

THIRD EDITION.



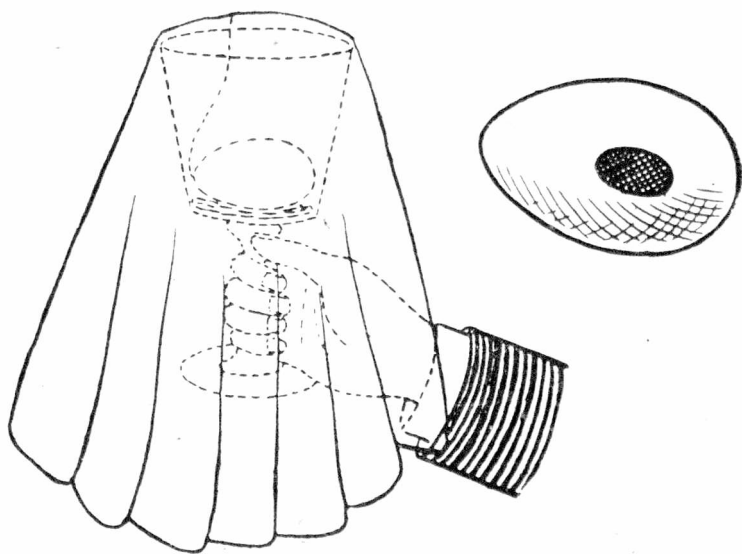
TRICKS

... FOR ...

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Tricks.



An Effective Trick with Tape.

THERE are several apparently puzzling tricks which are yet so simple when explained to an audience after having been performed, that the onlookers feel quite annoyed because they did not at once see through the deception. The following trick is of this class and is an excellent one to perform before a small circle.

Supposing our amateur conjurer is at an evening party, he can ask his hostess for an ordinary piece of tape, say about three feet

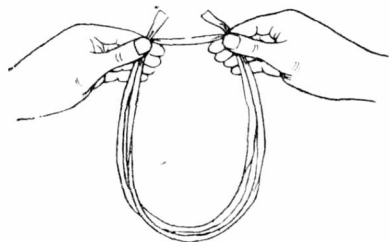


FIG 1

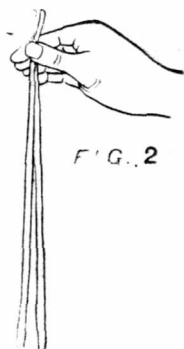


FIG. 2

long. This piece of tape, as soon as received, should be handed round for critical examination; attention being called to its even texture, etc. When all are quite satisfied that the tape is but ordinary tape, the operator can suspend it by its ends between the finger and thumb of his left hand. So far, so good.

We will now view matters, first from the spectators' point of view, and will afterwards explain as to how it is done. By a sort of twist the tape is doubled, leaving an end protruding from between the finger and thumb of either hand after the style shown in Fig. 1. Someone is then asked to cut the tape in two with a pair of scissors,

in the middle, when the left hand is removed from the tape, allowing the two pieces to hang down as in Fig. 2.

A little patter explains that the tape having been cut in two equal parts, they can be joined together by tying, and with this end in view, a couple of knots are tied at the upper ends, thus making a knot in the middle of the tape. In order to make this knot quite secure, the operator takes the two ends and tugs violently. He then requests someone to stand up, and having handed him one of the ends, asks that it be held firmly. The left hand is then passed over the tape, and the part with the knot allowed to repose in the hollow of the hand. Meanwhile, a second person is called upon, and the operator grasps the knot with his right hand, thus leaving the left free to hand the other end to the newcomer, who is also requested to hold it firmly. The operator now moves his hand slowly to and fro over the knot and finally removes it, revealing, to the astonishment of all, the tape mended. It is then again submitted to the examination of all, when it will be found to be exactly what it was at the commencement, viz., an ordinary piece of tape about three feet long.

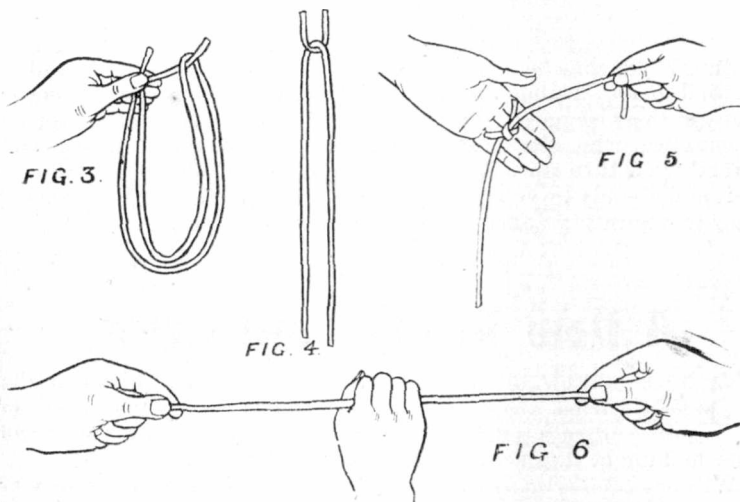
Now for a few words as to how it is done. It was explained that the tape was first held by its ends between the operator's left hand finger and thumb, and that by means of a twist it was doubled so as to present the appearance of Fig. 1. This doubling is effected by quickly passing the loop over one of the protruding ends, as in Fig. 3. This is best effected by a swinging motion, the end being bent over and then covered by the finger and thumb of the right hand; it will thus be apparent (although the tape is seemingly cut in halves) that only a piece of about two inches has been cut off; the left hand is now opened, and the ends allowed to drop down. The position of the two actual pieces are shown in Fig. 4.

Relative to the tying together of the two pieces, all that is necessary is to tie the ends of the small piece together, under cover of the hand, but as it would manifestly be impossible to tie the two supposed lengths of tape together by one tie only, a pretence must be made of tying a second knot. When this has been done, the tape can be opened out, and the two long ends tugged vigorously, with the apparent intention of tightening the knot; this little piece of nonsense has, of course, no effect on the tightness, but has nevertheless a good effect. It will, by this description, be understood that the knot consists merely of a small piece of tape which has been tied round the larger piece.

After one end has been handed to some person standing at the operator's right hand to hold, the knot is allowed to lie for a moment on the palm of the operator's left hand, in order to do which, the hand must be passed over the top of the tape, and the hand so turned that the little finger is towards the operator's body with the end hanging over the little finger, as in Fig. 5.

Now that matters are so far advanced, bring the right hand down smartly upon the knot and close it, at the time sliding the now closed left hand, together with the knot, a little to the left.

then sliding it up to the extreme end (see Fig. 6) of the tape, hand this end to the second person to hold, enjoining him to hold it firmly. By this means the operator will have been enabled to slip the knot right off the tape, whereas the spectators are given to understand that the right hand is holding it. Seeing that the attention will be centred on the right hand, there need be no hurry, and ample time may be taken to slip the left hand into the pocket and thus get rid of the knot, but on no account let go of the tape until the second person has taken hold of it at the other end. After a little patter, the right hand may be moved slightly to and fro over the supposed knot, and finally removed, thus revealing



the tape mended and in its original condition. This trick requires to be done slowly and deliberately, and like everything else, practice makes perfect.

Blindfold Divination.

THIS is a very simple trick; but if it is executed in a neat and proper manner, it will be sure to cause some bewilderment.

The effect of the trick is to be thoroughly blindfolded, and then have a pack of cards well shuffled by the audience, which must be laid upon the table.

Now you raise each card separately and show the face of it to the company; but before doing so, you can declare with unflinching accuracy whether or not that card is a picture or court card.

Before introducing the trick, separate the court cards from the pip cards, and bend all the picture ones slightly convex, so that if

put on the table, faces down, the ends will appear turned up just a little. Similarly bend the pip cards, only in the opposite direction—that is, concave—so that if laid faces down the middle of the cards will be raised somewhat from the level of the table. When this has been done, leave the cards lying carelessly upon the table and ask anybody to shuffle the pack. Then allow yourself to be blindfolded, and take the cards one by one from the top, and by feeling with your fingers in which direction it is bent—whether convex or concave—you tell the company whether or not it is a picture card before showing it to them.

By the same method you can also tell all the black cards from the reds.

Should your *modus operandi* ever be discovered, there is another method of performing the same trick, which will probably puzzle many of the wise ones. This method will necessitate the use of an accomplice, who sits next to you during the experiment, and directly you turn up a card and show it to the audience, he looks at it and signals to you whether or not it is a picture by pressing your foot with his—once for a picture, twice for a pip.

A New Rising Card Trick.

BY the aid of this method, many puzzling variations of the rising card trick may be performed; for instance, one of the audience selects any card haphazard from a pack, and after looking at it, places it back again with the rest.

Without tampering with the cards in the least, the performer commands the chosen one to rise up of its own accord, which it does to everybody's astonishment.

Now another card is selected, and placed back again, and then the performer places the whole pack beneath his foot, commanding the chosen one to jump out at the bidding of the gentleman who selected it. On the card being named, it jumps right out of the pack, and flies across to the one who drew it, which you account for, by telling the spectators of the wonders of magnetic attraction.

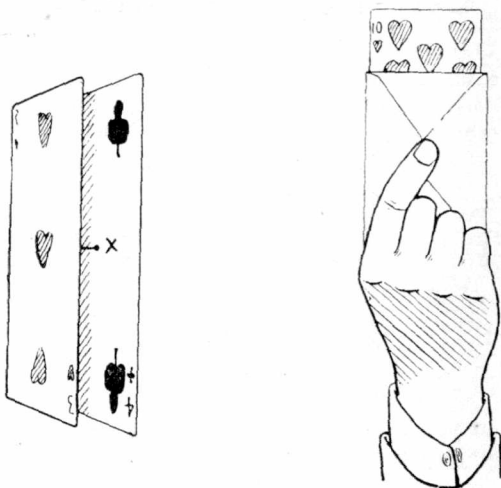
As a final and conclusive test, an ordinary small-sized paper envelope is handed round for examination; when this is returned, a few cards are placed into it, and one of them is selected. Now when called upon, the chosen one will rise up slowly or quickly as desired, it will jump right out, or will rise up to the right hand side or the left; and at any stage of the experiment the chosen card may be handed round for examination in order to prove the absence of any strings, wires, or any like attraction.

The wonderful agency employed for this remarkable trick, is merely a small piece of elastic. Two cards should be prepared by cutting a small slit in each, about the centre; and a flat piece

of elastic should be threaded through both slits. The ends of the elastic must be secured by pasting another card on the back of the two through which the elastic passes; and if done in this manner, detection will be almost an impossibility.

For an amateur, it is advisable to execute the trick in the following manner; although, probably, some of my professional readers will invent new ideas in its presentation:—

Place the piece of apparatus that you have constructed in your pocket, while you hand the rest of the pack for examination, and to be shuffled. Then ask some one to select a card, and so that you cannot see what it is, turn your back upon them while they look at it, and show it to their friends. This manœuvre enables the performer to slip the elastic apparatus into the centre of the pack, and you then turn round and request the drawer to replace his card



taking care that he slips it between those that have been prepared. Now force the card right back into the pack with its lower edge against the elastic band, and if the pack is held moderately tightly, the card will not move, but directly the pressure is relaxed, out jumps the card. With the chosen one firmly held in the centre, say to the audience—"At the word of command, your card shall rise from the pack of its own accord. Watch!" And at that instant you slowly or suddenly let the pack go loose, according to how you want the card to appear.

Placing the pack beneath the sole of your shoe is, of course, worked in the same manner, by raising your foot directly you want the card to shoot across the room.

The final test, that of placing the selected card into an examined envelope, relies, of course, upon the same motive power.

After the envelope has been returned, insert the prepared cards,

and also two or three ordinary ones inside, just to keep it firm, so you tell the spectators. The envelope should be just about the same size as a playing card, with the flap sealed down, and one end cut open to allow of placing the cards inside.

The selected card is then placed into the envelope between the prepared cards, pushed down tight and held between the thumb and fingers, as in the drawing. By a slight relaxation of the pressure, the selected card will, of course, rise up, and by holding the envelope by either side, the chosen one will ascend in a slanting direction corresponding to that in which the envelope is gripped.

Ten Bags of Gold.

TO put 1,000 sovereigns into 10 bags, in such a manner as to enable any number of sovereigns to be taken (from 1—1,000) without opening a bag. How is this done?

The answer to this question is simple enough:—

| Put | 1 Sovereign into | No. 1 Bag |
|-----|------------------|-----------|
| 2 | " | 2 " |
| 4 | " | 3 " |
| 8 | " | 4 " |
| 16 | " | 5 " |
| 32 | " | 6 " |
| 64 | " | 7 " |
| 128 | " | 8 " |
| 256 | " | 9 " |
| 489 | " | 10 " |

This will put you in a position to take any amount of sovereigns without unfastening a single bag.

A Freezing Experiment.

AFTER your friend has accepted your invitation to partake of a little wine, you produce a bottle of the liquid and give him a glass, asking him to pour the fluid out himself. He attempts to do so, but soon finds that during the few seconds the bottle has been in his possession the contents have frozen quite solid.

To perform this startling experiment, you must previously make a saturated solution of sulphate of soda and hot water, with which you fill a clean white bottle, taking care to cork the bottle while the liquid is hot. The liquid will remain in this fluid state so long as the bottle is corked, but directly the air is allowed to act upon

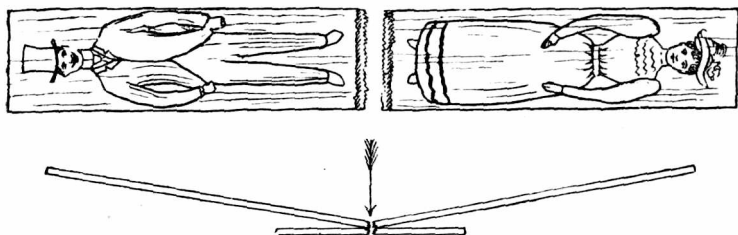
the solution in four or five seconds the fluid becomes fixed and immovable.

You show the bottle containing a liquid, and in handing it to the person be careful to remove the cork. In order to give the preparation sufficient time to solidify pretend to be looking for a tumbler, and make some remarks about a sudden chill, or you can feel the hand holding the glass, and suggest that it is very cold. In the meantime the air acting upon the solution has caused it to apparently freeze, and when the person attempts to pour it out, he finds it impossible to do so.

The Matchwood Lovers.

THIS little trick, although very simple, never fails to cause plenty of amusement, and for that reason we have included it in this collection of experiments.

Take the two narrow sides of a box of safety matches, $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches long, or say the size of our illustration, and bend them double, about half an inch from one end. Then lay them flat upon the



table, and draw with a lead pencil the figures of a man and woman, one upon each piece of matchwood, and allow them to remain flatly stretched out, pushing the rough-bended joint of each close together.

Now allow a drop of water to fall upon the centre of the two bends, and in a second or two the peculiar action of the water upon the wood will cause the pair of lovers to rise up to a perpendicular position and embrace.

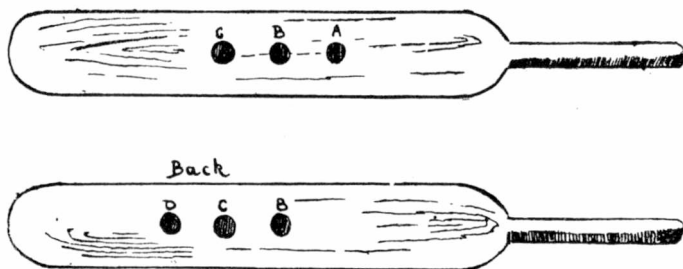
The Chinese Bat.

THIS is an extremely clever trick, invented by a celebrated Chinese magician, and presented to the editor of this book.

It can be made in ten minutes very easily, and is constructed in the following manner:—Obtain a piece of wood about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, and trim it to the shape of a bat. Altogether, this should be

about 8 inches long. By looking at our illustration, the bat appears to be perforated with three holes, A, B, C, but such is not the case; in reality only two holes go right through the wood, viz., B and C; the other one, A, only goes half-way. Now turn the bat over to the other side, and we see that the holes are in a different position, that is, the first hole on the right corresponds with B on the opposite side. C is really the hole B as it appears if you turn the bat over, D only goes half-way through, and so is similar to A. Now I think all is clear, and you see that on either side there appear to be three holes running right through the bat, although no more than two are genuine.

To perform this trick, hold the bat by the handle, and with that side uppermost containing the genuine hole at the top part of the bat. Take an ordinary safety match (first removing the phosphorous) and pass it through the first hole, which should be of sufficient size as to just admit one match. Now pass the match through the second or centre hole. After you have done this,



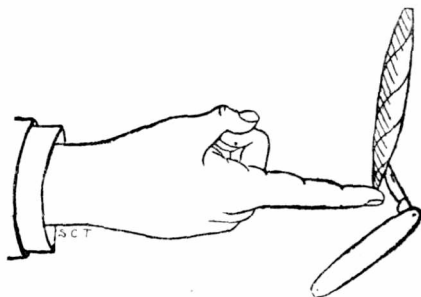
remark, "It does not make any difference which side the match is passed from." You then turn the bat over and pass the match through the lower or third hole. Now what you have really done was to pass it through the same hole again, because the first and second holes of the other side are on this side of the bat the second or third. You have to all appearances passed the match through three distinct holes, but in reality only two, the second one being used twice, once from either side. Place the match half-way in the lower hole, and allow it to remain there. State that by breathing on it, or waving the bat in the air, the match will jump into the centre hole, and, sure enough, it has made its appearance in the second hole. This was accomplished by merely turning over the bat. Pull out the match completely, show or turn bat to the outer side, place match half-way in centre hole, again reverse bat as you wave it in the air, and the match will have apparently jumped to the top or first hole.

Perhaps the simplest way of perforating the holes in the bat, is to burn them out with a red-hot bodkin.

The Balanced Cigar.

A PRETTY little interlude can be worked with a cigar that you have just accepted from a friend.

You pull out your knife to nip off the end, but before doing so ask him if he has ever seen a cigar balanced upon anyone's finger. He is sure to say no, so then fix the point of the



blade into the cigar, at an angle which allows the handle to act as a balance, and then place the cigar tip on your finger as in our drawing. No dexterity is required to balance the cigar in this position, because the knife acts as a balancing weight and so prevents the cigar from falling off.

Mystify your Visitors.

WHEN a visitor calls, accidentally pick up a pad of paper, and ask the person to write any message he likes upon it, and without allowing anyone to see what he has written, tell him to tear the paper off and place it safely away in his pocket book.

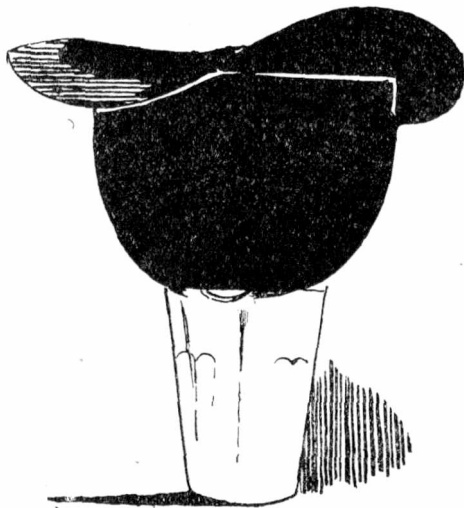
Say no more about it, but when your friend is on the way home, and puts his hand in his pocket, he will find a communication in answer to the message he so secretly wrote. Of course, he will be astonished, and will never cease to wonder how the answer tallied so exactly with his question or message; this is the explanation. Take a piece of ordinary soap, and with it rub well the backs of the paper in the pad, accidentally pick up the pad and give the party a hard, sharp-pointed lead pencil to write with, so that an impression of his writing will be left upon the underneath sheet.

During his stay, you excuse yourself for a few minutes, and thus give yourself time to tear off the next sheet of paper from the pad which bears the desired impression. Sprinkle over this paper a few grains of ground coffee, these will adhere to the soap,

and make the writing stand out quite boldly. Now you know what your friend wrote and consequently will be able to construct an answer which you write on another sheet of paper in a disguised and shaky hand (for you know spirits always make your hand shake). Place this paper into your visitor's overcoat pocket, which should be hung in the hall, or else contrive to put it in his jacket pocket when he is not looking, and trust to his finding the paper after he leaves your house.

Tricks with Coins.

FOR this brilliant little trick you require an ordinary tumbler and a gentleman's bowler hat. Stand the tumbler upon a table and show that the hat is devoid of preparation, then stand it crown upwards upon the glass, but in doing so secretly insert a penny between the edges of the tumbler and the crown of the

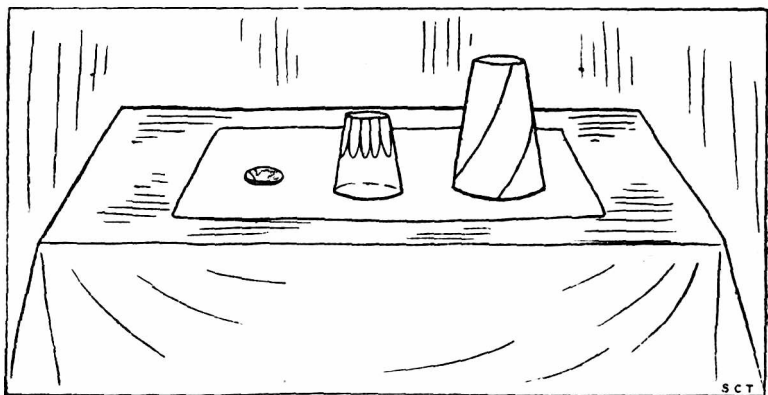


hat, as in our drawing. To do this quietly and without attracting attention is very easy, and you should start the trick by concealing a penny in your palm, and on receiving the hat back after examination rest it over the coin in your hand. Now make a little fuss in placing the hat upon the glass, and you will have plenty of opportunity to make the necessary preparation. You are now ready to present the trick, so either borrow or take a penny from your pocket and say that you will pass the coin right through the hat into the glass beneath. Stand behind the tumbler, so that you face

the concealed coin, and throw the penny that you have in your hand against the opposite side of the hat inside. The shock causes the headgear to shake sufficiently to dislodge the underneath coin, which consequently falls into the glass. Now remove the hat and turn it crown upwards, and the coin will drop into the inside band, thus hiding it from observation, while you turn the duplicate penny out of the tumbler, telling the audience that it is the same one that passes right through the hat.

THE apparatus required for this trick is a sheet of newspaper, a glass tumbler, a cone of paper rolled round to fit the glass, and a borrowed penny; all of which are laid upon the table, as in the first illustration.

Before presenting the trick a little preparation is necessary.

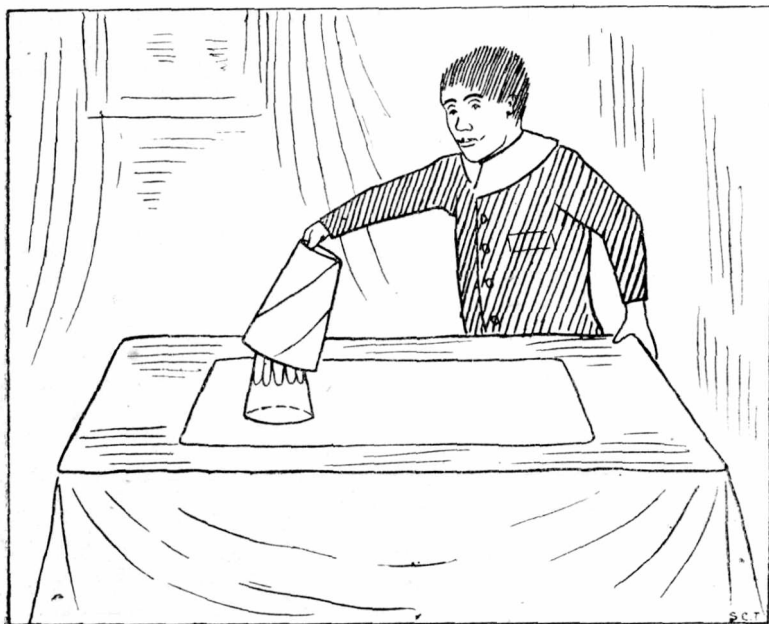


First take the tumbler and moisten the edge of it with gum, then press the glass upon a sheet of newspaper, so that the gummed edge adheres to it; now trim the paper so that the mouth of the tumbler is completely covered with a circular disc, and if the glass is turned upside down upon the sheet of newspaper, it appears quite empty and unprepared.

You must get someone to loan you the penny, which place on one side; now cover the glass with the cone of paper and place it over the coin; tell everybody to watch you closely, count one, two, three, and quickly raise the cone, when the penny will have apparently vanished, although it is merely hidden by the covering of paper fastened over the mouth of the glass.

To cause the reappearance of the piece of money, you replace the cone, pronounce some unintelligible exclamation, and lift the glass and cone away together, thereby exposing the hidden coin.

This is a trick which is very puzzling, and can be performed over and over again without anyone seeing how it is worked. If two or three glasses similarly prepared are used, many mysterious



variations can be easily invented, and will make quite a little entertainment in themselves.

YOU must first procure an ordinary glass tumbler, and invert it on the table. Then request anybody present to lend you a penny. Placing the coin on the top of the glass, you leave the room, telling the company at the same time, that if a person will take the penny and conceal it, you will tell them when you return, which person has it.

Someone having concealed the coin, you make your appearance, and request each one round the table to place their first finger on the glass, one after another, and not all at once. This done, you take up the glass, and place it to your ear, remarking at the same time that by the aid of the sound which you hear, you will be able to tell which person has the coin. Then you listen for a second or two, put down the glass, and turning to the person who has the coin, make some remark, such as "Mr. —, please give me the penny." Whereupon the person addressed produces the coin and hands it to you.

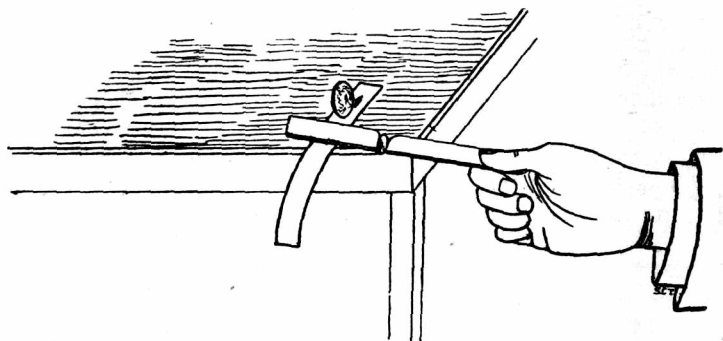
How you got to know who possessed the coin will seem remarkable to the company, you having been out of the room when the coin was taken off the glass and concealed.

This is how it is done: When you tell the persons to place their fingers upon the glass, your confederate, who is one of them, must place his on after the person who has the coin. This mode will not easily be detected, as will be found when once tried, and may be performed *ad libitum*.

PROCURE a strip of notepaper about six inches long by half an inch wide; lay this on the table and stand a new penny, edge upwards upon the paper, which should project as far as possible over the edge of the table.

Now challenge anybody to take the paper away without knocking the penny over.

Anyone unpossessed of the secret will fail to accomplish this,



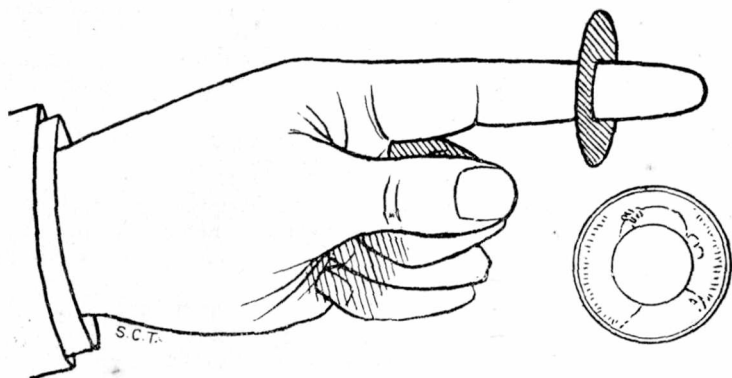
because at the slightest touch the paper will cause the penny to overbalance.

The only way to do this trick is by giving the paper a smart hit with the back of a knife or ruler; the paper will then be knocked away and the penny left standing.

FOR this experiment you must either purchase or make yourself a penny with a hole through the centre, as illustrated in the drawing; with a fret saw, the operation of making this perforation will not occupy many minutes.

Borrow a penny, and secretly lay your own prepared coin underneath it. Hold both coins between the thumb and fingers of the right hand, and push the left-hand index finger through the underneath coin; this will push the borrowed penny into the right-hand palm, which retains it while the left hand is being exhibited.

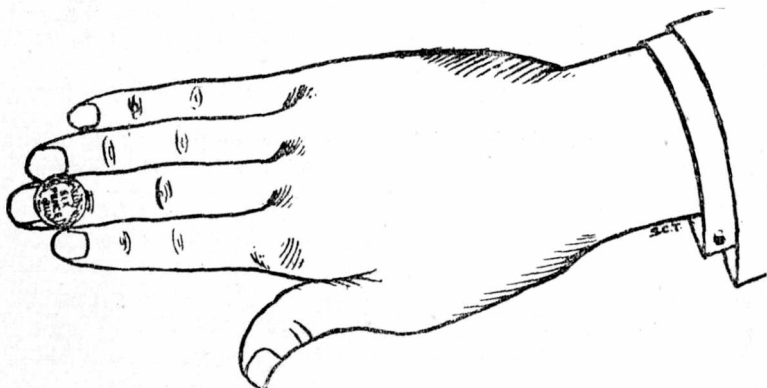
When everyone is satisfied that your finger has passed completely through the penny they lent you, draw the coin off with the right hand and drop the borrowed penny from the right palm to left,



concealing the perforated piece in the fingers of the right hand while you pass for examination the coin that was first borrowed.

While all eyes are searching for a hole in the penny you have returned, quietly slip your piece of apparatus into your pocket.

TO perform this trick you must first put a piece of white wax upon the first joint of your second finger; then lay a six-penny piece in the palm of your hand, and inform the company present that you will cause it to vanish.



Now close your hand, which will bring your waxed second finger in contact with the coin, to which it will firmly adhere.

Blow upon your hand, and cry "Be gone!" Suddenly open your hand and exhibit the empty palm, showing that the coin has completely disappeared.

FOR this experiment you require a piece of glass just the size of a penny. Procure a tumbler of water, and also a handkerchief; secretly hold the piece of glass in the palm of your hand, and borrow a penny. Now cover the glass with the handkerchief and place the penny underneath, but in placing your hand beneath the handkerchief substitute the piece of glass for the penny. Then ask someone to hold the penny over the glass; make some



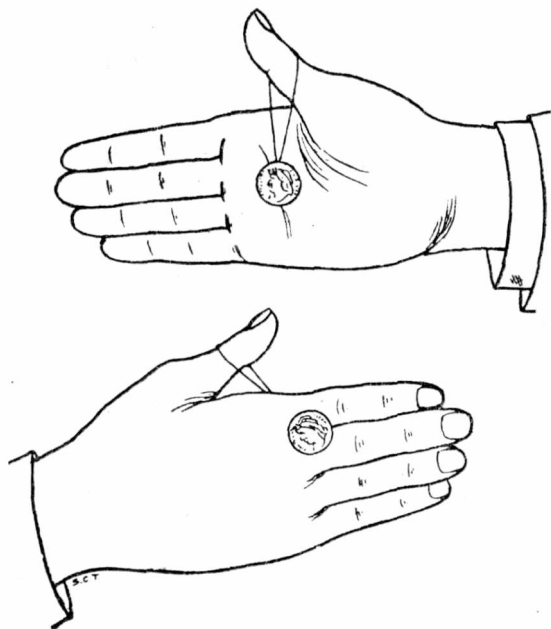
passes over his hand and tell him to drop the coin (as he believes the glass disc to be) into the tumbler. Everybody hears it fall to the bottom, so then remove the handkerchief, and the penny will appear to have vanished. To prove that there is no deception in the tumbler, pour the water out into a jug, and hold the glass upside down. The disc will not fall out, as it will stick to the bottom by suction; you can then conclude by producing the borrowed penny from anywhere that your fancy dictates.

THIS is a very simple and effective method of causing the disappearance of a penny.

Before performing the experiment, it is necessary to pierce or drill a small hole in a penny, near the edge. Through this hole pass a piece of white or flesh coloured thread, to form a loop.

Now put your thumb through this loop, and allow the coin to lay upon the palm of your hand, as in the first position of the illustration. At a couple of paces away, the loop will be absolutely invisible, and therefore there is no fear of detection.

Tell the audience to watch the penny closely, and apparently close your hand upon the coin; although what you really do, is to slip the penny between the first and second fingers; allowing it to remain on the back of your hand, as in the second position, while telling the audience that it is in the palm. This movement is very



deceptive, and easily acquired, and by experiment it will be found that it is best to execute the vanish under a small, circular, sweeping motion of the arm.

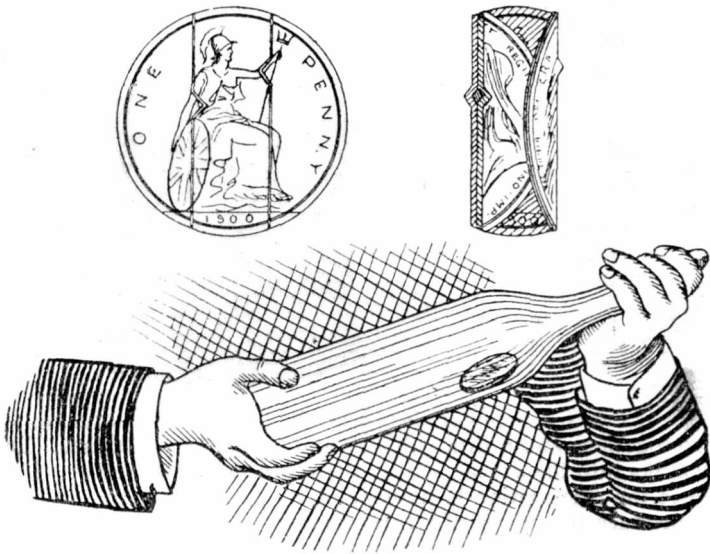
When performing the trick, never open your hand until you have impressed upon the audience the fact that it would be practically impossible for the coin to disappear without them detecting the *modus operandi*, and after a few passes over the closed hand, quickly open it, and show that it has entirely vanished.

THIS experiment consists in passing a penny into a narrow-necked bottle, or any similar trick based upon the same principle.

Of course, it would be impossible to do this with an ordinary penny, and therefore the conjurer makes use of one that will fold.

The peculiar construction of these coins enables them to be folded three times; but directly the pressure upon them is relaxed, they spread out and form an ordinary coin.

To make one of these coins yourself, you must proceed as follows:—In the edge of the penny, a slight rim or hollow must be turned or filed out. Then the coin must be cut into three pieces with a fret saw, in the positions indicated in the drawing. Now obtain a thin, but strong indiarubber ring, about the size of a threepenny piece; lay the three pieces of coin flat upon table, and fit the rubber ring into the grooved edge. When this is done the coin can be folded in any direction, but immediately the pressure is taken off, the elasticity of the ring will cause the penny to assume



its natural proportions. There is absolutely no danger of the pieces of coin falling apart, unless the rubber ring perishes or is removed.

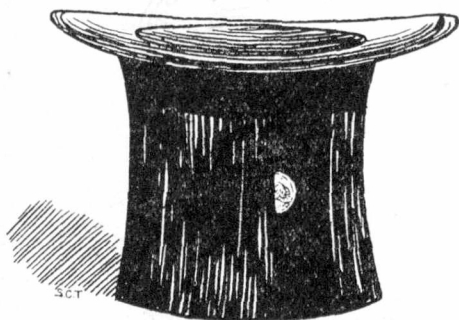
When desiring to insert the coin into a bottle, it is always advisable to borrow another penny, which must be secretly exchanged for the prepared duplicate. Hold the bottle as illustrated in the drawing, which will enable you to fold the coin while inserting it without detection. Then push the penny through the neck with your finger, until it reaches a portion of the interior wide enough to allow the coin to expand; the bottle can then be shaken, and the penny closely examined from the outside, without anybody discovering the secret, and unless the bottle is broken the coin cannot be extracted.

A PRETTY coin trick is that of pushing a number of pennies through the crown and sides of a borrowed hat.

Really the coin never leaves the performer's hand—he simply palms it, and at the same time allows another coin to fall from his left hand, which is holding a little stack of pennies inside, while gripping the brim of the hat.

A pretty variation and addition may be made by pushing the coin only half-way through, and the conjurer brutally apologises by saying that he did not push it quite hard enough; then giving it another push it is heard to fall inside.

This penny is constructed something after the style of that described for No. 10 trick. The coin is first grooved round the edge, and then cut in half, right across the diameter. A hole is drilled in the centre of one half, into which is inserted a sharp needle point, at right angles to the edge. In the other half



a recess is cut to accommodate the needle; then the two halves are placed together, and a thin rubber band passed round them. This band sinks into the groove, and is therefore invisible, and at a little distance the preparation is undetectable.

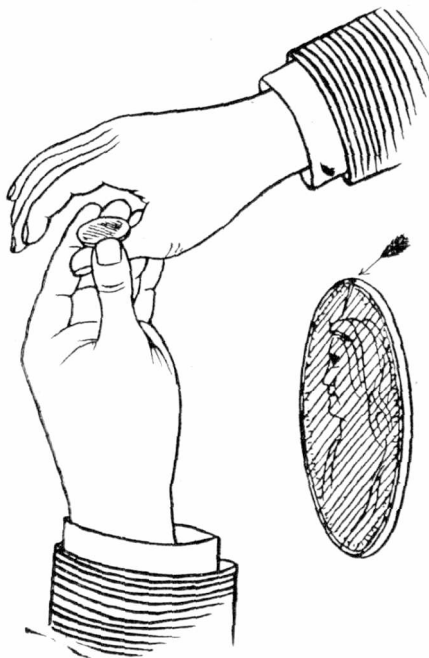
To produce the effect, this coin must be held in a slanting direction and pressed against the crown of the hat. The pressure will cause the penny to bend in half, and the needle will naturally come in contact with the silk, through which it must be pushed until the half is flat against the hat as in the illustration. Then the penny can be left in this condition, the needle keeping it quite firm. After your apology has been made for the apparent injury, the coin can be pulled out of the hat again, and in order to avoid the possible request of some member of the audience to allow him to examine the penny, it should be immediately thrown into the hat with the other ordinary coins.

BY the aid of a penny prepared as explained herein, and a little sleight-of-hand, which can be learned in half an hour, many puzzling passes may be executed.

The penny should have a small pin-hole drilled from the edge,

to the face of the coin in a slanting direction. Through this hole an ordinary steel pin must be inserted, until the point projects about one-sixteenth of an inch beyond the face of the coin; this point will then be pointing slightly downwards. The pin itself must then be cut down until it is flush with the edge of the coin, and it should be fixed with just a touch of solder or any other material that would hold it firm.

Now you are ready to commence the passes; hold the coin between the thumb and fingers of the left hand with the palm upwards. Now move the right hand towards the left, passing the



thumb of the right hand under, and the fingers over the coin (see illustration), closing them just as they pass it.

Directly the coin is covered by the fingers of the right hand, the thumb of the left slightly releases the pressure that it had upon the penny, allowing it to drop quietly into the left palm.

The right hand should be carried upwards, followed with eyes, which draws the attention of the audience away from the left hand, which should be allowed to slowly and carelessly fall to your side.

While all eyes are fixed upon your right hand, the left should lay the penny against the cloth of your left trouser leg, to which the point of the coin will cause it to adhere.

Then the right hand should be slowly opened, showing that the penny has vanished ; upon turning round to look for the coin, the audience see it sticking to your trouser leg, and soon acquaint you with the fact.

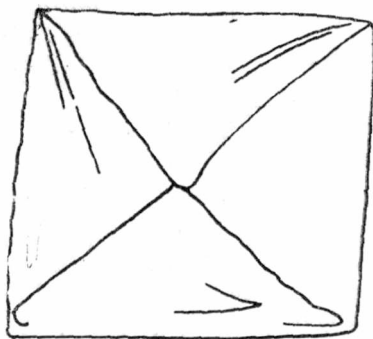
Remove the penny and repeat the experiment, this time using your right instead of your left hand, and sticking the coin on some other part of your clothing.

By making use of two similarly prepared coins, and by fixing one of them upon your back before commencing, numberless passes can be easily worked out, such as vanishing the coin, turning round and exhibiting the penny upon your back, and while your back is towards the audience fix the duplicate coin upon the front of your coat, vanish the penny from the back, and then show it sticking on your chest.

BORROW from somebody in the audience a sixpenny piece, which you must ask them to mark so that they will always know it again.

In the act of returning to your table this coin must be exchanged for a duplicate of your own, which should be laid where everyone can see it.

Remove your handkerchief from your pocket, and spread it out flat upon the table. Previous to this experiment, care must be taken to well soap one corner of the handkerchief, which should be laid on the table with the soaped side uppermost, the prepared corner being at the bottom on the right-hand side.

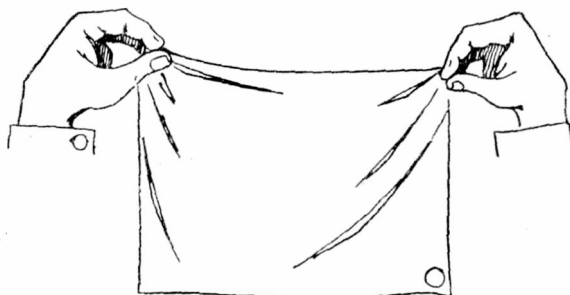


The Handkerchief Folded

Now place the borrowed sixpence in the centre of the handkerchief, and commence to fold over the corners in such a manner that they shall overlap the coin by about an inch. First take the right-hand corner, and lay that upon the sixpence, taking care that the

soaped portion covers the coin; then fold over the other three corners, pressing upon each as you fold it down, thereby causing the sixpence to adhere to the handkerchief.

Now ask the gentleman who loaned you the sixpence to come forward and ascertain by feeling the handkerchief, whether or not the sixpence is still there. While he is doing this, plenty of opportunities will be presented for dropping the original borrowed coin into one of his pockets, and directly he acknowledges that the handkerchief really contains the sixpence, dismiss him to his seat. Now take hold of the two uppermost corners of the handkerchief, quickly draw them apart and give it a good shake. The coin,



which will remain attached to one corner, will be invisible to the audience, but can be secretly removed quite easily.

When the audience see that the coin has really disappeared, quietly tell the gentleman who lent you the sixpence to feel in his pocket, where sure enough he discovers his own coin bearing the mark that he himself put upon it.

BORROW an ordinary pocket handkerchief, which must be laid flat upon the table, and place a penny in the centre of the handkerchief.

Now this is slowly rolled up, so that the coin is between two flaps, formed by folding the handkerchief over.

After this has been rolled up with the penny inside the flaps, it is unrolled, and the coin will be seen to have found its way on to the top instead of between the two flaps.

As the audience cannot quite see how the trick is performed, you do it again; proceeding exactly the same as before, only instead of the coin being on the top of the flaps it has vanished.

The trick is performed in the following manner: Lay the handkerchief flat upon the table, and let us call the corners *a*, *b*, *c*, *d* (see Fig. 1). Lay a penny upon the centre of the handkerchief, which must then be folded over so as to enclose the coin between the two flaps formed. Care should be taken to fold it over, so that

point *c* slightly overlaps point *a*, as in Fig. 2, the coin being indicated by *e*.

Now commence to roll the handkerchief over, till it appears in the form of a narrow strip, continuing the operation until the point of the underneath flap (*a*) only appears, see Fig. 3. Then unroll the handkerchief, until it appears in the form of a triangle, as in Fig. 2, when the penny will naturally be on the top of the two flaps.

Be careful to commence unrolling as soon as point *a* comes in sight, and before point *c* appears. If carefully done, it is very difficult to detect how the penny gets out.

When you show the trick a second time, the handkerchief is unrolled in such a manner that the coin finds its way underneath, and consequently it is invisible, having apparently completely vanished.

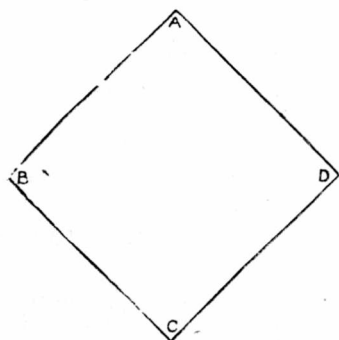


FIG 1

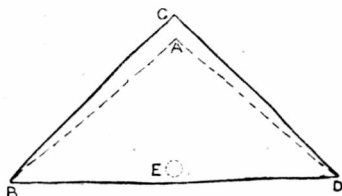


FIG 2

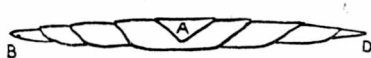


FIG 3

This is accomplished by rolling the handkerchief in exactly the same manner as for the previous effect. When the point *a* appears, hold it between the thumb and first finger of the right hand, and seize the other end *c* with the fingers of the left; point *c*, it will be found, will be just underneath *a*. Now slowly pull these two corners apart, and the handkerchief will open out, leaving the coin underneath.

For obvious reasons it will be best to perform this trick upon a table with a cloth on, in case of the coin betraying its presence by a suspicious noise.

When concluding the experiment, pick up the handkerchief, at the same time secretly securing the coin, and attempt to place the handkerchief in your pocket, then recollecting that you borrowed the article, return it with your thanks to the lender, after, of course, allowing the penny to drop into your pocket.



Fig. 1.

The . . . Balanced Handkerchief.

THIS trick is so simple that the veriest amateur will be able to perform it quite easily, while it is effective enough to be presented upon any stage.

A large cambric handkerchief is borrowed and rolled ropewise; then one end is rested upon the top of the finger and balanced. That is the effect, and this is the secret of the performance.

First obtain a piece of whalebone, or failing that a piece of stout wire about 20 inches long. To the end of this fix a fish hook, and then push this piece of apparatus up the left sleeve. Take the borrowed handkerchief by the corners diagonally, and twist it round in the form of a rope; then attempt to balance it upon the first finger of the left hand. This first attempt will of course be un-

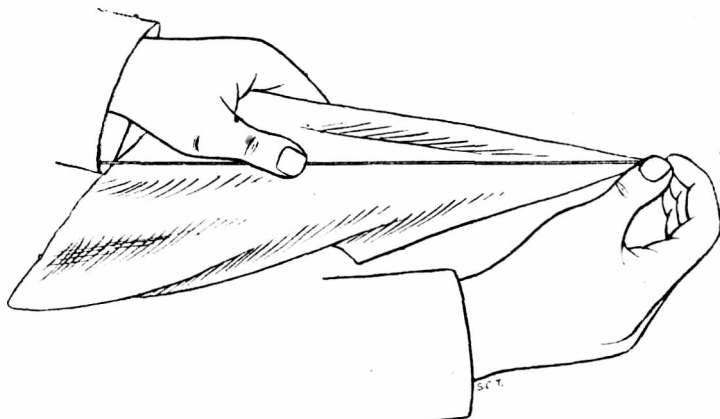


Fig. 2.

successful, and the handkerchief will drop down to the position indicated in our first drawing.

Now take the top corner of the handkerchief between the thumb and first finger of the right hand, and hook it to the top of the piece of whalebone protruding from the top of your sleeve, drag this through your left hand so that the handkerchief hides the apparatus (see Fig. 2).

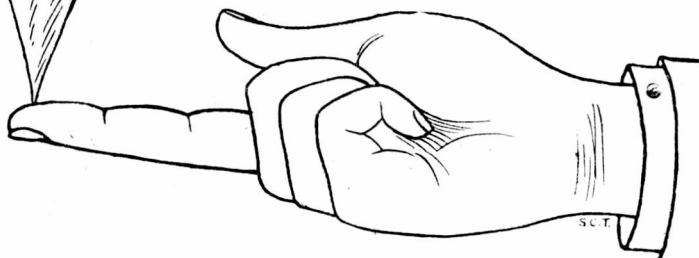
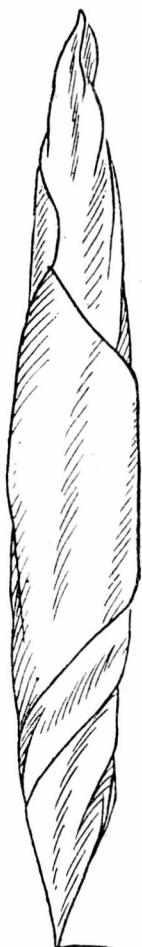
Directly the whole length of the support has been pulled out of the sleeve, the handkerchief must be again twisted into a rope which readily forms round the whalebone.

In this condition, if the handkerchief is placed upon your finger-tip, it will be found quite easy to balance, as in the third illustration. The corner fixed to the hook must be at the top, thereby preventing the handkerchief from slipping down.

The handkerchief can be balanced upon your nose equally well, and in fact a variety of suggestions will occur to the performer now that he knows the secret of stiffening the square of cambric.

Even when the whalebone is in position and everything ready to perform the trick, it is always advisable to make one or two attempts before allowing the handkerchief to stand upright.

An additional effect may be obtained by passing your wand round the sides and top so as to prove the absence of any strings or wires.



Carrying Fire in the Hands.

IN performing this extremely simple trick, the audience must not be informed of what it is your intention to do, but it should be done when there is any delay in your other tricks, or some hitch occurs in getting anything you require, and which happens not to be at hand. For filling up a gap in a performance, it will be found extremely useful. In giving an entertainment of magic, always have on your table two burning candles; they are both useful and ornamental, and serve to dispel any idea of the spectators that you cannot perform your tricks in a full light. You go to the table, having previously concealed a piece of paper in your hand, between the two middle fingers, and place your hands around the flame, saying it is perfectly possible to retain the heat in the hand, and even carry the flame from one candle to another. You then blow out one of the candles, and quickly place your hands round the other, set fire to the paper in your hand, blow out the candle, quickly light the first, and then the second, smothering the flame of the paper in your hand. This trick, when well done, causes great astonishment and surprise.

A Good Dice Trick.

INSTRUCT a few friends of the company to deal the three dice (while your back is turned) upon the table, and add their uppermost numbers together. Then one is to be picked up and its bottom number added to the total already arrived at. That one is to be again thrown, and whatever number appears at the top to be also included, as example:—

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----|----------|----|
| The first throw is | ... | ... | 6, 4, 2= | 12 |
| The bottom number of the first dice | | | = | 1 |
| That one thrown up again comes to | ... | | | 3 |
| | | | | — |
| Making a total of | ... | | | 16 |
| The dice now left are | 3, 4, 2. | | | |

Upon returning to the table, after pressing the dice to your forehead, etc., you declare that the number the company are thinking of is 16.

The key to the mystery is the number 7, and if this is added to the total of the dice as finally left, it will give the exact number required. (The two opposite sides of a dice always count seven.)

This a very puzzling trick to the onlookers if done properly.

To Balance a Cone of Paper on the Nose.

GET a rectangular piece of good stout paper about 20 inches by 12, and fold it similarly to the way grocers fold their sugar bags. It will then form a cone of considerable size, which can be easily balanced on the nose with the narrow end downwards. It is a well-known fact in balancing, that the greater the difference



in the size between the top and bottom of the object to be balanced, the easier it is to perform. An additional effect may be obtained by lighting the paper at the top and continuing to balance it until it has burnt right down.

A very pretty way of concluding this admirable trick is performed by secretly obtaining possession of a packet of collapsible flowers; this is easily accomplished by concealing them underneath your waistcoat, and when all eyes are watching the burning cone, just pull them down into your hand. When the paper cone has nearly burned down to your nose take the remaining portion in your hands and while smothering the flames release the flowers and throw them up in the air. As they gracefully descend to the floor,

the performer always receives a round of applause, and this is a very pretty and effective finale to a conjuring entertainment.

The collapsible flowers mentioned above are made of tissue paper with a steel spring, which causes them to expand when released from the piece of cotton tied round them, and they can be obtained from any magical store. While smothering the flame, just break the cotton with your finger nail and thus effect their release.

A Trick with a Penknife.

TO fix a penknife by its point in the ceiling and afterwards place a shilling so exactly under it that when the knife is dislodged by striking the ceiling it will fall exactly on the coin.

This is a most ingenious and bewildering trick, which can be done in this manner:—Standing on a table, stick the penknife by its point in the ceiling, but only far enough so that a slight knock will make it fall. Then, to get more effect, make an examination of its position, and appear to be measuring the distance with your eye, etc.; place a piece of brown paper on the floor—or newspaper will do just as well—on which you put the shilling, and then say you will undertake to place the shilling so exactly under it that when dislodged the knife shall fall upon it. When wonder is excited, and it is declared to be impossible, call for a glass of water; then mounting on the table, dip the end of the penknife in the water; then withdraw the glass: a drop of water will soon fall on the paper, and on that exact spot place the shilling. You then strike the ceiling with your fist or a stick of some sort, when the knife will fall, of course, on the shilling.

The knife chosen for the purpose should be one, if possible, with a rather heavy and slightly pointed handle, as the drop of water will then form and fall from the most central point with greater accuracy.

The Restored Cotton.

WHILE out of the room, get a couple of pieces of cotton about the same length. Roll one piece up and put it between the thumb and first finger—low down, so that it does not show. Walk in with the other piece in your hand, and ask somebody to cut it into about eight pieces. When they have done this, burn the ends to show that it is in pieces. Then roll it.

up again, and start talking to the people so as to take their attention away from what you are doing. Drop the cut piece, and bring out the piece that was secreted between your thumb and finger. Pull it out full length, and they will be astonished to see, what they think is in pieces, all in one.

A Curious Shilling Trick.

GET a glass tumbler with a wide mouth, and small at the bottom. Drop a shilling into the glass, and half fill it with water; then lay a plate on the top of the glass, and quickly turn it over, so that no water can escape. Now, by looking through the glass at the shilling, you will see on the plate a coin the size of half a crown, while higher up another piece the size of a shilling is visible.

This phenomenon arises from seeing the piece through the conical surface of the water at the side of the glass, and through the flat surface at the top of the water at the same time, because the conical surface diffuses the rays, and makes the piece appear larger than it really is, but by the flat surface the rays are only refracted, by which the piece is seen higher up in the glass, but still of the natural size. That this is the cause will be evident by filling the glass with water, for as the shilling cannot be then seen from the top, the larger piece only will be visible.

After amusing yourself with this peculiar experiment give the glasses to the servant, telling her to throw away the water and bring you back the two pieces of money; if she has no suspicion of the deception, she will be considerably surprised to find one piece only.

An Incomprehensible Divination.

UNDER this title, I have pleasure in describing what is, in my opinion, a very clever non-sleight of hand trick. It has never yet been published, and is, in fact, absolutely unknown. It is so simple that a child can learn it in five minutes, yet it can be exhibited to experts for hours without the slightest fear of detection. It is one of the very few tricks that can be repeated *ad. lib.*

In effect it is as follows:—

Eleven cards are placed face downwards on the table in a heap. The performer is now securely blindfolded, and, if desired, can be led into another room. In his absence a spectator cuts the cards, and after counting the lower portion, replaces them on what was originally the upper portion. The performer now enters the room.

still blindfolded, waves his hand over the cards, and immediately picks one out of the packet, which, upon examination, proves to have the number of pips or spots that correspond with the number of cards counted.

For instance, suppose four cards were removed, the performer would unhesitatingly turn up, say, the four of clubs. Supposing that no cards were removed, and the packet was left in its original state, the knave would be turned up by the artist. Not only can the performer be blindfolded, but a thick cloth or handkerchief can be covered over the packet, and yet the card with the proper number of pips is produced. This trick can be repeated as often as desired without any rearrangement of the pack, and it is this part of the experiment that mystifies conjurers unacquainted with *modus operandi*.

For the performance of this excellent drawing-room trick, the performer must previously arrange eleven cards, as follows:—

Place a knave face downwards, and on the top an ace, then a deuce, then a tray, and so on to the ten, and the cards must be kept in this order throughout the trick. They can, however, be cut as often as desired before you start the experiment; but as the packet is placed on the table the performer must manage to catch a glimpse of the bottom card, as this forms the key to the whole mystery.

Supposing the bottom card is the four spot. Now, no matter how many cards the spectator moves, all that the performer has to do is to show the fourth card down from the top, and this will have the number of spots that correspond with the number of cards removed.

We will suppose a spectator moved seven cards, the performer now shows a fourth card from the top, which is a seven spot.

Now, without re-arranging the cards, or even looking at the bottom one, the trick can be repeated.

The artist remembers that the card just shown, a seven spot, was fourth from the top, and he therefore knows that the third card from the top, must be the eight-spot, the second the nine-spot, and the top card the ten-spot, leaving the Jack at the bottom.

A certain number of cards are again moved, and, as in all cases when the knave is at the bottom of the packet, all the performer has to do is to turn the cards over, and on the bottom card will be found the correct number of spots.

Should the ace be at the bottom, the second card from the top will always denote the answer.

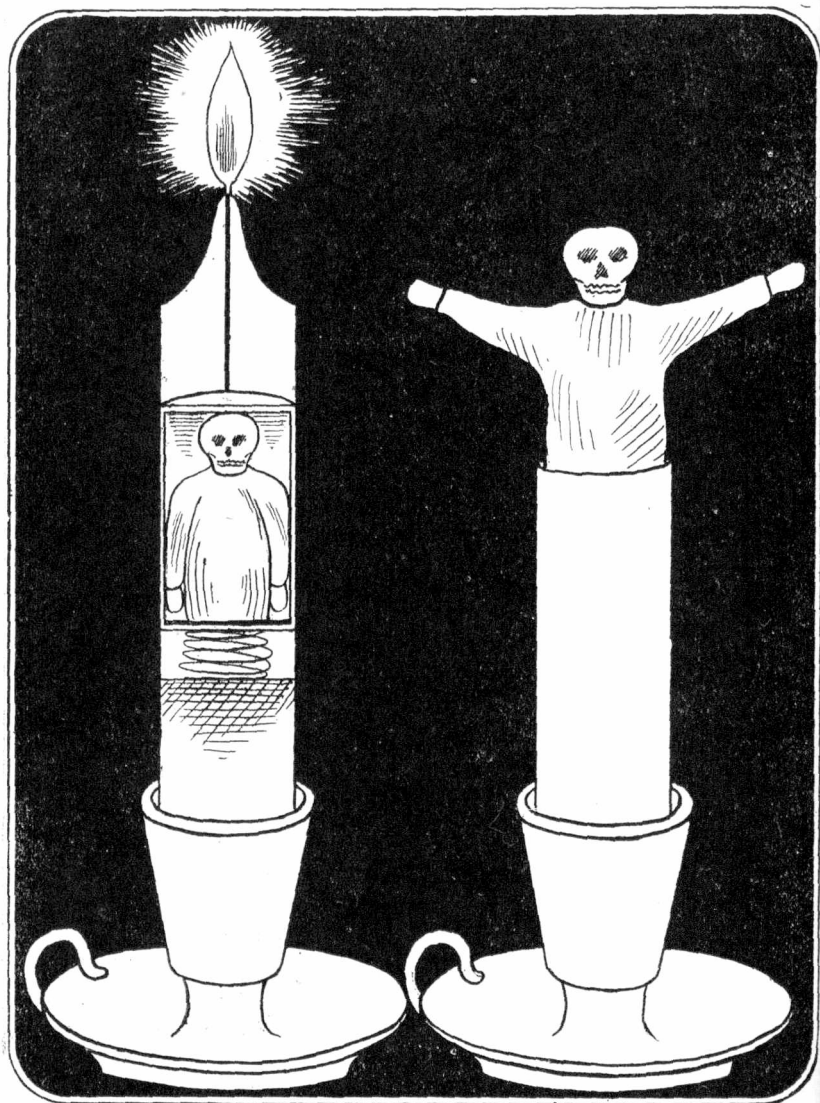
If the two-spot be at the bottom, the second card from the top will denote the answer, and so on all through.

If no cards are moved, say when the cards are in the position shown in the first table, it is apparent that the performer would turn up the knave, this being fourth from the top, so that if no cards are shifted the knave always turns up.

After five minutes' study, this trick will be found quite easy of accomplishment.

A Nocturnal Surprise.

THIS is a very clever contrivance, calculated to cause consternation and astonishment to any average-nerved individual. Supposing yourself to be the victim, how would you feel if, when retiring to bed in some strange establishment, just as you



were thinking of blowing out the candle, it should suddenly explode with no small report, the light be extinguished, and in place of the flame a small ghost with outstretched arms should appear, shining with a phosphorescent glow? I venture to think you would be very, very much surprised; and yet this is the effect produced by this ingenious construction.

By examination it will be found that the lower half of the candle is really a thin cardboard case, enamelled to resemble a wax candle, and containing a small ghost whose arms fly apart when released from their bondage. To the bottom of this ghost is affixed a wire spring.

The upper half of the candle is perfectly ordinary, and merely stuck on to the lower portion; the joint being hidden by a rubbing of wax.

On top of the ghost's head a few gunpowder caps, such as are supplied at toy shops for children's pistols, are laid.

Now the candle can be lighted, and it will burn quite respectably until it reaches the caps, which by their explosion cause everybody's attention to be drawn in that one direction, just in time to see the appearance of the ghost, it being forced upwards simultaneously with the discharge by the action of the spring. The wicked little image should be liberally coated with luminous paint, and the effect can be better imagined than described. Any little difficulty presenting itself to the reader's mind will be immediately dissipated upon reference to the drawings.

The Magical Aquarium.

THIS is an extremely pretty trick, and effective enough to occupy a prominent position upon the programme of any conjurer; the effect is as follows:—

Upon your table you have a tumbler full of ink, and to prove that it is nothing else, you dip a piece of white notepaper into it and pull it out stained as black as jet. As an additional proof, the conjurer takes a spoonful of the liquid, and pours it into any other vessel that might be handy, thus showing that the ink is really genuine.

Now take a white serviette, or a large handkerchief, and cover the glass with it. Make a few passes over the tumbler, and snatch the handkerchief away; everyone will then be astonished to see that the ink has been converted into clear water, with goldfish swimming about in it, this forming a very pretty finish to a puzzling trick.

In explaining the secret, let us hasten to say that the glass was filled with ordinary clear water all the time, although appearing as ink. To obtain this effect, a piece of black waterproof cloth, or mackintosh must be procured; this must be cut to fit the inside of

the glass, and to this piece of material a black thread should be attached. This thread should be of sufficient length to hang down over the side for a few inches, and should terminate in a piece of cork or matchwood, as in our illustration. Of course this accessory must be invisible, and consequently the glass should be so placed that this thread hangs behind, or on the opposite side to the audience.

Place this lining then, inside the tumbler, and fill it with water; the peculiar substance of the cloth looks when wet, exactly like ink. Now place two or three goldfish inside the glass, and naturally they



will be invisible; failing genuine goldfish, a very good substitute is obtained by cutting a piece of carrot into the same shape.

This is the condition in which the glass really is, when placed on the table; but now to convince your audience that it does not contain anything but ink. For the first test you must procure a strip of paper or white card, which should be blackened on one side only, for about two inches up from the end. Holding this strip with the white side in front, dip it into the glass; then, before withdrawing it, quickly turn the paper round, so that it appears to have been inked during its immersion.

As for the liquid taken out of the glass with a spoon; previous

to the experiment, you must fix into the bowl of the spoon, a few grains of aniline black. The best way to do this is to lay a few particles in the bowl, and breathe on it, the warm breath causing them to adhere, without any fear of their dropping off.

The water taken out in the spoon will turn black directly it comes in contact with the aniline dye, and can then be poured into a plate or saucer.

After both these tests have been submitted, cover the glass with the serviette; make your passes, and then when you desire the change to take place, take hold of the serviette at the same time securing the cork at end of thread, and quickly pull both away from the glass.

This pulls the waterproof lining out of the tumbler and exposes the fishes swimming about in a glass of clear water. The lining, which must of course remain unseen, should be bunched up with the serviette, and put on one side, while you pass the glass round to be examined.



A Good Hat Trick.



BORROW a friend's hat, and say that you believe it isn't of the best quality, and to prove the truth of your assertion, pierce the crown with your finger. As he watches your wriggling finger through the top of his hat, his face will not wear an expression of delight; but of course it is a trick, and you conclude by handing him back the borrowed headgear perfectly uninjured.

The secret is explained by the drawing. You must first provide yourself with a false finger, made of wood or wax. In the base of the finger, insert a long needle point, and gum pieces of irregular black cloth round the outside of the model, as is explained in the illustration. If you cannot make these articles very life-like, it is best to buy a finger from any magical shop, the cost being only a few pence.

The performer must conceal the finger in his left hand, and when he borrows the hat must turn the interior towards the spectators. While in this position, the needle point is thrust through the crown of the hat, this action being quite invisible to the audience. Now the conjurer must ap-

parently push his finger through the crown, and turns the hat round to show it protruding right through; the black cloth round the edges of the finger make the illusion perfect, and causes it to appear as if a hole was really made in the silk covering.

To cause the finger to wriggle and appear life-like, the performer simply moves the needle about from the inside.

When concluding the trick, you turn the hat with the crown towards your own body, and appear to draw your finger out of the hat, meanwhile, with your left hand, merely pull the false one out and drop it into your pocket.

Pass round, and allow anyone to examine your finger or the borrowed hat, which will be none the worse for having a needle stuck through the crown.

This principle can be utilised for many other tricks of a similar nature, such as piercing the hat with a cigar, your magic wand, etc., while as a practical joke it is as good as any.

For the latter, cut a wooden penholder in half, and in that part containing the nib, insert a needle. Push this through a visitor's hat, and leave it in the hall; when he is leaving, hand him his chapeau, without noticing the apparent damage, and unless he is a real gentleman, you will soon hear that he has discovered the injury. However, when he sees how he was tricked, he will probably laugh as heartily as the joker.

The Magic Cane.

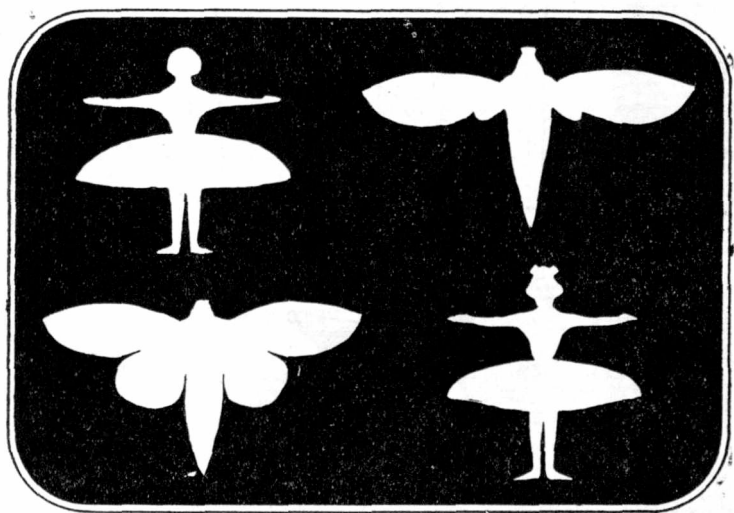
SPEAKING of the wonders of electricity and magnetism, you take a cane (which may be borrowed), and after making one or two mesmeric passes over it, it clings to the back and front of your hand, and even adheres to a finger tip in a most peculiar manner, seeming to ignore the laws of gravity. There are several ways of doing this trick. The following will, I think, puzzle some who are acquainted with the other methods:—Take a fine but strong thread, tie it to your left wrist, lead the thread up your left sleeve, across your back, and down your right sleeve, where it terminates in a loop. Length of thread should be adjusted so that on holding the arms slightly contracted, but not cramped, you can slip loop over right thumb. With loop over thumb, come forward and obtain the loan of a cane (the small black ones like a soldier's cane are the best), and slip thread over cane while making the pretended mesmeric passes. It will now be clear that if you pass thread through fingers and keep it taut, the cane will adhere to the back of your hand, and by placing a finger tip below the thread on the side of the cane nearest to you, it will cling to finger tip, and so on. Finally, you come forward and ask someone to take the cane

and examine it; as you do so slip off thread, when a slight extension of the arms will cause the thread to fly up sleeve, thus leaving every one in a fog as to how it is done.

The Dancing Fairies.

THIS is a very amusing experiment, especially for children, and it always causes a good deal of fun and laughter. All the properties required are a piece of tissue and a piece of brown paper.

Cut out of the tissue paper a few small figures of fairies, ballet dancers, butterflies, etc., after the style of those in our illustration. These should be as light as possible, and must be laid out on the



table; meanwhile you must lay a few pieces of coarse brown paper in front of the fire. When these pieces of brown paper are moderately warm, they should be well rubbed with the clothes brush, or rubbed between the sleeve and side of jacket. This friction generates a certain amount of electricity, which displays itself on holding the rubbed brown paper about three inches above the little figures.

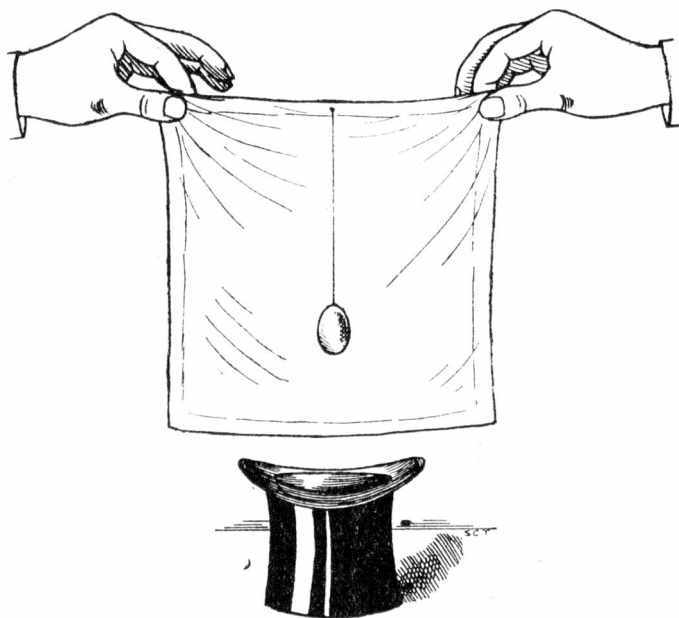
If properly manipulated the ballet dancers can be made to dance and the butterflies will gracefully soar up to the paper and will attach themselves to it quite securely.

In the hands of an ingenious operator, many other pretty effects can be introduced.

Egg Production.

THIS experiment has been performed upon the stage with great success, and owing to its simplicity and good effect, we have included it in our collection of tricks.

An empty hat is placed upon the magician's table, and a handkerchief is shaken out and both sides shown to be devoid of preparation. Then from the folds of this same handkerchief the performer produces an egg, which he lets drop into the hat; the handkerchief



is now crumpled up, opened again, and another egg produced. Thus he goes on, until some dozen eggs have been dropped into the hat, and then comes an additional surprise: the hat is turned upside down, when instead of a shower of eggs falling out, it is seen to be quite empty.

The secret depends upon one solitary imitation egg, suspended by a thread attached to the edge of a handkerchief.

In this condition the egg is held in one hand with that corner of the handkerchief, and both sides are shown and shaken out; then the egg is dropped behind the handkerchief, where it remains unseen. Dropping one corner, and only holding the handkerchief between the tips of one finger and thumb, the performer just lifts the egg out of one of the folds in which it gets concealed. Then he

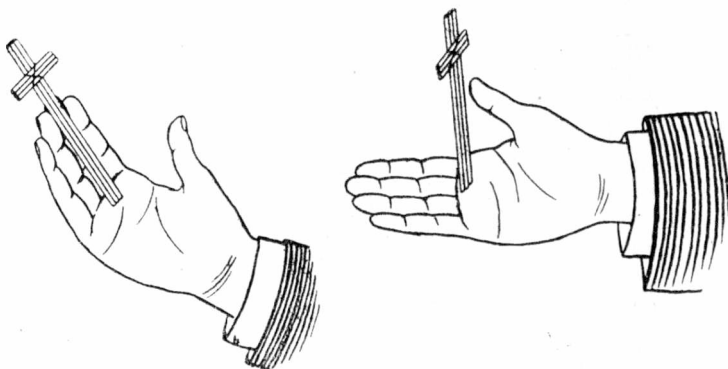
drops it into his hat, afterwards picking the handkerchief up by two corners in such a manner that when it is lifted above the hat the egg is invisibly dragged behind it, and the production repeated as often as desired.

To make all details quite clear, our illustration shows the arrangement at the moment when the egg has been removed by the thread, on the side opposite to the audience.

An additional effect has been obtained by the writer, by causing a flutter of feathers to fall from the hat when it is upturned. If this method of presenting the trick be adopted, a small packet of feathers must be secretly introduced into the empty hat after it has been examined, or better still during the egg production. This little packet is tied round with weak cotton, which can be easily broken with the finger-nail, thus liberating the feathers. Their presence must of course be accounted for by saying that you will hatch the eggs.

The Cross of the Orient.

FOR this splendid and mystifying trick you will require six ordinary cider straws. These straws must be fashioned into the form of a cross by being bound with thread at the place



where the cross piece joins the upright. As an additional security, and as a help to keep the cross perfectly flat, small pins are passed through the three straws at about half an inch from each extremity, as indicated in the first illustration.

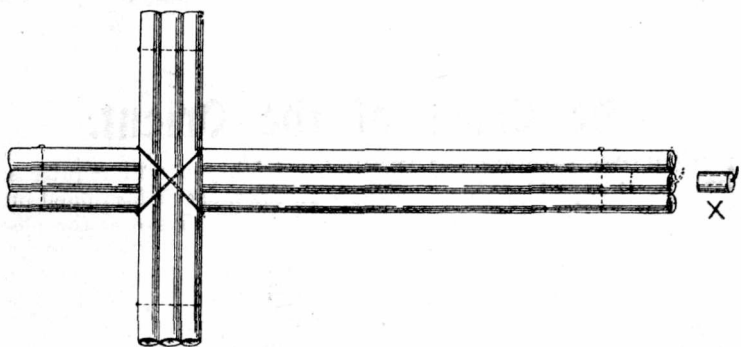
Besides these straws, a tiny wooden plug, just large enough to fit inside the centre upright straw, will be required. A bent needle point is fixed into this plug, which is shown in the drawing marked X.

When desiring to present this illusion, the cross can be passed round for examination, and the plug secretly inserted on receiving

it back; or, better still, the cross can be fashioned with loose straws in front of the audience, who will then be quite satisfied that it is quite ordinary and unprepared.

Now the cross is laid flat upon the palm of one hand, while the other makes passes round and above it. Suddenly the cross is seen to move, and slowly it rises until it stands perfectly erect; all this while you can pass your wand above and round the cross to prove that it is not suspended in any way by wires or strings.

The trick is worked in this manner: The cross with the plug in it is laid upon the fleshy part of the base of the fingers, so that the needle point is inserted into the flesh. The hand is now held in the position indicated in the illustration, with the fingers slightly bent upwards supporting the cross. Now gradually straighten your hand, and as the flesh tightens the cross will assume an upright

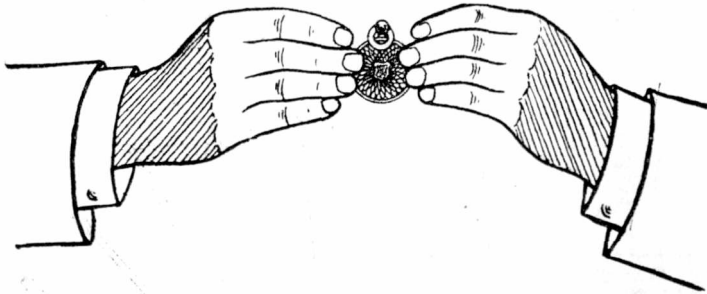


position; by an almost imperceptible movement of the finger, the cross can be made to rise or fall at the performer's inclination. When desiring to conclude the experiment, it is always advisable to extract the plug, which can be dropped on the floor, and the cross handed once more for examination without fear of the secret being discovered.

An effective method of performing a similar trick is to fix a bent needle point into the end of a lead pencil. This is then manipulated in the same manner as the cross, with the exception that after the experiment the pencil is quietly put into your pocket. Then, pretending to hear someone remark that they would like to examine the article, take from your pocket a duplicate pencil, entirely unprepared, which is handed round, the audience being under the impression that they are examining the pencil that was performed with.

Watch-Bending.

THIS is a pretty little optical illusion that can always be introduced with a borrowed watch to the consternation of the lender. Taking the time-piece in your hands with the dial turned inwards towards your body, and with your fingers and thumbs gripping it as in the illustration, say, "This watch seems quite soft, Sir," and with that you proceed to twist the watch about as if it were a piece of putty.



This remarkable illusion is produced by bending the hands outwards, at the same time bringing the points of the fingers nearer together, then immediately bring them back to their former position.

An experiment with your own chronometer will illustrate the simplicity of the working, and will also prove how great a deception may be produced by such simple means.

A New Match Trick.

PLACE as many matches as you please upon the table, making them form a kind of semi-circle; within this half hoop lay any number of matches until they resemble in shape the diagram.

Now ask anybody in the audience to start counting from the left-hand side match of the row placed within the semi-circle. Tell them to count silently any number they please, counting along the bottom row from left to right, and then along the half circle from the right hand to the left.

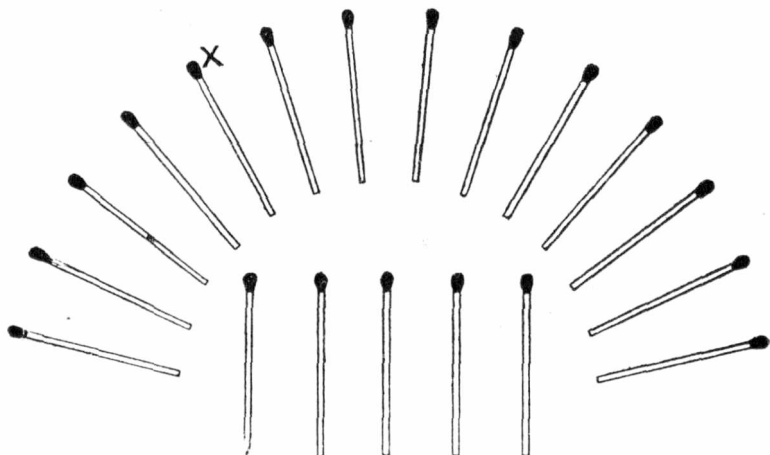
When anybody has done this, and when they have arrived at any number without having told you, instruct them to start counting backwards, only when they arrive at the right-hand corner of the semi-circle, they are to miss out the bottom row, and finish counting up the left-hand side of the half circle.

They finish counting backwards when they arrive at number one, and no matter which match they finish upon, without a word or question you immediately point the one out to them.

To prove that the arrangement of the matches makes no difference to you, the trick is repeated as often as desired, each time changing the position of the matches, or else either adding to, or taking away a few from those you are using; or you can even allow the audience themselves to arrange the matches, and yet you never fail to name the correct match.

So much for the effect; now for the secret:—

Supposing, for example, that the matches are arranged as in the drawing; let us count, as explained above, along the bottom row and then round the circle. Presuming that we decide upon number thirteen, we finish upon one of the centre matches. Now start



counting back, 13, 12, 11, etc.; when we have counted to six we are upon the right-hand corner of the half circle.

Instead of continuing along the bottom row, leave that out and start again at the left-hand corner of the semi-circle, counting 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, where an \times will be observed denoting the match finished upon.

Without hesitation, the performer immediately points to that match as the one upon which we finished.

All that has to be done in order to discover the correct number, is to count the bottom row, which numbers five. Now count the same number round the semi-circle, going from left to right, and you will then finish upon the same match as the person who counted 13.

After a moment's reflection, everybody will see how simple this is when once you know it, and it will be observed that no matter

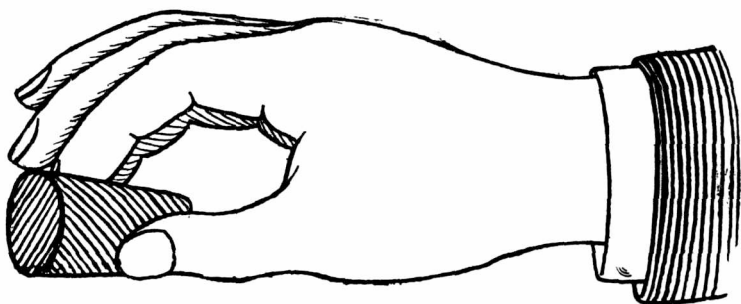
what number is thought of, if the directions are carried out, number one must fall upon the match marked \times .

For that reason, if you are repeating the trick, always alter the number of the bottom row, so that you do not keep on finishing upon one match each time.

A Regular Corker.

TAKE any ordinary cork with flat ends, and drop it on the table, so that it will stand up on end.

The only way to do this with an ordinary cork is to hold it between the thumb and first finger, as in the illustration, about four inches above the table. The cork should then be dropped



quite horizontally, and the force of the fall will be just enough to cause it to rebound, when it will be found to fall again in an upright position.

It is next to impossible for anyone unacquainted with this method to do the same trick, and with just a little practice the knack becomes so natural that it is very seldom you miss.

The Watery Knife.

PASS an ordinary knife for examination, and tell the audience that by sheer strength of your wrist you will cause a stream of water to flow from the blade.

Having received the knife back, with the assurance that it is entirely devoid of preparation, you proceed to squeeze the handle until water is seen to be trickling down the blade.

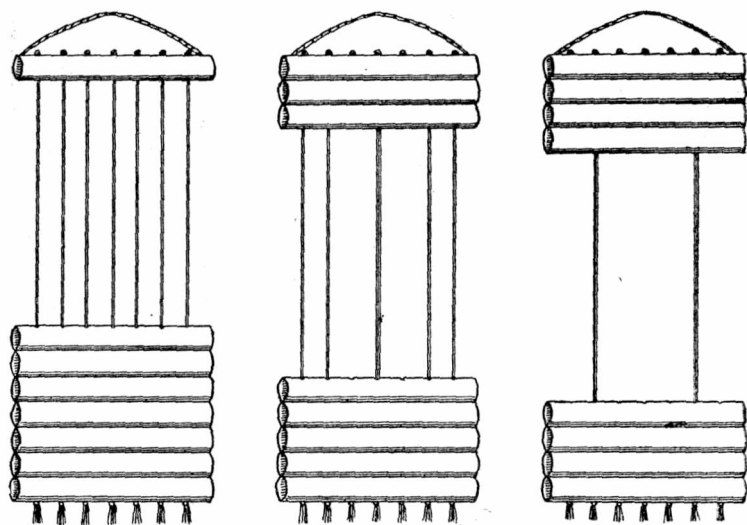
Previous to performing this startling trick, a sheet of tissue paper or a little tow must be thoroughly soaked in water, and then this small wad of wet material must be secreted behind your ear.

Directly the knife has been returned to you, it must be grasped in the hand, while your arm is crooked upwards so that your hand containing the knife rests upon your ear, and you then request anybody to place their first finger upon the joint of your elbow.

This peculiar request effectually masks the operation of securing the wad of paper or tow, therefore all that remains to be done is to squeeze the wet out, allowing it to trickle down the knife, afterwards secretly slipping the paper into your pocket while the spectators are examining the knife.

The Chinese Rods.

THIS is another ingenious illusion, emanating from the inventive brain of an oriental magician. It consists of eight pieces of hollow bamboo, with seven holes bored through each in a straight line, each hole being spaced one inch away from the others.



Through these holes seven cords are seen to pass, each having a bead at the top, and a tassel at the bottom, to prevent their being pulled through the rods. The upper rod has a loop from one corner to the other to hold it up by, and its condition when first picked up is illustrated in the first drawing by the diagram at the left, which shows one rod at the top and seven at the bottom, while seven cords are seen to be passing apparently right through each rod. Now the position of the rods can be reversed, and the six

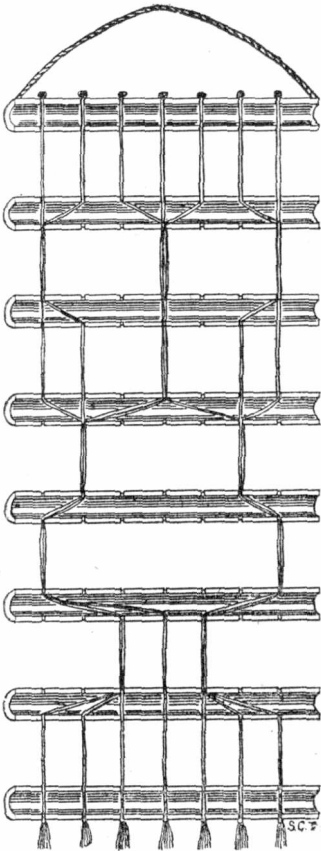
upper ones of the lower set can be slid up to the first rod, thereby leaving seven of them at the top and one at the bottom, and still seven cords will be visible; but now comes the extraordinary part of the trick.

Three rods are slid from the upper set to the bottom, making altogether four at the top and four underneath; when this is done, the rods appear to be supported by only two cords, as in the right-hand figure of the illustration.

Then another rod is brought down, and it will appear as in the centre drawing, supported by five cords. No matter which rods are moved, a change will take place, as will be found by referring to the second illustration, which thoroughly explains the mystery.

The rods, of course, are hollow, and each one contains seven holes. The cords used should be of silk, as that material slips easily, and allows the position of the rods to be changed without inconvenience. It will be noticed that the cords do not pass straight through each rod, but their course is changed as the drawing shows, and it will be observed that where two or three strings go through any one hole, the strands appear slightly thicker.

The effect of this illusion is very pretty, and would well repay for any time expended in making this inexpensive apparatus.



A Transparent Deception.

THIS is a very effective trick, that anybody can learn in a few minutes, and all the apparatus required is a glass tumbler and a sheet of newspaper.

Place your apparatus upon the table and take a seat behind it, keeping the audience well in front of you. Then take the glass and cover it over with the newspaper, pressing the paper closely round so that it gradually becomes fashioned to the form of the glass. Then draw the paper to the edge of the table, and drop the tumbler

into your lap, quickly returning the paper to the centre of the table; the stiffness of the paper, of course, still possesses the shape of the tumbler. Hold the paper form in one hand, and strike a heavy blow upon it with the other, and at the same time drop the tumbler from your lap to the floor, when it will appear as though you positively knocked the glass through the solid table.

Care must be taken to straighten the paper out directly the blow has been given, so as to prevent any suspicion that the form of the glass was simply preserved by the stiffness of the paper.

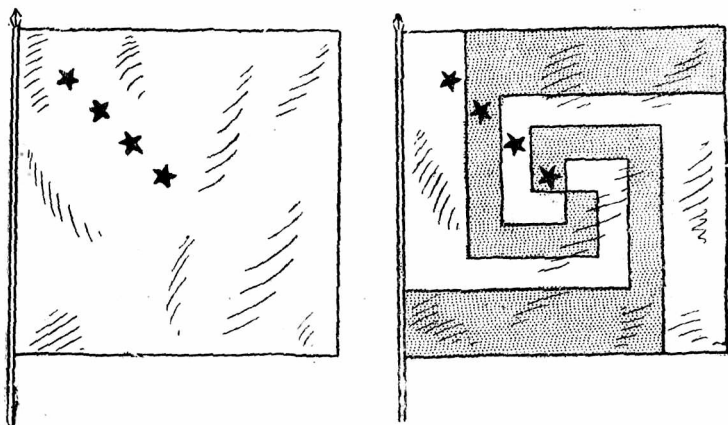
When the glass is in your lap, it can be made to gradually slide towards the ankles by sloping the legs, and if this is done there is no danger of breaking the glass when you slightly spread your feet apart to allow it to fall.

This is a splendid trick, but it should never be repeated during one evening.

“Tricks” Banner.

THIS puzzling little experiment we have given the above title, and when you are exhibiting the trick to your friends, never fail to give it the proper name, and tell them that the journal is only a penny a week.

The flag should be made out of a square piece of notepaper of any convenient size. Four stars must be drawn upon this paper,



diagonally from one corner to the other, only in the positions indicated in the first drawing.

The trick is to cut the flag into four separate pieces of exactly the same size and shape, each piece containing one of the stars.

It will be found that very few persons will discover the correct

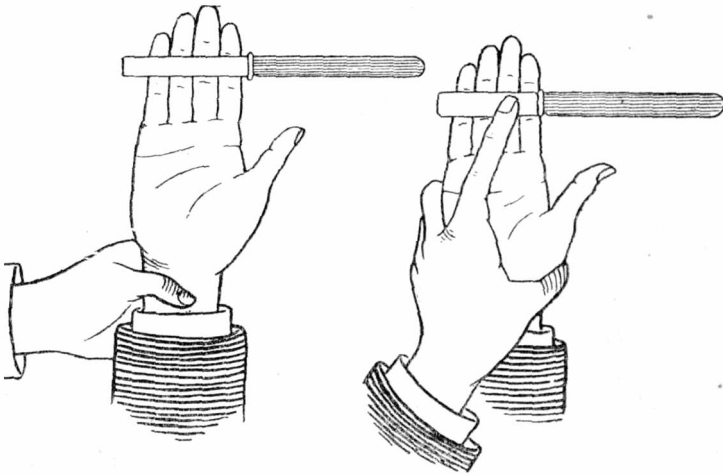
method of performing this experiment, but the second illustration explains how it can be accomplished, and it will be seen that two of the pieces have been shaded so as to make the solution more clear.

The Magnetic Knife.

THIS is a very popular party trick, because at such festive gatherings there are knives in plenty; and all that has to be done is to pick one up, and lay it upon your fingers, when it will be found to remain there unsupported by any tangible reason.

The trick can be performed in two ways, and both are clearly described in the drawings.

For the first method the knife is laid upon the fingers of the right hand, while the left seizes the wrist, and then under cover of turning the hand over, the first finger of the left hand is placed on

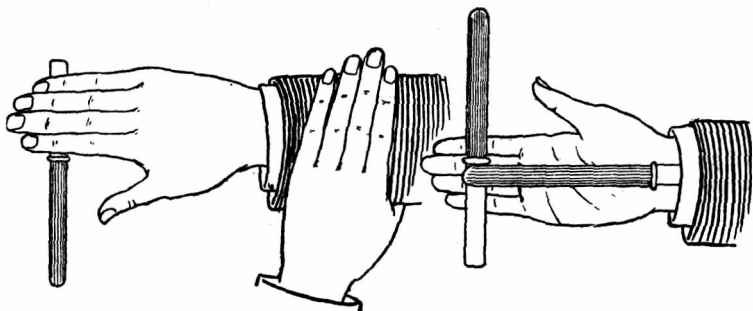


the handle; therefore when the right hand is held back uppermost the absence of the left index finger is unnoticed, and the knife is suspended by an invisible support.

The second method is to secretly insert another knife up your sleeve, the tip of which is used as the support for the magnetised blade, and as an additional security, the left hand is rested upon the right arm, thus holding the hidden blade perfectly tight. Now everything should be clear; first come forward with the knife and say:—

“Ladies and Gentlemen, I have the honour of exhibiting a few experiments in natural magic, which will, I trust, afford you some little amusement.

"I shall first take an ordinary knife, which I would ask you to examine. Now you all know that if a piece of steel is rubbed on a magnet, the steel immediately becomes magnetised, and will attract other objects in the same manner, as an ordinary magnet. My hand, if rubbed by this knife, acquires in virtue of the electric fluid thereby generated, the faculty of attracting other bodies. I have



only to rub it so, to develop in it the mysterious power in question."

So saying, pass your fingers up and down the knife, and then leave it suspended by either of the methods described, and the patter should have taken the attention of the audience away from so simple a contrivance as a concealed knife or a hidden finger, and they will be trying to puzzle out the answer by some obtruse principle of electricity.

The Dancing Skeleton.

THIS is certain to cause much astonishment if well arranged beforehand.

Get a piece of board about the size of a large school slate and have it painted black. The paint should be what is known as a dead colour, without gloss or brightness. Sketch out the figure of a skeleton on a piece of cardboard, and arrange it after the manner of the dancing sailors and other cardboard figures exposed for sale in the streets and toy shops, so that by holding the figure by the head in one hand and pulling a string with the other, the figure will throw up its legs and arms in a most ludicrous manner.

Make the connection of the arms and legs with black string, and let the pulling string be also black. Then tack the skeleton by the head to the blackboard. The figure having been cut out it must be painted black to match the board.

Now to perform: Produce the board; show only the side upon which there is nothing. Request that the lights may be lowered slightly, and take up your position a little way from the audience.

With a piece of white chalk make one or two attempts to draw a figure; rub out your work as being unsatisfactory, and turn the slate round. The black figure will not be perceived on account of the board being of the same colour. Rapidly touch the edges of the cardboard figure with chalk, filling up the ribs, etc., at pleasure, taking great care that nothing moves while the drawing is progressing.

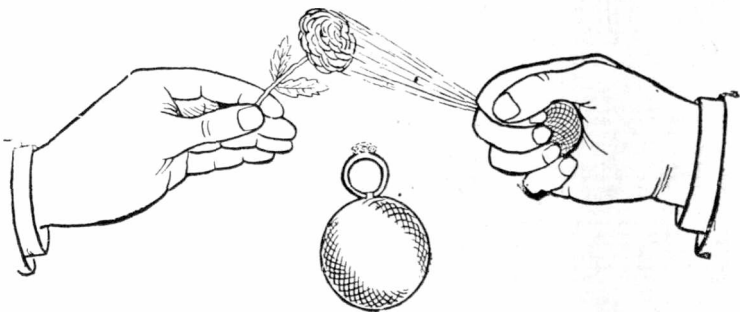
Then manipulate your fingers in front of the drawing and command it to become animated, when by secretly pulling the string attached to the skeleton with your foot, it will of course kick up its legs and throw its arms about, to the astonishment of the company.

A little soft music from the piano will greatly assist the illusion.

The Magic Rosegay.

THE following is a simple way of producing the seemingly miraculous transformation of white roses to red:—

Obtain one of the small indiarubber balls affixed to a finger ring, which are usually sold for the purpose of treating your unsuspecting friends to a spray of water in their faces from ap-



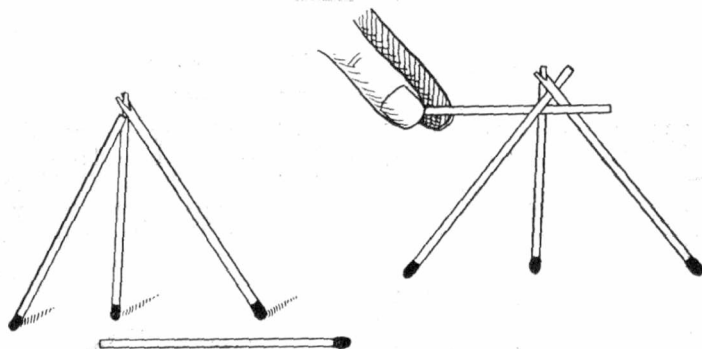
parently nowhere. This must be filled with eau de Cologne, alcohol or methylated spirits. Now take a white rose and delicately sprinkle its petals with aniline crystals. This will not alter its appearance at a short distance. When about to perform the trick, slip the ring on your finger, the ball being hidden inside the right hand. The white rose is exhibited in the left, and whilst the performer is pointing out its spotless purity, the back of the right hand approaches it. The hidden ball is now surreptitiously pressed, a spray of spirit falls on the flower, and the next moment it is suffused with a lovely crimson blush.

The trick can be performed in the garden on growing roses with startling effect.

A Trick with Matches.

BEFORE commencing this experiment, it is always best to challenge the company to so erect three ordinary safety matches that they form a tripod, and then by means of another match to raise the three above the table without them falling apart. Needless to say, an uninitiated spectator has not the faintest idea as to the best way of setting about the trick, which is really a very clever puzzle.

To perform this trick, it is necessary to cut a small notch in the plain end of one match, while the corresponding end of another one should be slightly pointed; then insert the pointed end into the



incision made in the first one, and place them upon the table, with a third match resting against them as a support, as clearly illustrated in the left of the figure.

Now you can take another match, presenting it to any member of the audience, challenging them to raise the three together by means of this fourth match.

The secret is explained in the drawing at the right hand side of the illustration.

Press lightly against the two matches that are joined together, until the third falls against the one held in the hand. Then, of course, the three may be raised without coming apart.

Free Trade Conjuring.

THIS peculiarly illustrative experiment we have given the above title, although that of course has no direct connection with the illusion itself, apart from giving the trick a name, and the conjurer something to patter about while performing it.

The properties required for the trick are:—

1. A glass tumbler with a tolerably wide mouth.
2. A large silk handkerchief.
3. A wooden imitation egg.
4. Two small silk handkerchiefs exactly alike.
5. A hollow egg, which should be of celluloid or metal, enamelled to represent a real egg, only with an oval opening in the side to permit of the introduction of one of the small handkerchiefs into the interior.

Before commencing you must attach to the wooden egg, by means of a minute wire hook or staple, a fine black silk thread, about three inches long, the other end of which must be attached to the centre of the large silk handkerchief. This must be arranged upon your table so as to look as if the egg was merely lying loose upon the centre of the handkerchief, and at the same time put one of the small silk handkerchiefs within one of the upper folds of the large one, but so hidden that its presence shall not be suspected.

On the other side of your table lay the duplicate small handkerchief, concealing the hollow egg beneath it.

These arrangements having been completed, you should always begin the trick with a little introduction, and therefore we have written some suitable patter, which may heighten the effect, and raise your oratorical powers in the estimation of your friends.

"Ladies and Gentlemen, in introducing my next experiment in the fascinating art of legerdemain, just allow me to say a few words about Free Trade.

"Whole floods of ink have been expended upon the question, and yet in spite of the many discussions that have taken place, public opinion seems just as much divided upon the subject as in the days gone by.

"Will you allow me to reduce the question to its simplest expression? This, I think, will reconcile the conflicting opinions.

"I shall not trouble you with theory, but will proceed at once with practise, and shall take, to illustrate my argument, two very common objects—an egg and a silk pocket handkerchief.

"England is in want of our eggs, for which she purposes to give us in exchange the silk handkerchiefs, which she derives from her Indian possessions. What can be more simple? We will test the matter by a practical illustration. Here is a new laid egg, which I had sent me from Russia this morning. I place it in this glass and cover it over with a handkerchief.

"Will you represent France, Sir? You will? Very good! Then all you have to do is to hold this glass in your hand.

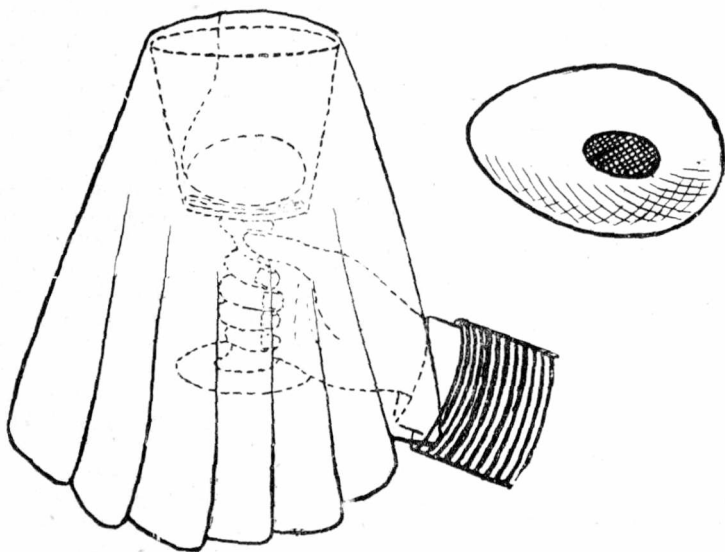
"You see that the egg is really in the glass" (you here take up the corner of the handkerchief to show the egg). Besides, if you shake the glass lightly, you will hear the egg strike against the sides, producing a sound that cannot possibly leave any doubt as to its presence.

"I myself will represent free-trading England, as indicated by

this silk handkerchief, which I propose to exchange for your egg. I will begin by folding it into a small parcel; so! Now—shake the glass a little, please. Yes, the egg is still there. I send you my handkerchief, and I take in exchange your egg. Here it is, you see! I uncover the glass, the egg is gone, and the handkerchief has arrived there in its place.

“This, ladies and gentlemen, is an illustration of Free Trade. I trust my demonstration is fully satisfactory.”

The above patter gives the reader an illustration of how a simple trick can be bounced along until when it is finished, the audience will consider the effect nothing short of marvellous. Now for a few hints as to when and how the trick is worked.



When everything is arranged upon your table as described at the commencement of this trick, proceed as follows:—

“Here we have,” you remark, “a handkerchief and an egg.” As you say these words, you take up the egg with the right hand, and, raising it a couple of inches or so, show it to the company; then replace it in the centre of the handkerchief still lying on the left hand.

With the right hand, which is now at liberty, take the glass, and with the left hand, which is still covered by the handkerchief, lay the egg in the glass (keeping the back of the hand towards the audience), and at the same time throw over the large handkerchief by way of cover, but in so doing first drop the small handkerchief (which it will be remembered was concealed in one of the folds of the large one) into the glass. Now lift a corner of the large

handkerchief on the side towards yourself, and take out the egg to show that it is really in the glass. It will be remembered that this egg was attached to the centre of the handkerchief by three inches of thread, therefore for obvious reasons it can only be raised about a couple of inches.

After it has been shown, replace the egg in the glass on the top of the small handkerchief, cover it again with the large one, and give the whole to some person to hold. Such person must grasp the tumbler by the bottom part, his or her hand being covered by the folds of the larger handkerchief (see illustration),

Ask the holder to shake the glass gently, that all may hear the egg knock against the sides; then shake the second small silk handkerchief from the table where it lies, at the same time obtaining possession of the hollow egg, which must be retained in the palm of the right hand. Have the egg again shaken once or twice in the glass, and announce that you are about to roll the handkerchief into a ball and pass it into the glass.

While thus speaking, you hold the small handkerchief between your hands, and gradually work it into the hollow egg, by means of your fingers.

When the whole of the handkerchief has been worked into the egg, have the glass shaken once more, and ask the person holding it to keep it quite still without moving again until instructed. Take hold of the large handkerchief at the edge of the glass, and lift it off, first, however, making believe to "change" the egg for the handkerchief.

Show the hollow egg in your right hand, telling the audience that the handkerchief, at your command, changed to the egg (of course not allowing them to see the opening, the egg being so held as to present a perfectly ordinary appearance from the point of view of the spectators).

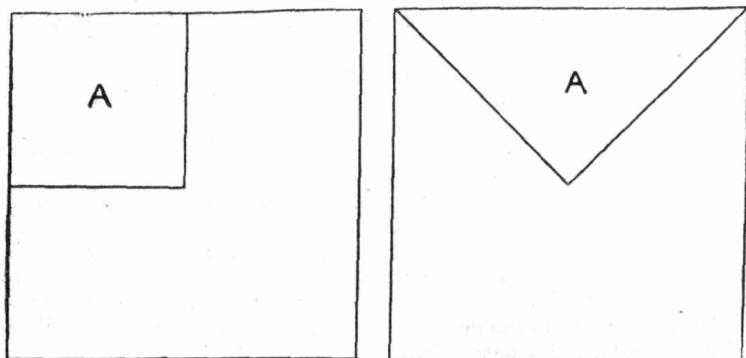
Now lift off the large handkerchief from the glass, and the attached egg will naturally come away too, leaving the small handkerchief alone in the glass, and so producing the change.

The Puzzle of Two Fathers.

THIS is an interesting little amusement for when you have half an hour to spare to puzzle your brains. If you are showing the puzzle to any friends, it is best to draw the plans upon a sheet of notepaper, as in this manner you can easily explain to your auditors the solution of the trick.

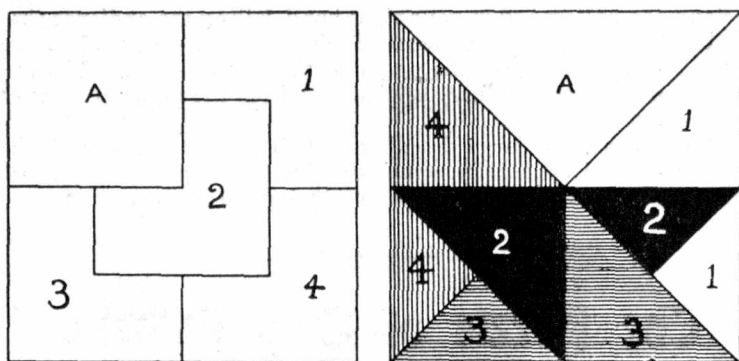
Tell a tale about two gentlemen who each possessed a square plot of land. They were both making their wills, and each one wanted to reserve himself one-fourth of his property. One, however, wanted to divide his so that his fourth was perfectly square, while the other desired the portion that he retained to be in the form of

a triangle. To illustrate what you mean, just draw the two plots of land on the paper, thus :—



Now, each of these two gentlemen have four sons, and in both wills it states that the remaining portion of the land must be divided among the sons in such a manner that each son will share equally with his brother, and the plot of land that they each receive must be exactly similar in shape. How was it divided?

By just glancing at the following illustration, it will be seen how the sons divided the land. Observe how the square fourth of the



first gentleman was preserved intact, while his four sons each had an equal portion exactly similar to each other in shape and size; and just see how the second gentleman's property was split up without touching the triangular fourth that he wished to retain.

A "Reel" Have.

THIS is one of the best and most laughable catches that have ever been devised for causing endless fun at parties and similar gatherings.

The joker is seen walking about, until someone observes a piece of white cotton sticking on the back of his coat; of course, the unfortunate individual is asked whether he has been sewing his buttons on, etc., being generally laughed at, until anyone attempts to remove the piece of cotton. Then the laugh is turned, for as the obliging gentleman pulls the cotton away from the joker's coat, so does it become longer, until some hundreds of yards have been extracted. The amusement is then brought to a climax by the gentleman turning round and drily remarking, "Well I never! you had better start putting that back now!"

Before entering the room, the party that is going to play the joke should provide himself with a reel of white cotton. Without breaking the cotton, two or three feet must be unwound and threaded through a needle, which must be passed through the centre of the back of your jacket. Then the reel should be deposited in your inside breast pocket, and the coat put on; afterwards pulling a little of the cotton through your jacket to see that the reel works properly; the needle, of course, being removed, and the cotton being cut until only two or three inches project through the coat at the back. Now it will appear that the cotton is only sticking to the nap of your coat, but directly anyone pulls, the reel will revolve and allow it to be dragged out until the supply is exhausted.





LIKE all games that are in vogue at the present time, the origin of billiards can be traced back and found to have been developed from a very crude form of amusement of ancient times. It has undergone many changes and vast improvements have been made, chiefly during the last half century. It is now the most fashionable and fascinating game that we have; indeed, it has been dubbed, "the king of games and the game of kings," which is an appropriate description that it worthily upholds.

One of the most important factors in developing billiards as a game and giving to it popular interest are the public competitions and exhibitions of skill given by experts, which are always well attended by a critical and enthusiastic audience.

In this article I will endeavour to describe some very pretty and astonishing tricks that can be done by anybody with a slight knowledge of the game; the concluding part will be devoted to explaining a few trick shots which will require some amount of skill to accomplish. Technicalities in language will be avoided as much as possible, and where necessary a diagram will be given to make the description more easily understood.

To make a Ball jump into the Pool Basket after travelling the whole length of the Table.

This trick, which is very puzzling to anyone not acquainted with the *modus operandi*, may be executed in the following manner:—

Place the pool basket at the top end of the table, on its side, with its bottom touching the cushion, the mouth being towards the baulk

end of the table, lay a penny on the cloth about nine inches in front of the basket, as in the illustration marked A. If the ball is placed on the middle spot in baulk, and struck moderately hard just above the centre, it will jump when it touches the coin and go clear into the basket. If it is a clean shot, the ball will go right into the basket without touching the neck, and will not move it, so that the whole of the pool balls may be put into the basket consecutively in this manner. A variation of this trick is that of making a cannon when the two balls to be struck are on another table. It is necessary for the two tables to stand side by side, with about four feet between them. Arrange the two balls on one table in position for an ordinary angle cannon, and place the striking ball on the other table, so that if no obstacle intervened you could get the

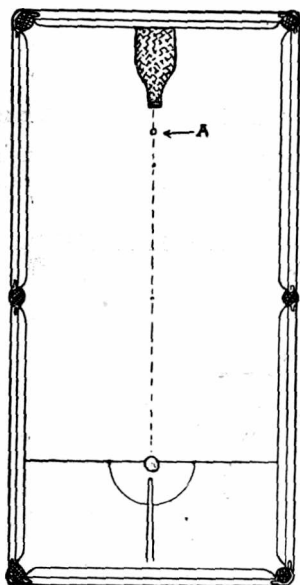


Fig. 1.

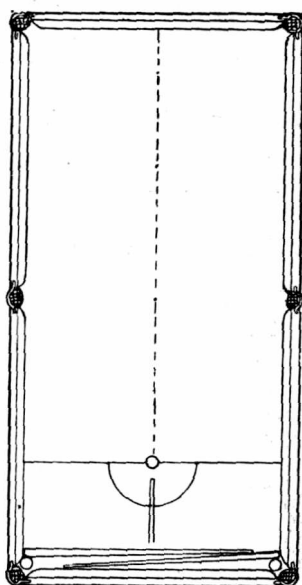


Fig. 2.

cannon; now put a penny on the table about a foot from the cushion in a line with your ball and the ball to be struck first, and on taking the shot the ball will jump right on to the other table and get the cannon. This is a very effective trick, and it will be found that the coin will not divert the direction of the ball if truly struck.

To Pocket Three Balls in Three different Pockets in One Shot.

This sounds rather startling, but it is one of the easiest tricks to accomplish.

Place a ball just on the edge of each pocket of the bottom end of the table, so that a slight touch will make them roll in; then arrange two cues laying parallel with each other, as in the illustration, with the butt ends just touching the balls. Put the other ball in baulk and, striking it just above the centre, play a straight shot up to top cushion and back. On coming in contact with the cues the ball will jump the table, when it is caught in performer's coat pocket, which is held ready; the slight touch given to the cues will knock the other balls into their respective pockets, and the trick is done exactly as stated before taking the shot.

To make a coin describe a Curve and roll into a Pocket.

A half-crown is placed on its edge resting against the cushion about the position where the arrow is pointing in the illustration,

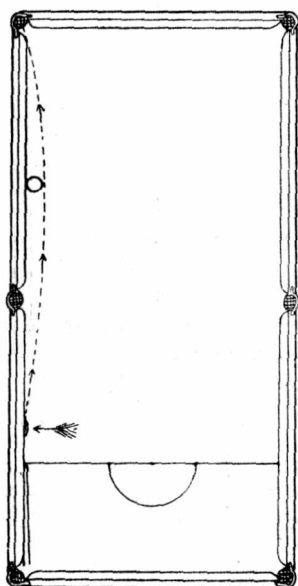


Fig. 3.

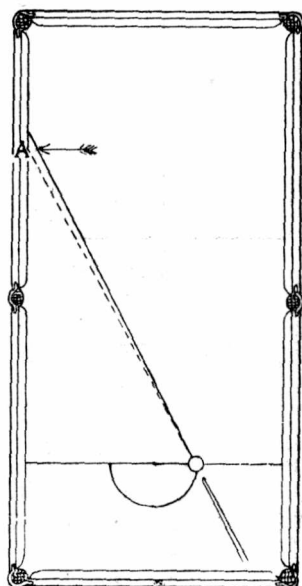


Fig. 4.

and a ball is laid at about the middle of the left-hand top cushion, which it touches. It therefore appears impossible to get the coin

in the top left-hand pocket, as the ball is apparently in the way, but with a little practice it may be done as follows:—The coin, which is to be as nearly upright as possible, must be struck rather high on its edge, or it will not roll, and if played properly it will describe a graceful curve right round the ball into the pocket. If the coin is placed leaning slightly and struck gently, it will roll along the cushion and drop into the middle pocket.

How to knock a small Coin from under the Cushion.

If a halfpenny or a shilling is placed on its edge under the cushion at the spot marked A in the illustration, and the ball played from baulk, it will be found extremely difficult to dislodge the coin, unless you are aware of the secret. If you ask anyone not acquainted with the trick to do it, they will invariably strike the cushion exactly over the coin, as shown by the dotted lines in the diagram, but the ball will always rebound off the cushion, leaving the coin unmoved. The only way to accomplish the trick is to strike the cushion just behind the coin, following the course of the firm lines in diagram. If this is done the middle of the ball which, being the widest part, goes slightly under the cushion, will just catch the edge of the coin and send it spinning.

To go into the Middle Pocket off the Red without moving the White Ball placed on Centre Spot.

This is another shot which is very mystifying until you know how it is done. Place the red on the edge of one of the middle pockets, and one of the white balls in the same position over the other middle pocket; then put the other white ball on the centre spot, so that all the balls are in a straight line. Now the trick is to go in the middle pocket off the red without moving the other white ball and without potting the red. This may be done by striking with your ball the bottom cushion exactly in the centre, when the ball will take the angle as shown in the illustration, and just touching the red, will go into the pocket. No side is required, and to make it more certain, a small chalk mark can be made on the cushion beforehand. This is a very good test to see whether the table and balls are running true, as it is impossible to miss the shot under ordinary conditions.

A Pretty Cannon.

Arrange two cues, as in the illustration, with the butt ends in the jaw of the top left-hand pocket, and place a ball on the top of them so that they will be jammed firmly in the pocket; they will then form a V with the thick ends touching. The ball on the top will then be fixed, and cannot be knocked into the pocket or run

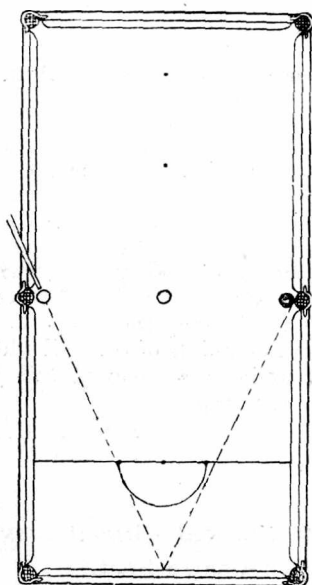


Fig. 5.

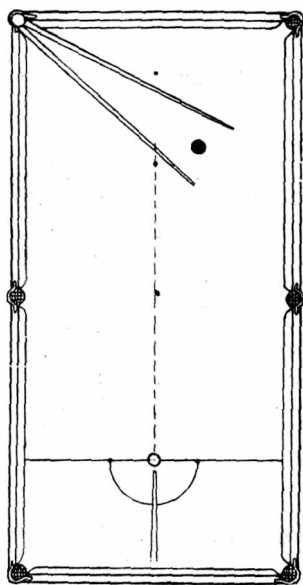


Fig. 6.

down cues. Now place the red ball midway between the open ends. To make the shot, play from baulk, and striking your ball rather high, hit the first cue about 18 inches from its tip, the ball will then jump over the cue, and though not having enough strength to jump the second cue, it will be found that the ball has just sufficient impetus to reach the white ball at the butt end of the cues. After touching this, it will start to run down the incline, and leaving the cues, it will run straight on to the red, getting the cannon.

A New Stroke.

This is a peculiar way of getting a cannon, but it is invariably successful. Place one white ball and the red side by side on the baulk line touching the cushion, the other white ball is touching

the opposite cushion, so that the three balls are now in a straight line. This shot can only be got with a flexible cue, which is held as shown in the illustration, the right hand being in the usual position at the butt. Press the ball tightly against the cushion with the cue at about 24 inches from its tip, then drawing the cue towards you sharply, still pressing the ball, cause the ball to run up the

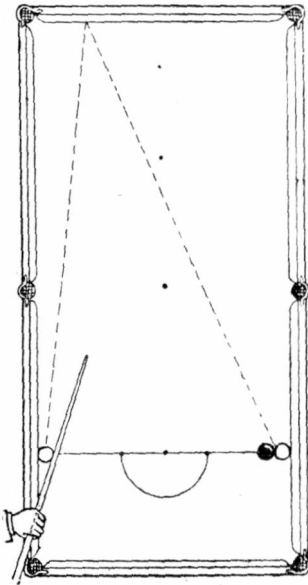


Fig. 7.

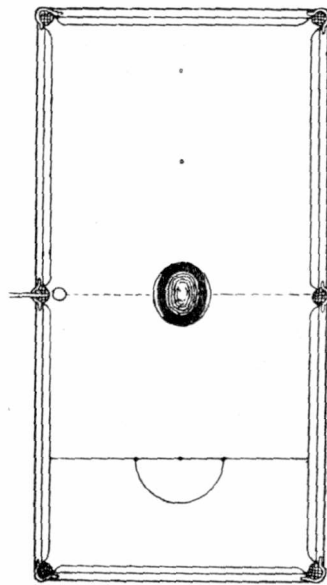


Fig. 8.

table. This movement, which is very difficult to describe, is somewhat on the same principle as squeezing an orange pip from the fingers. The ball will then travel up to the top cushion, and will be found to have a lot of running side on it which will take it at a sharp angle off the cushion and get the cannon.

How to get Ball into the opposite Pocket without touching the Hat with the Ball or lifting it off the Table.

Place a bowler hat, brim downwards, over the centre spot; the narrowest parts of the hat, viz., the sides, are to be facing the middle pockets. A hat with a curly brim, so that a slight touch will make it rock, will be the best for our purpose. The object of the trick is to get your ball into the opposite pocket without touching the hat or lifting it entirely off the table. Aim at the other pocket,

just as though no obstacle intervened, and strike your ball with just sufficient strength to take it into the pocket. Just before it reaches the hat, put the tip of the cue under the brim and lift it up just enough to let the ball go under the hat; then withdraw the cue sharply, and the hat will rock the reverse way, letting the ball out, which goes serenely on its way, and eventually falls into the pocket. If this move has been adroitly executed, the ball will not touch the hat at all.

When practising this, do not make any hurried movements, but just take it quietly and slowly, and you will be surprised at the slick way you can do it.

A Kiss Cannon, using Hand instead of Cue.

Arrange balls in a straight line, two of them touching, and the other touching the cushion at the other end of the table. Now make a movement with the hand towards the cushion, appearing to

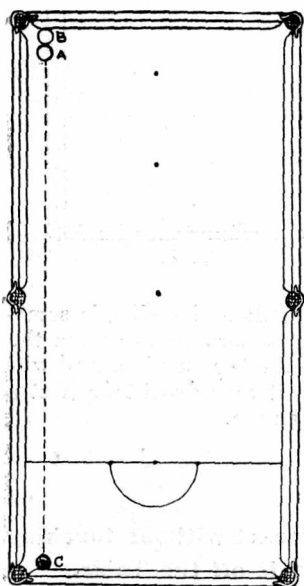


Fig. 9.

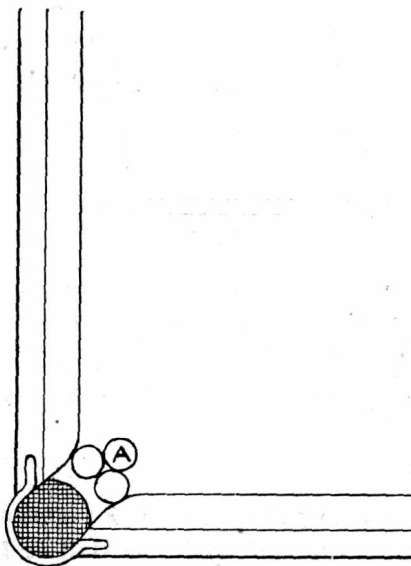


Fig. 10.

strike the top of the ball (marked A) with the flat part of the hand as you pass over it; but you really strike the ball marked B, next to the cushion; this causes A to rebound in a straight line on to C.

This is a very deceptive move, as the onlookers always think you hit the first ball; but if this is done, the ball will only curl round the other one.

Pocket the Ball.

This is somewhat on the same principle as the one last described. Place the balls as in the illustration, pyramid shape, the two balls to be jammed tightly into the jaws of the pocket, and the other ball to be touching them. Make a sharp movement with your hand, striking the ball marked A as though you wanted to force it into the pocket; the three balls will rebound about eighteen inches, and the two will open out and let A come through, which will then come back straight into the pocket. This is a very pretty movement, the hand just catching the ball as it passes over, imparts a tremendous amount of pull back side, which causes the ball to come back with incredible speed directly it has an opportunity, through the other balls opening out.

The Match that cannot be Knocked Down.

This is a very curious trick, and it will give rise to much amusement, as it is apparently so easy to do.

First, stand a match on the table—this may be done by slitting the end a little way up and spreading out, so as to form a small tripod arrangement, or by cutting a slit in a piece of card and placing the end of the match inside the slit; the card will then lay flat on the table. But both these methods must be on a very small scale, as the object is simply to make the match stand upright. Now place three balls round the match, each one touching the other. The match is then standing up in the small space left between the centre of the balls, but is not touched by any one of them. (In the illustration the match cannot be seen, owing to the small size of the drawing). You then invite anyone to try and knock the match down by placing their ball about two feet away from the three. They are at liberty to try from any direction outside the two-foot radius.

Strange to say, however hard the balls are struck, the match still remains upright; the reason being, that owing to the position of the balls, they kiss each other away from the centre. The shot, however, may be done by using a little thought. Those who try it for the first time think that they have only to hit the balls hard, and it is sure to go over; but the harder they strike, the firmer the match seems to remain.

One way is to make your ball jump on top of the others; but this is very difficult to judge, and I should not advise any but professionals to attempt it, owing to the danger of cutting the cloth. The

other way is to put your ball opposite one of the corners of the triangle and play a run through shot. Strike your ball well above

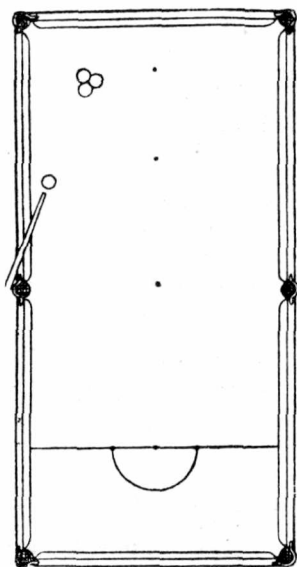


Fig. 11.

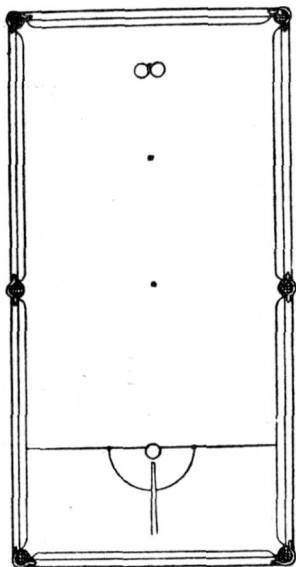


Fig. 12.

the centre fairly hard ; when it comes in contact with the first ball, it will rebound from the other two, but your ball following on behind will push it forward again, and the match will go over.

Another Method.

The next trick (Fig. 12) is on the same principle, but is executed in a different manner.

Stand a match on the red spot and place two balls, touching each other, in front of it. The trick is to play from baulk with another ball, and knock down the match ; it not being permissible to play off the cushion.

This is not very easy to do, but it may be accomplished by running through one of the balls with a lot of side on ; right side for the left-hand ball, left side for right-hand ball.

A Difficult Cannon.

Place two balls touching each other tight up against the top cushion, and playing from baulk, try to get the cannon. This is very difficult to do, and you may safely wager against anyone doing it six times in succession. Unless your ball strikes both the others at exactly the same time, it will be kissed away; and with moderate players this happens quite as frequently as the cannon is scored.

Hit the Red First.

Place two balls tight up against the top cushion, touchig each other, and then place the red ball on top of them, resting partly on each ball and partly on the cushion. If the red ball shows a tendency to slip off, rub some chalk into the palm of your hand, and then rub the ball in it; this makes it grip the other balls tightly.

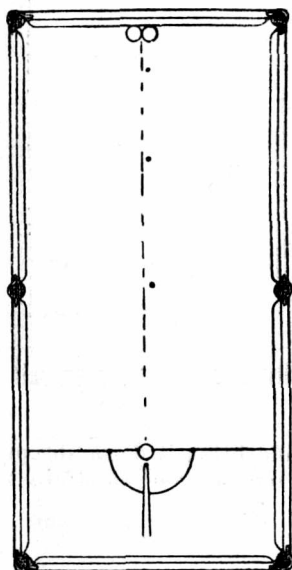


Fig. 13.

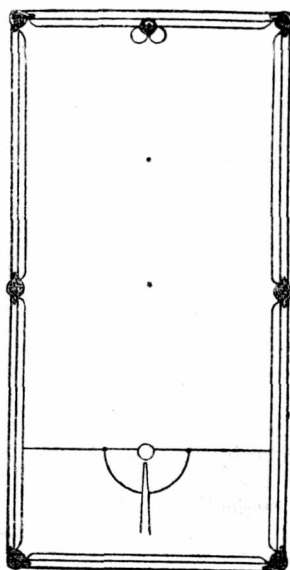


Fig. 14.

The object of the shot is to hit the red ball without touching the other two. This is easy to accomplish if the following conditions are adhered to:—

Play from baulk a gentle shot, aiming exactly between the two balls at top end of table. When your ball is about half way on its journey, give the table a shake by thumping it with your hand, or

giving it a push with your body; this will dislodge the red ball, which will roll over the other two, and knocking them away on either side, will roll on and meet your ball.

To Pocket two Balls, one in each middle Pocket, in one Shot.

Place two balls touching each other in the middle of the table, in a line with the middle pockets; now to pocket each of these balls in the corresponding middle pockets in one shot, take hold of

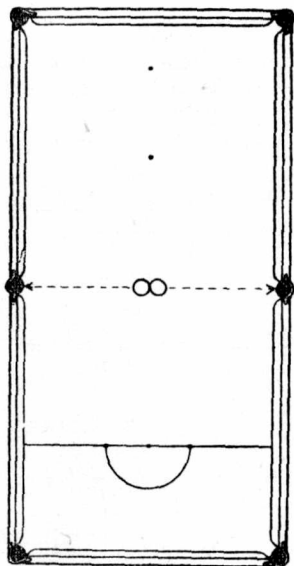


Fig. 15.

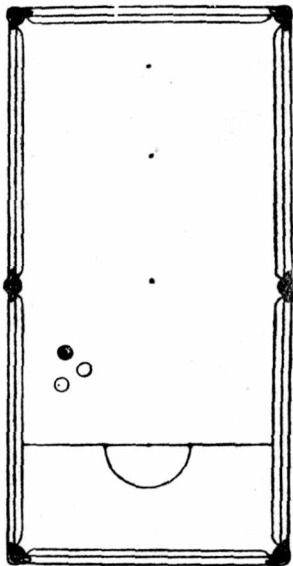


Fig. 16.

your cue by the butt in one hand, and bring it down sharply between the two balls; they will then separate and go straight into their respective pockets.

To get a Cannon without touching the Balls.

Arrange the balls as in the illustration, in a position for an easy nursery cannon, playing with the spot white, then say you will get the cannon without touching your ball either with hand or cue, or by blowing it along. This may be done by inserting a pin in the cloth, just behind the spot ball, and lifting up the cloth, thereby causing the ball to roll on to the others. This will not injure the cloth to any appreciable extent.

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