggs, etc. The Pass called the *tourniquet*, or "French drop," described already in relation to coin, will be found equally applicable to balls up to a couple of inches in diameter, but is not available for objects of larger size. Balls of larger diameter are best palmed by one or other of the methods following.

First Method.—Taking the ball in either hand, the performer tosses the ball from palm to palm (at a few inches' distance) four or five times, finally making the motion of tossing it from the right hand to the left, but really retaining it in the right by a slight contraction of the palm, and at the same time closing and elevating the left hand, and following it with the eyes, as though it contained the ball. It is obvious that a ball of the size now under consideration (say of two or three inches in diameter) would not admit of the hand containing it being perfectly closed; and this must be borne in mind in the position of the left hand, the fingers of which must not be tightly closed, as they would if apparently containing a coin or other very small article, but merely curved inward; the palm of course being turned toward the performer's own body, so as not to disclose the secret of its emptiness. Where the hand of the performer is small, or the ball is of such a size as not to be readily retained in the right hand by the contraction of the palm, the thumb may be used to assist in supporting it.

Second Method.—Taking the ball between his open hands, the performer rolls it round and round between his

palms, as though it were a lump of clay which he was molding into a spherical form ; and in doing so gradually turns his hands till the back of his right hand is undermost, when, with an inward movement of the hand towards himself, he palms the ball therein, at the same time closing and elevating the left hand, as described for the last method.

To Vanish a Large Ball with the aid of the Table.—First Method. Standing behind his table, the ball being some six or eight inches from its hinder edge, the performer places both hands round it, apparently picking it up and bringing it forward between his two hands, from which, however, the ball is, on examination, found to have vanished. Its disappearance is effected as follows : At the moment when the performer encircles the ball with his hands, he gives, with the little finger of the hand which is innermost—and therefore unseen by the audience—a quick jerk to the ball, which is thereby made to roll towards the hinder edge of the table, and drop upon the shelf, on which there should be a padded box or basket to receive it. The action is wholly concealed from the spectators by the hands which, with the exception of the finger which does the work, should remain motionless.

Second Method.—Standing behind his table, as in the last case, the performer tosses up the ball, and catches it again three or four times, keeping the hands low, so as to be near the edge of the table. The hands naturally sink in the act of catching the ball ; and after having caught it once or twice, the performer, as he lowers them, drops it on the shelf, immediately raising them again with the action of throwing up the ball, taking care to follow it with the eyes in its imaginary flight. If this is done neatly, the eyes of the spectators will instinctively travel in the same direction, and the effect to them will be as if the ball vanished at the highest point of its upward flight, instead of disappearing, as it really does, at the moment of reaching the hands in its fall. This method may also be employed for objects other than of spherical shape.

Third Method.—The performer, standing behind his table as before, and placing the ball thereon, covers it with his right hand, and rolls it round and round in circles, each time bringing it nearer and nearer to the hinder edge of the table, till it finally rolls over, and drops upon the shelf. He continues the motion of the hand for two or three turns, as though the ball was still under it, gradually working back towards the center of the table, the effect to the spectator being as if the ball melted away under the operator's fingers.

Fourth Method.—This is generally employed to apparently pass one object into another—say a small ball into a large one. The performer, standing a little behind his table, with his right side slightly turned to the spectators, takes in his right hand the small ball, and in his left the large one. The latter he holds about shoulder high, keeping his eyes fixed upon it, and remarking, "I shall now pass this small ball into this large one," he draws back and lowers the right arm, as though to give it impetus, as one naturally does in the act of throwing. This brings the right hand just over the padded box or basket on the shelf, and allows him to drop the small ball therein. Without any pause, he brings the right hand smartly up to the left, describing a tolerably wide arc in its transit, and then, separating his hands, shows that the smaller ball has vanished, having apparently passed into the large one. This sleight is not confined to objects of spherical form, but may be used with any article of convenient size.

With this introduction, we shall now proceed to describe a few of the most popular "ball tricks."

The Ball Box.—The leading idea of most of the tricks which we are about to describe is the magical appearance or disappearance of a ball. So far, they resemble the cup-and-ball tricks described in the last Chapter, but with this difference, that, in the case of the present series, the main effect is produced by mechanical means, any sleight-of-hand employed being rather an accessory than the leading feature. The oldest and simplest of the mechanical appliances for this purpose is that known as the "ball-box,"

consisting of a box two to six inches in height, of the shape shown in Fig. 12, and containing a ball which just fills it. The box consists of three portions—the lower portion, or box proper *a*, the lid *c*, and an intermediate portion *b*, being a hollow hemisphere colored externally in imitation of the ball, and so fitted with reference to the box and lid, that it may be either lifted off with the lid, leaving the box apparently empty, or may be left upon the box when the lid is removed, the effect to the eye being as if the ball had returned to the box. The ball-box is generally of turned box-wood, and is scored with concentric circles, which serve to disguise its double opening. Simply stated, its effect is as follows:—The solid ball is first

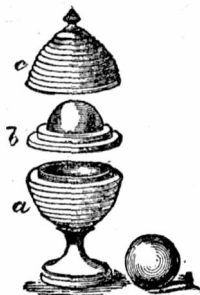


Fig. 12.

shown in the box, and then openly taken from it, and the box covered with the lid. The ball is then got rid of in one or other of the modes before described, and a pretense is made of passing it invisibly into the box. The lid is removed without the intermediate portion *b*, and the ball appears to have returned to the box. Again the lid is replaced, and again removed; but this time *b* is removed with it, and the box again appears empty. The trick in this form is to be found in every toy-shop, and is so well known as to produce scarcely any illusion, but its transparency may be considerably diminished by previously palming (in the right hand) the movable shell *b*, the convex side being inwards, and then handing round the re-

maining portions and the solid ball for inspection. When they are returned, the performer apparently places the ball in the box, but really makes a secret exchange, and places *b* in the box instead. Upon again removing the lid, and with it *b*, the ball has disappeared; and as the audience have, as they believe, inspected the whole apparatus, the mode of its disappearance is not quite so obvious as in the first case. At best, however, the ball-box, in this its pristine form, is a clumsy and inartistic contrivance, and has long been relegated to the juvenile and country-fair school of conjuring. There is, however, an improved apparatus for producing a similar effect, which is generally worked in couples, under the name of

The Red-and-Black Ball Vases.—The receptacle for the ball is in this case made in the form of a neat vase, and without any of those tell-tale grooves which disfigure the older ball-box. (See Fig. 13). Like its prototype, it is in

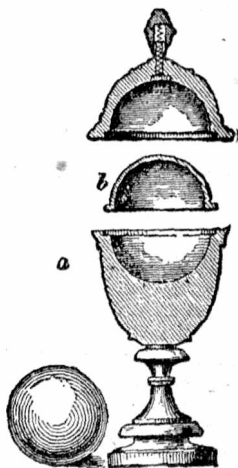


Fig. 13.

three parts, which we will distinguish as before by the letters *a*, *b*, and *c*. The portion *b*, however, in this case goes

completely within the lid *c*, within which it fits just tightly enough to be lifted off with it. When, however, the performer desires to leave *b* upon *a*, he presses down, in the act of lifting off the cover, a movable button or stud at the top. This pushes out the shell *b* from the cover, and, when the latter is lifted, leaves it upon *a*. When used in pairs, the ball-vases are usually made with one red and one black ball, the shells *b* of each vase being also one black and one red. The balls are first offered for examination, after which the red ball is placed in the vase containing the black shell, and the black ball in that which contains the red shell. The vases are then covered, and on the covers being again removed, leaving the hollow shells upon the vases, the red ball being covered by the black shell, and the black ball by the red shell, the effect to the spectator is as if the two balls had changed places. By leaving alternately the one or the other shell over its respective vase, the ball in the opposite vase being left uncovered, the vases may be made to appear as if both containing red balls or both black balls, the genuine balls being finally again exhibited as at first.

There is yet another form of ball-box, also frequently worked in pairs, and designed to simulate the apparent passage of a ball from the one box to the other. The vase in this case consists of two parts only, the vase proper *a*, and the cover *b*, but the latter is of such a height as to completely contain the ball, and of such a size internally, that, if the ball be jerked up into the cover, it will not again fall, unless a slight shake be used to displace it. (See Fig. 14). Each vase has its own ball, and the mode of use is as follows:—One of the vases is prepared beforehand by jerking up the ball into the cover, which may then be removed, showing the vase apparently empty; or both may be first shown empty, and the ball then introduced secretly under the cover, after the manner of the cups and balls. The remaining vase and ball are offered for inspection, and when they are returned, the ball is placed within and covered over, after which the closed vase is placed upon the table; but in the act of doing this the performer gives the apparatus a slight upward jerk, thereby causing the ball therein to rise into the cover, where it remains.

The second vase is once more shown empty ; but in replacing it on the table, the performer puts it down sharply, thereby causing the ball to drop from the cover into the

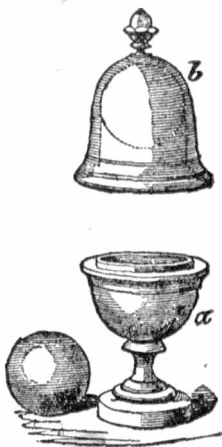


Fig. 14.

cup. He now orders the ball, which the company have seen placed in the first vase, to pass invisibly into the second ; and on again opening the two, this transposition will appear to have taken place, and by a repetition of the process the ball may be made to travel backwards and forwards from one vase to the other.

Morison's Pill-box.—In this trick the device of the "shell" is carried still further. The box in this case is spherical, standing upon a thin stem (see Fig. 15), and each part (box proper and lid) contains a half shell, the edge of one having a rebate or shoulder, so as to fit into the other, the two conjoined having the appearance of a solid ball. The genuine ball is of such a size as just to fill the hollow shells when thus joined. The lower shell fits loosely in the box, the upper one a little more tightly, so

as not to fall out unless pressed down by the button on the top of the lid, which not only loosens it from the lid, but presses it into union with the lower shell.

The mode of using the apparatus is as follows:—It is first brought forward with the one half shell in the box, and the other in the lid, the true ball, which is of the same



Fig. 15.

color as the shell (generally black) being placed within the lower shell. The ball is ostentatiously removed, and the box closed. The ball is then either placed in some piece of apparatus adapted to cause its disappearance, or is made to vanish by sleight-of-hand in one or other of the modes already described. The ball is now ordered to return to the box, which, for greater certainty, is once more shown empty. The performer again closes it, pressing as he does so the button on top of the lid, thus compelling the two half shells to coalesce; and on again re-opening the box, the ball has, to all appearance, returned as commanded. The ball-box now under consideration has this great advantage over the single-shell vases, that the sham ball can be completely removed from the box, and shown on all

sides, thus (apparently) negativing the possibility of its being a shell only.

The trick may be also worked very effectively by using a genuine ball of a different color to the shell, with the addition of a duplicate of each. Thus, if the shell be black, you must be provided with a solid ball of the same color, and two red balls. One of the latter, as also the solid black ball, should be of such a size as to go inside the shell, the remaining red ball being of the same size as the shell in its complete condition. The half shells being in their place in the box, the performer brings it forward, together with the smaller red and black ball, keeping the remaining red ball concealed in his palm. Borrowing a handkerchief, he wraps (apparently) the black ball therein, and gives it to some one to hold (really substituting the palmed red ball, and getting rid of the black ball as soon as he can into one of his secret pockets). He then places the remaining red ball in the box, and having covered it over, commands the black ball in the handkerchief to change places with the red one in the box. Upon examination, the change has apparently taken place, the red ball in the box being now enclosed within the hollow shell, and thus having all the appearance of the solid black ball.

The Ball which changes to a Rose.—This is little more than an enlarged edition of the apparatus just described, the ball in Morison's pill-box being generally of about an inch and a half in diameter, while in the present case the ball is nearly double that size. (See Fig. 16). The only difference is the addition of a short pin, about a sixteenth of an inch in length, projecting from the bottom of the cup, and fitting into a corresponding hole in the lower shell. The addition of this pin enables the performer, after having pressed the stud at top, and thus caused the ball to appear in the previously empty box, to again cause its disappearance. This is effected by opening the box with a slight lateral pressure, when the pin acts as a stop or check to hold back the lower shell; and the shells which are in this instance made to fit rather more loosely together, are thus forced to separate again, the lower being left in the cup and the upper in the lid, as before.

This apparatus is generally used with a solid black ball and a couple of artificial rosebuds, as nearly alike as possible. The apparatus is brought forward empty, and with the solid ball and one of the rosebuds, is handed to the au-

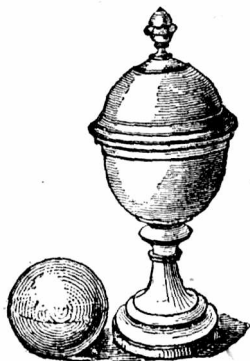


Fig. 16.

dience for inspection. The two half shells, joined together so as to form a hollow ball, with the second rosebud within, are placed ready to hand in one of the pockets of the performer. The audience having duly examined the apparatus, the performer returns to his table, secretly exchanging as he does so the solid for the hollow ball. This latter he keeps openly in the cup, taking care that the hole in the lower shell duly corresponds with the pin at bottom, and puts on the cover. He now announces that the ball which he has just placed in the cup will at command fly away, and that the rosebud which he holds shall take its place. The disappearance of the visible rosebud is effected in any way that the invention or the appliances at command of the performer may suggest; and on the box being opened, so as to part the two shells, the ball has apparently disappeared, and the rose has taken its place. By again closing the box, and this time pressing the stud on the top, the flower may again be made to vanish, and the ball to reappear in its original position.

A similar apparatus to the above is sometimes made in metal, and of a size sufficient to enclose a cannon-ball, which being made to disappear, its place is supplied by a variety of articles which have been otherwise disposed of at an earlier period.

The Obedient Ball.—This trick is of Japanese origin, and from that circumstance is sometimes known as the Japanese Ball. It is performed with a large black wooden ball, about five inches in diameter, with a hole bored through it from side to side. A piece of stout rope, four or five feet in length, with a knot at one end, completes the apparatus. The performer commences by passing the rope through the ball, and hands both for examination. The ball is found to run loosely upon the rope, and both are manifestly quite free from mechanism or preparation. The articles being returned, the performer places his foot upon the knotted end of the rope, and taking the other end in his right hand, holds it in a perpendicular position. The ball is raised as far as the length of the rope will admit, and, on being again released, immediately runs down again, as would naturally be expected. The performer now announces that, in obedience to his will, the laws of gravity will be in this particular instance suspended. Accordingly, on his again raising the ball to any portion of the rope, it remains stationary at that height until released by his command, when it instantly runs down. Other persons are invited to come forward, and to place the ball at any height they please, the ball again remaining stationary until released by the word of the operator, when it slowly descends, stopping, however, in its course, and remaining fixed whenever commanded by the performer to do so.

The secret lies in the fact that the hole in the ball is not made straight from end to end, but curved, with an angle or break in the middle. (See Fig. 17). So long as the rope is slack, it runs through easily enough, but as soon as it is drawn taut, and thus forced into a straight line, it is clipped by the opposite angles *a*, *b*, and *c*, creating an amount of friction which would support a much greater weight than that of the ball. The performer, has, there-

fore, only to draw the rope taut when he desires the ball to remain stationary, and to slacken when he desires it to run down.

There is another form of the Obedient Ball, designed for drawing-room use. The ball in this case is about two and a half inches in diameter, and the bore is straight, but tapering from a quarter of an inch at the one opening to about half an inch at the other. The cord used is a thin piece of whipcord, and the ball therefore runs quite loosely upon it. There is, however, in this case an additional element in the apparatus, consisting of a little black wooden plug, about an inch in length, and tapering so as to fit midway in the bore of the ball. (See Fig. 18, in which *a*

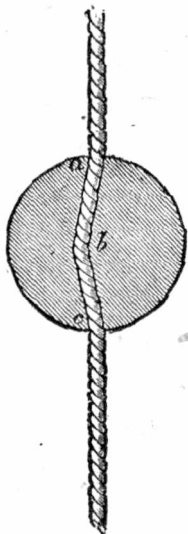


Fig. 17.

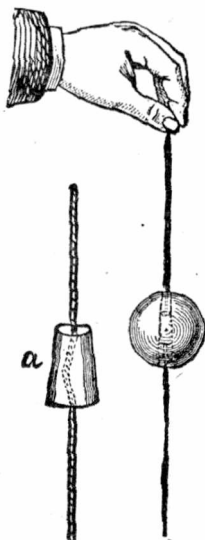


Fig. 18.

represents a nearly full-sized view of the plug in question). The plug is bored after the manner of the large ball, the hole being of such a size as to just allow the cord to run

through it. This plug is secretly threaded upon the cord before commencing the trick; the cord, which in this case has a tassel instead of a knot at one end, being passed through it from the larger end. This plug is kept concealed in the hand of the performer, the string being allowed to dangle down on each side of it. The ball is handed round for examination, and when returned the cord is passed through it from the side which has the larger opening. The ball is then allowed to drop quickly to the full extent of the cord. As it runs down it encounters the plug, which is thereby placed in position within the ball, and both run down together until stopped by the tassel. From this point the working of the trick is the same as with the larger ball.

Hat Tricks.

The present chapter will be devoted to those tricks in which a hat plays a special or prominent part. Borrowed hats have been used in the course of many of the tricks already described, but the part played by the hat has been of an incidental and subordinate character. In the tricks next following the hat is the principal article employed.

The majority of hat tricks are different modifications of the same broad idea, viz., the production from a borrowed and apparently empty hat of various articles, in size and number much exceeding what any hat could in the natural way contain. One of the best is that of

The Cannon-balls in the Hat.—The earliest and simplest form of this trick is limited to the production of a solid wooden globe, blacked to resemble a cannon-ball. The introduction of the ball into the hat is effected as follows:—The ball, which has a hole of about two inches in depth by one in diameter bored in it towards its center, is placed on the shelf of the performer's table in such manner that the hole above mentioned shall slant upwards and outwards, at an angle of about 45 degrees. To keep the ball steady, and to prevent its rolling off, some performers have a slight circular hollow scooped in the surface of the shelf itself. A more convenient plan, however,

is to use an india-rubber ring (such as is given to infants teething). This may be placed on any part of the shelf, and makes a capital rest or bed for the ball. A bit of half-inch rope, with the ends joined so as to form a ring, will answer the same purpose.

When the performer desires to introduce the ball into the hat, which we will suppose to have been borrowed for the purpose of some previous trick just completed, he takes the hat with his thumb outside and his fingers inside the brim, and holds it up with its mouth towards the spectators, so as to show indirectly that it is empty (see Fig. 19).

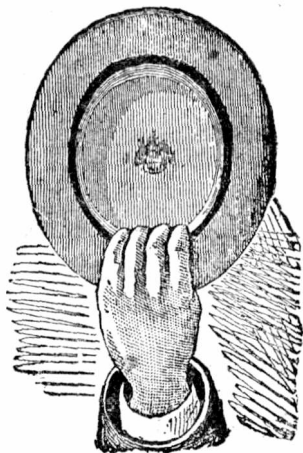


Fig. 19.

Carelessly lowering his hand he brings the hat mouth downwards on the table, and, drawing it towards him, slips the second finger into the hole in the ball (see Fig. 20), when the mere action of crooking the finger brings the ball into the hat. He then, still holding the ball supported by the finger, walks away from the table towards the owner of the hat, with the apparent intention of returning it. Just before reaching him, however, he pretends to notice that it is somewhat heavy, and looking into it, says:

"Dear me, sir, there is something rather peculiar about this hat. Are you aware that there is something in it?" The owner naturally professes ignorance of the fact; and

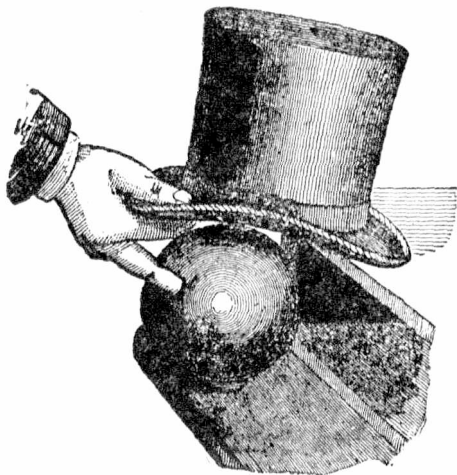


Fig. 20.

the performer, after keeping the audience in suspense for a moment or two, turns the hat over, and lets the ball fall out upon the stage.

The performer may in some degree heighten the effect of the trick by making it appear that the ball is wedged very tightly in the hat, as the difficulty of introducing it becomes thereby presumably the greater. This is managed by holding the hat with both hands, as shown in Fig. 21, when the extended finger-tips will prevent the ball from falling as long as may be desired, however much the hat may be shaken.

The trick, as above described, is of very short duration. In order to lengthen, and at the same time to diversify it, a second ball is sometimes employed, of similar appearance, but of different construction. This second ball (see

Figs. 22, 23, the latter representing a section of the ball) is a strongly made hollow sphere of tin or zinc, with a circular opening of about three and a half inches across, closed

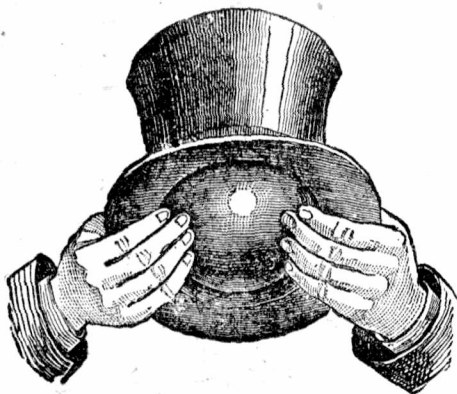
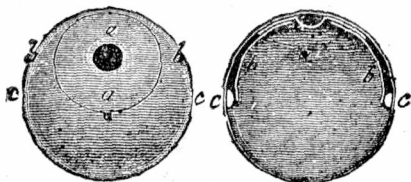


Fig. 21.

by a sort of sliding door, *a*, also circular, working on two curved arms, *b b*, which move on two pivots, *c c*, at opposite sides of the ball on the inside. In this door is a hole an inch in diameter, answering the same purpose as the hole bored in the solid ball.

The ball is filled beforehand with bonbons, small toys, or any other articles suitable for production. Thus "loaded," it is placed upon the shelf, and introduced into the hat



Figs. 22, 23.

as above described. The performer goes through the ceremony of pretending to discover something in the hat, but

does not, as in the last case, at once produce the ball. Slipping back the sliding door, he brings out, one by one, the articles contained in the ball, not hurriedly, but with deliberation, as he thereby produces the effect of greater quantity. Having emptied the ball, he again closes the circular slide, remarking that the hat is now quite empty. As a proof that it is so, he turns the hat mouth downwards as above directed, preventing the ball from falling with the tips of his fingers. Again he moves towards the owner, as if to return the hat, and again pretends to find something in it. This time, however, he does not allow the ball to fall on the ground, as, being hollow, it will not bear rough usage, but lifts it out with his left hand, taking care that the "door" side shall be downwards, next his palm. Observing that he will have the ball packed up for the owner of the hat to take home with him, he returns to his table, and places it thereon. As the ball was in his left hand, the right is still holding the hat, and this gives him the opportunity to introduce the second (*i. e.*, the solid) cannon-ball, which should be placed in readiness at the opposite corner of the shelf. This also is produced in due course, and, being manifestly solid, naturally leads the audience to infer that the other was so also.

What are known as "multiplying balls" are frequently used in conjunction with the cannon-balls. They are cloth-covered balls of about two and a half inches in diameter. In appearance they are solid, but in reality are mere outer coverings of cloth, kept distended by spiral skeletons of wire (see Fig. 24), and may be pressed quite flat, in which

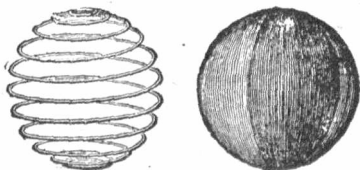


Fig. 24.

condition they occupy an exceedingly small space, though they immediately regain their shape on being released. A large number of these may be packed in the hollow cannon

ball, and when taken out, produce a pile extending far above the mouth of the hat, the cannon ball lying hidden beneath them.

The hollow ball may also be filled with soft feathers, of which what will seem an incredible quantity when spread out may be compressed into a very small space. Feathers are, however, objectionable in a drawing-room, from the difficulty of collecting them from the carpet.

The "Hundred Goblets" From a Hat.—The goblets used for this purpose are of polished tin, about four inches in depth, and made without ornament or projection of any kind. Being all of the same size, and slightly tapering, a large number of them may be fitted one within the other, and yet occupy little more space than a single one. The goblets thus packed are placed in a bag of black alpaca, just large enough to receive them, and concealed on the shelf, or in one of the pockets of the performer. When it is desired to introduce them into the hat, they are grasped in either hand, the back of the hand being turned towards the audience, and thus covering them. The hand is now carelessly placed in the hat, as though to take something out. Once introduced, the goblets are produced one by one, and placed mouth downward on the table, their number giving an appearance of bulk which seems to exclude the possibility of their having been all contained within so small a space. Two or three parcels of goblets may be introduced successively, and brought out one by one, with little difficulty.

We may here mention a little expedient which will be found of great assistance where the performer desires to introduce into a hat a bundle of goblets (or any similar article) from either of his secret pockets. We will suppose that the article in question is in the right-hand pocket. Taking the empty hat in the opposite hand (the left), he stoops a little, and holding it down near the floor, with its mouth toward the company, gently moves it round and round in circles, gazing at it intently, as though anticipating some important result. This draws all eyes to the hat, and enables him to drop his right hand to the

pocket, and bring out, under cover of the hand and wrist, the article to be introduced. Continuing the motion, he gradually brings the mouth of the hat upwards, so that the company can no longer see into it, and suddenly plunges his right hand into it, as though merely to take out the article or articles which he, in fact, thereby introduces. This may be repeated from the pocket on the opposite side; and thus two successive packets of articles may be introduced without even going near the table.

A Dozen Babies from a Hat.—Among the various objects available for production, may be enumerated dolls, of which a dozen, each eight or nine inches in height, may be produced from a borrowed hat. The dolls for this purpose are of colored muslin, stretched over a framework of skeleton of spiral wire, after the fashion of the multiplying balls (see Fig. 25), and may be compressed vertically to a



Fig. 25.

thickness of about three-quarters of an inch. A dozen of them may be packed within the hollow cannon-ball, described above, resuming their shape as soon as they are released.

The Magic Reticules.—This is one of the most modern hat tricks. The reticules, which are of cardboard covered

with leather, are, when expanded, as shown in Fig. 26. They are, however, constructed so as to fold into a very

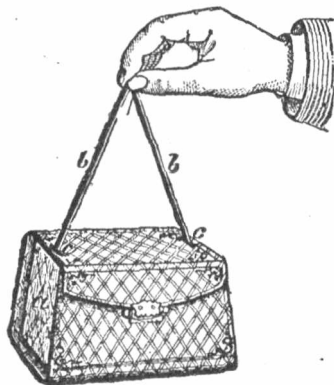
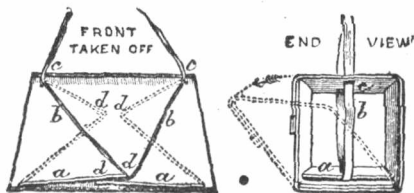


Fig. 26.

small compass, in manner following: The ends, *a a*, are only attached to the reticule at their lower edges (which form a kind of leather hinge), and may be folded inwards flat upon the reticule. (See Fig 27.) The ends of the ribbon *b*, which forms the sling or handle of the reticule, run freely through two holes *c c* in the upper side of the reticule, and are attached to the ends *a a* at the points *d d*.



Figs. 27, 28.

The ends being folded down, as in Fig. 27, the reticule becomes a hollow oblong, open from end to end, as in Fig. 28. The angles, being made of soft leather, are flexible, and by

pressing the sides in the direction indicated by the dotted lines (see Fig. 28), the reticule is brought into the condition shown in Fig. 29, and, on being folded, into that shown in

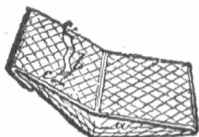


Fig. 29.

Fig. 30, in which condition it is little larger than a pocket-book. Half-a-dozen reticules thus folded, and packed in a bag of black alpaca, or held together by an india-rubber

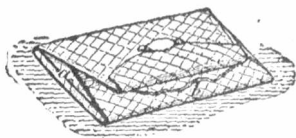


Fig. 30.

ring, form a small and compact parcel, and are easily introduced into the hat. The performer having got them out of the bag, has only to unfold each, so as to bring it into the condition shown in Fig. 29, when the mere act of lifting the reticule out of the bag by the ribbon *b* raises the sides and ends, and restores it to the shape shown in Fig. 26.

The Drums from the Hat.—In this trick the performer generally begins by producing from the hat a number of the multiplying balls described at page 51. He next produces a miniature drum, prettily ornamented, then another, then a third and a fourth, each being a shade larger than its predecessor, and the last of such a size as barely to be containable within the hat.

With the reader's present knowledge he will readily conjecture that the drums are so constructed as to fit one

within the other, the multiplying balls being packed with in the smallest of the four. One end of each drum is loose, and falls inwards upon the opposite end, upon which it lies flat, thus giving space for the introduction of another drum a size smaller. Across the loose end, and parallel to it, is fixed a wire, forming a handle whereby the performer may lift the drum out of the hat, the act of doing so raising the end into its proper position, and a wire rim round the inside of each drum preventing the loose end being drawn out altogether. Each drum is taken out with the loose end upwards; but the performer in placing it on the table, turns it over, thus bringing the solid end up. In default of this precaution, the loose end would fall back again to its old position, and thus betray the secret. The drums are usually made oval, rather than round, as they are thus better suited to the shape of a hat.

The Birdcages from the Hat.—Not content with cannon balls, drums, and ladies' reticules, the public of the present day requires that birdcages and living birds should be produced from an empty hat.

The birdcages used vary in their construction. Some are made to fit one within the other, after the fashion of



Fig. 31.

the drums just described, save that the birdcages, unlike the drums, are lifted out by the solid and not the loose

ends, which fall down of their own accord. Those in most general use, however, are of the shape shown in Fig. 31, and are alike in size, measuring about six inches in height by five in breadth and depth. The bottom is made to slide upwards on the upright wires which form the sides. When it is desired to prepare the cage for use, a canary is first placed therein, and the bottom is then pushed up as far as it will go (see Fig. 32), the sides, which work on

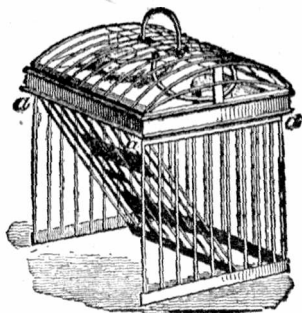


Fig. 32.

hinges at *a a a*, being folded one by one upon the bottom, the cage finally assuming the shape shown in Fig. 33.

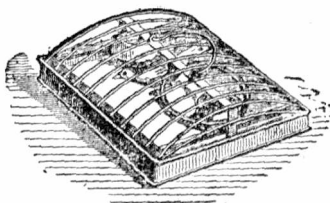


Fig. 33.

It is in this condition that the cages, generally three in number, are introduced into the hat, either from the shelf or from inside the vest of the performer; and in the act of lifting out (which is done by the wire loop at top), the

sides and bottom falling down, the cage again becomes as in Fig. 31.

The Cake (or Pudding) in the Hat.—This is an old and favorite hat trick. The necessary apparatus consists of two parts—first, a round tin pan (see Fig. 34), four inches in depth, and tapering from five inches at its greatest to four and a half inches at its smallest diameter. It is open at each end, but is divided in two parts by a horizontal



Fig. 34.

partition at about two-thirds of its depth. Second, a larger tin *b*, japanned to taste, five and a half inches in depth, and so shaped as to fit somewhat tightly over the smaller tin. In the larger end of the latter is placed a hot cake or pudding, and in this condition it is placed on the shelf of the table, projecting a little over the edge. The performer borrows a hat, and in passing behind his table, tips cake and tin together into it. The chances are that the tin will fall small end upwards (the opposite end being the heaviest); but if not, the performer turns the tin so as to bring it into that position. Placing the hat mouth upwards upon the table, he announces his intention of making a cake in it; for which purpose he takes, one by one, and mixes in

the tin *b*, a quantity of flour, raisins, eggs, sugar and other ingredients for a cake, adding water enough to make the mixture into a thin batter. This he pours into the hat, holding the tin with both hands, at first high above it, but gradually bringing it lower and lower, till at last, as if draining the last drop of the mixture, he lowers the mouth of the tin right into the hat, and brings it well down over the smaller tin. On being again raised, it brings away within it the smaller tin and its liquid contents, the cake being left in the hat. He next proceeds to bake the cake, by moving the hat backwards and forwards at a short distance over the flame of a candle, and, after a sufficient interval, exhibits the result, which is cut up and handed round to the company for their approval.

As the batter round the sides of *b* is apt to cause *a* to stick pretty tightly into it, a folding ring is generally fixed inside *a*, in order to facilitate its removal after the close of the trick.

The Welsh Rabbit.—This is a trick of a comic character, and in the hands of a spirited performer is sure to be received with applause, particularly by the younger members of the audience. Its effect is as follows:—The performer brings in in one hand a saucepan, fancifully decorated, and in the other a plate, with bread, cheese, pepper, etc. With these ingredients he proposes to make a Welsh Rabbit, and to give the audience, without extra charge, a lesson in cookery. Chopping the bread and cheese together in a burlesque fashion, and seasoning with pepper and salt to a degree which no palate short of a salamander's could possibly stand, he shovels all into the saucepan, and claps the lid on. For a moment he is at a loss for a fire, but this difficulty is quickly conquered. Borrowing a gentleman's hat, and a lady's pocket handkerchief, he requests permission to use them for the purpose of the experiment. This is readily accorded, but the respective owners look on with consternation when the performer proceeds to set fire to the handkerchief, and, dropping it still blazing into the hat, to cook the Welsh Rabbit by moving the saucepan to and fro over the flames. Having

done this for a minute or two, he extinguishes the flames by lowering the saucepan for a moment into the hat. Then again removing it, and taking off the lid, he brings it forward to the company, and exhibits, not the expected Welsh Rabbit, or "rare-bit," but a genuine live rabbit, every vestige of the cheese and other ingredients having disappeared.

The secret of this ingenious trick lies mainly in the construction of the saucepan, which consists of four parts, designated in the diagram (Fig. 35) by the letters *a*, *b*, *c* and *d*; *a* is the lid, which has no speciality, save that the rim round it is rather deeper than usual; *b* is a shallow tray or lining, of the same depth as the lid, fitting easily within the top of the saucepan; *a*, on the contrary, fits tightly within *b*; *c* is the body of the saucepan, and has no specialty; *d* is an outer sheet or covering, loosely fitting the lower part of the saucepan, and, like it, is japanned plain black, the upper part and lid being generally of of an ornamental pattern. (For our own part, we much

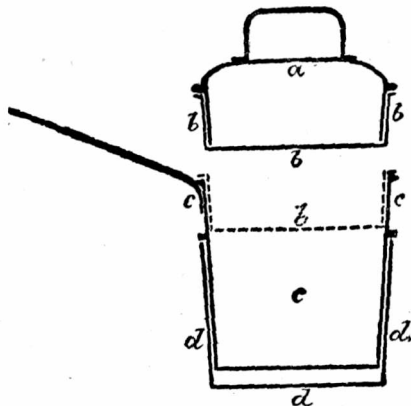


Fig. 35.

prefer either plain black or polished tin throughout, as savoring less of mechanism or preparation.) The presence or absence of *d* does not alter the general appearance of

the saucepan, and cannot therefore, be detected by the eye. It should be mentioned that *d* is so made, that between its bottom and the bottom of the saucepan is a space of about half an inch in depth, and in this space, before the apparatus is brought forward, is placed a substitute handkerchief, sprinkled with a few drops of spirits of wine or eau de Cologne, to render it more inflammable; within the saucepan is placed a small live rabbit, after which *b* is put in its place, and pressed down.

The performer is now ready to begin the trick. He brings forward the saucepan, holding it as in Fig. 36, in which position the pressure of the first and second fingers on *d* prevents it falling off, as, being loose, it would otherwise do. Placing it on the table, he mixes the bread, cheese, etc., on the plate, and then pours all into the sauce-

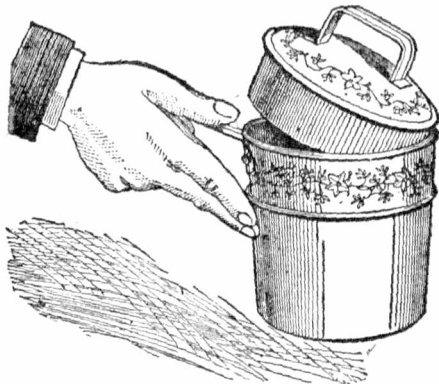


Fig. 36.

pan, where, of course, they fall into *b*. As *b* is comparatively shallow, it is well to place the saucepan in some tolerably elevated situation, so that the audience may not be able to see into it, or they may perceive that the bread, etc., do not fall to the bottom. The lid is next placed on the saucepan. The hat and handkerchief are borrowed, the latter, which is to serve as fuel, being dropped into the hat. The performer, as if bethinking himself of a possible

difficulty, carelessly remarks, "We mustn't have the stove too small for the saucepan;" and so saying, lifts the latter as shown in Fig. 36, and lowers it for a moment into the hat, as though testing their relative sizes. In that moment, however, he relaxes the pressure of his fingers on *d*, and so leaves it within the hat, placing the saucepan on the table beside it. When he again takes out the (supposed) handkerchief, and sets light to it, it is, of course, the substitute that is actually burnt, the genuine handkerchief meanwhile remaining hidden beneath *d* in the crown. The effect of the flames rising from the hat, in which the audience cannot suppose any preparation, is very startling, and yet, unless the substitute handkerchief is unusually large, or the spirit has been applied with a too liberal hand, there is no real danger of injuring the hat. The performer moves about the saucepan above the blaze at such a distance as not to inconvenience the animal within, and after a moment or two brings the saucepan sharply down into the hat, for the ostensible purpose of extinguishing the flames, but in again lifting it out he brings with it *d*, and places all together on the table. Nothing is now left in the hat but the borrowed handkerchief, which may be restored in any manner the performer's fancy may suggest. When the lid of the saucepan is removed, as it fits more tightly within *b* than the latter fits within the saucepan, it naturally carries *b* with it, thus causing the disappearance of the bread, cheese, etc., and revealing in its place the live rabbit.

Some fun may be created by selecting beforehand an assistant from the juvenile portion of the audience, and dressing him up with a pocket-handkerchief round his head, and another by way of apron, to act as assistant cook.

A guinea-pig or small kitten may be substituted for the rabbit, the performer accounting for the wrong animal being produced by supposing that he must have made some mistake in mixing the ingredients.

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