



The State Library of Victoria
"ALMA CONJURING COLLECTION"

BY
DE VEGA.

FOREWORD.

"Patterettes" is not really a book of Patter. Personally I do not believe in ready-made Patter; which is like ready-made clothing - must be altered to suit the individual. "Patterettes" is rather a collection of snappy little gags that may be added to your patter at your discretion. I do not claim originality for what is to follow: some are original but many are not. They are taken from my "gag books" in which I have collected many notes of little sayings, jokes, etc. which I have made suitable for patter in connection with conjuring and the allied arts.

I would also like to thank my good friends Chris Van Bern; Charles Dacre, and Lawrence Glen for the valuable items they have sent me for this booklet.

Yours fraternally,

De Vega

CONCERNING PATTTER.

Do not be ashamed to learn your patter "Parrot fashion" as the saying is; few performers are gifted with a ready flow of conversation and a genial wit, but patter must not be laboriously delivered but must appear spontaneous. If you have the groundwork of your patter thoroughly memorized your mind will be free to take any opportunity to add "local color" that may arise.

Don't gag about Mothers-in-Law; the poor fellow in front may have one; and remember he came to forget his troubles.

Avoid saying "And now", "And here we have", etc.

Don't say "my next swindle": swindlers are not nice people to know.

Don't take the "offensive" in talking to your audience. I remember hearing a well-known performer say to a man in the stalls who was looking at his programme, "Hope you have spotted a winner". The man promptly replied, "No! I'm trying to spot a conjuror."

Don't say "my next experiment". It should be past the experimental stage.

Don't say "this trick is awfully simple". It belittles your endeavours and then it may be simply awful.

Remember a Theatre or Concert hall is not the place to indulge in politics.

Don't command any one to come up and assist you - you look foolish if they sit still.

Don't load your patter with French and Latin phrases; people are so well educated nowadays.

Don't talk your audience to death. They came to see you perform.



PATTERETTES

The following "Patter-ettes" which apply to coin tricks can be introduced into the patter as the performer fancies; many apply to such effects as the Miser's Dream; others will serve to cover a sleight or help raise a laugh during a dull moment. For example if you are using say - the "Money Tray". Just before you pour the coins from the tray, you may say: "Perhaps you are wondering how I came into possession of so much money; the fact is, I was a cashier - at the Police Station - yes, counting the coppers". As you say so you 'do the needful'. The remark causes a titter and effectively covers any slight awkwardness of an insufficiently rehearsed move.

"A Conjuror's cash is nearly always invisible."

"If any gentleman begins to feel dishonest, will he kindly ask his neighbour to hold him down."

"The faster a man is the more trouble he has to keep up with his expenses."

"My Aunt refuses to give me any more money - of course, I can always appeal to my Uncle."

"It's a good thing to give credit where credit is due - but it's better to be paid in cash."

"I came across a coin dated 1933 - evidently someone forging ahead."

"Some people sing for money - others seem to do it for spite."

"The best thing to feather a nest with is cash down."

"Conjurers are born not paid."

"I always admire a good loser - especially when I have won his money".

"This paper money is very easy to handle - the most difficult part is to get sufficient of it."

"The man with money to burn usually meets his match."

"God help those who help themselves, especially when the policeman gets them."

"It is easy to make an Englishman part with his money; but an Aberdonian can always hold his own."

"Money, they say, is filthy lucre - yet how many people wallow in it."

"They say every conjurer has his price - yet some give themselves away".

"They say dark haired men are the most successful gamblers, but I thought it was only the light headed ones".

"I knew a man who was very generous with tips - on the racecourse."

"Fancy doing this in your sleep - wouldn't it be awful to wake up."

"In Aberdeen I usually sell instructions for doing this trick." (The Miser's dream).

"I once gave an Aberdonian a special lesson in this trick - he died of exhaustion." (The Miser's Dream).

"Aberdonians generally are a good race of people. They pray on their knees on Sundays - and on weekdays they prey on their neighbours."

A very laughable interlude. It is also one to cure the boy that knows it all. PROPS. 2 paper bags. 2 small eggs. Cod pistol. Do a few sleights with one egg, then ask the boy to hold an egg between his teeth. Inflate a bag, and give to him to hold, also the cod pistol. Place him in the centre of the stage, holding the bag up in the air, at arms length, and the pistol, pointing to the floor. Shew him your empty bag. Inflate and screw end up. Stand at the side of boy, slightly behind, so that he cannot see you. "I am about to make the egg, that this young gentleman is holding between his teeth, pass into this empty bag I am holding. Now my boy, I want you to keep one eye on the bag, one on the pistol and the other on the egg. GO... shout this word as loud as possible, at the same time bursting your bag. Unless the lad is a super lad, the finale will be one loud long laugh.

C A R D T R I C K S.

ON TAKING A CARD:- "Thats the way, sir! You take things quite naturally."

"Thank you madam, its really quite charming to see a lady make up her mind so quickly."

"Will you shuffle the pack please; its such a little thing to

"Your card is a blank one: it is the -- (show it). You are positive that is your card. I only ask because the last time I asked a gentleman that he saw 'red'." (As you say so you change it to a red card.)

"A friend of mine - an Aberdonian - when playing cards would win one day and lose the next. He played every other day".

"Is this your card, sir? Yes! Why I thought it was mine."

"Your card was a cherry colour, sir? No! Black was it, well there are black cherries."

"This pack of cards, I cherish very much, it was once the property of a famous Millionaire - Mr. Woolworth."

GLASSES and LIQUIDS.

"Yos, I know its rather small still its all a matter of taste, or rather I should say thirst."

"You will notice this glass has a foot to it. That is so that it will not be arrested for being without visible means of support."

"Glasses have made a "red mark" on many a man's nose."

"Slack wives are a menace to domestic bliss - so are "tight" husbands."

"All through the Summer I have been drinking in the sun at (favourite coast resort) and all through the winter I will be drinking in the Black Bull".

"Drink/

"Drink often drives a man mad - especially when they can't get it."

"I like doing a trick with a glass - one can put so much "spirit" into it."

"Bad English will ruin many a man's speech, so will bad "Scotch".

"The tighter you are the more you see".

"Its hard to take to water when a country goes dry."

"Here's to the ladies - God dress them."

"They say drinking is one of my failings - they are wrong; its one of my successes, its the best thing I do."

"A woman is happy before a glass - and a man after one - or two."

"There is a serious water shortage in the Highlands - most of the whisky comes from there."

"I only knew one man who could do a really good trick with water - he was a milkman".

"I must be very careful with this trick. I've seen a glass of wine disappear under my nose."

For WINE and WATER:- "When doing this trick in New York, last night, one of the Prohibition Officers came up and said 'Say you mustn't use wine on this stage. Don't you know this is a dry country'. I said I know its dry when I write to my wife, only yesterday, and had to pin the stamp on. Some say shun strong drink - ridiculous - you can get as drunk on water as you can on land."

And here we have the --- said the handsome young conjurer as he smilingly acknowledged the applause.

I will do this trick once more for the benefit of those who have just returned from the bar.

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PISTOLS.

"I shall now fire the pistol at the bag you are holding without hurting you - very much."

SPECIAL MUSIC.

(to Orchestra, after special music has been asked for)
"Evidently you boys have never met before, better get acquainted."

EGGS.

"The Shopman sold me these eggs as Empire Eggs. He must have meant the Roman Empire."

"This egg is a perfectly fresh one, you can see the number on it - 1-9-7; that hen must have been laying overtime."

"I asked you to feel the egg; I didn't say squeeze it!"

"You can show this trick to mother - she will be delighted".

"My wife is an adept at poaching eggs - I prefer to poach salmon".

"Many an egg looks young - but its beauty is only shell deep."

COD OPENING SPEECH.

Ladies and Gentlemen, When I came on the stage this evening, I made up my mind that I would not say "Ladies and Gentlemen", Ladies and Gentlemen, because everyone that comes on the stage as a rule start their performance by saying, "Ladies and Gentlemen, and as I think it very old fashioned and out of date, I will NOT start my performance by saying "Ladies and Gentlemen".

Deliver this speech in a very pompous manner.

A SURE FIRE LAUGH GETTER.

During your act, tell a short story that has no meaning at all. Wait for the laugh which, of course, does not come. Look at the audience in astonishment. Walk slowly to the table, and pick up a small slate and a piece of chalk. "A little experiment in Thought Reading. Will any lady or gentleman give me a number between 1 and 9. (Someone is sure to call a number out). "Thank you, sir, I don't really want it, I was only wondering if any one was really listening to me."

HANDKERCHIEFS.

"You will observe this handkerchief is in two parts - the front part and the back part"(show both sides).

"Sometimes when I am doing this trick the handkerchief changes colours - of course it all depends upon the state of my hands."

"Could I borrow a ladies handkerchief for a few moments - its such a little thing to ask."

"The Border you will observe runs all round the edge - some Borders run all over."

"Fashions are getting more and more daring - even the colours are guaranteed fast nowadays."

"This must be shot silk - I see a hole in it."

I notice your watch was not very new when you purchased it. I see its "second-hand".

I am going to place this watch in the bag - merely because I can't place the bag in the watch - at least I don't think so (shake rattle fake) though it does seem as if a little bit of packing would do it no harm. Even although this bagging experiment may appeal to you, be careful how and when you do it. I bag a watch and get paid for it. You might get six months for it.

Your watch must be very bashful, sir - I see it has both its hands before its face.

(borrowing a watch). "I see quite a number of chains; isn't there a watch on even one of them".

"This is a Wonder Watch - every time you look at it it makes you wonder what time it is."

"If time flies, who leaves the footprints on the sands of time".

"Your watch was going sir, - yes, well it won't be long before its gone".

"I admit I am a bit careless with this trick on a Monday night".

"You must have obtained this watch on the Hire-purchase system. I see its on Tick".

FOR THE TAMBORINE TRICK.

"Flowers are pretty; toffee is sweet;
But a bursted drum is hard to beat."

SILENCERS.

"I knew you were in but I didn't know where you were!"
(You will find the above will effectively silence the noisy one)

"My friend in front reminds me of the sea - impossible to "dry up".

MISCELLANEOUS GAGS.

"I'm glad to see you look up; it shows you are interested in the trick".

"Will all the married ladies please keep the eyes on the handkerchief (or whatever the article is). The men will naturally keep their eye on the glass - and all the single young ladies keep their eye on me."

"Excellent pianist our friend here, always plays from ear. You know some pianists play from music, some from ear - and some from spite."

"Speaking of music, do you know what an organ is. I'll tell you - a piano with knobs on."

"Banana skins are useful - they make splendid slippers"

"Some girls are so nervous they even jump at a proposal."

"Its the 'black sheep' that usually paints the town red".

"A little widow is a dangerous thing."

"Some men hang together, for fear they might hang separately."

(To Assistant) "Thank: you, sir; you were just made for this trick"

"A gentleman at the back of the hall is using his opera glasses trying to see that joke".

"Do you mind wrapping it up in this handkerchief; after all you may not be so honest as you appear."

"I was greatly disappointed in Church on Sunday - woke up and thought the parson said "winners".

"A man stops believing in dreams after marrying one."

"He married the second time; triumph of hope over experience."

"Don't be afraid of the audience. They are quite tame tonight - although I have seen them go wild over me."

"I used to ask for a lady in this trick, but there was such a rush I had to stop it."

"Every time I do this trick it hurts me - but they say women bear pain better than men. Any shoemaker will tell you that."

"A friend of mine who had two brothers said one worked for a living - and the other was a conjurer like myself."

A monologue is a conversation with a young lady.

"So and So - who has just appeared - plays the piano entirely by ear - but that's nothing, I have a friend who fiddles with his moustache."

"I always do an hour's hard work before breakfast - trying to get a

"I once heard of a crook who started a successful business - he opened a shop."

"I am a man of few words, but my hands will work overtime."

"Not long ago my negro assistant was kicked on the head by a horse - and the horse is still limping."

"America's National motto is - Abandon all "hops" all ye who enter here."

"Some women wear well - others don't wear much."

"Speaking of pencils, men have a powerful weapon in the ballot pencil - and women in the eyebrow pencil."

"The average conjurer has a very hard life of it. If he goes out to his club, his wife plays the martyr - and if he stays at home she plays the piano."

"Conjurers have many secrets; but do you know women can keep a secret just as well as any conjurer - but it takes more of them to do it."

(Lighting candle) "I once knew an absent minded professor who struck his wife and kissed the match."

"And here we have the --- said the handsome young conjurer as he smilingly acknowledged the applause."

FOR THE VENTRILOQUIST.

Performer: "I say you are a nuisance"
 Figure: So does father, only he specifies the kind of
 nuisance I am.

Performer: I'm sorry to hear your father is ill.
 Figure: (sobbing) Yes, and he is getting worse every day.
 Performer: I'm sorry to hear that. Does he take his medicine
 religiously.
 Figure: Oh, no gov'nor, he swears like 'ell every dose he
 takes.

Performer: Drops photo.
 Figure: What was that you dropped Gov'nor.
 Performer: (Picking it up). That is a photo of my sweetheart
 and her dog.
 Figure: What a lovely dog.

Performer: If you had ^{two}~~three~~ potatoes and wished to divide
 them among three persons what would you do?
 Figure: Mash them.

Performer: As a compliment I sent one of my songs to a dear
 friend of mine.
 Figure: Did he return the compliment.

Performer: I had the freedom of the city conferred on me last
 week.
 Figure: Was your wife on holiday.

Performer: Yes, I was very late in getting home last night and
 as a punishment my wife refused to speak to me.
 Figure: That sounds more like a reward.

Performer: My fiancée is a girl in a thousand.
 Figure: I'm looking for a girl with a thousand.

Performer: An idea flashed through my head.
 Figure: There was nothing to stop it.

Performer: I write to my wife every day while I am on tour.
 Figure: Yes, most women enjoy reading fiction.

Performer: Your brother called me an ass.
Figure: He should know better than judge you by your looks.

Performer: I gave a song recital the other night and held my audience for two hours.
Figure: Did you put it back in the cradle after that.

Performer: Can you tell me what happened after Alexander the Great died.
Figure: Yes he was buried.

The following six gags are by Laverance Glen, the renowned vaudeville ventriloquist.

Vent: How can you expect to get on if you don't think.
Figure: What is your head for.
Figure: To keep me hat on.
Vent: But what have you got IN your head?
Figure: A cold.
Vent: You should take some Tincture of Quinine.
Figure: No fear.
Vent: Why not?
Figure: I took some currants yesterday, and got a good hiding.

Vent: What was the first thing King George did when he came to the throne?
Figure: He sat on it.
Vent: You didn't learn that at school.
Figure: No, but I'll bet a quid I'm right.

Vent: What was the first thing that struck you when you went to school?
Figure: The teacher's cane.
Vent: I can quite imagine that.
Figure: There was no imagination about it.

Vent: If I brought the tiniest baby here, it would have more sense, it could do anything that you could do.
Figure: Righto', get a kid to come up and do this (turns head right round twice).

Vent: Did you have lessons in elocution today?
Figure: No, sir.
Vent: What did you have then?
Figure: I had "tummy" ache.
Vent: Where did you have that - in school?
Figure: No - in me tummy.

Vent: Is your father in the hotel line?
 Figure: Yes, in the queue, waiting for 'em to open.
 Vent: I mean what is his job.
 Figure: He's got a very hard job.
 Vent: That is it?
 Figure: Getting the landlord to trust him.

"Although carpets are gold by the yard; its usually the feet that wear them."

"This trick was shown to me by a Chinese Magician, whose name was Hung Won. His brother was also a very good conjurer, he was Hung Too".

When you have evolved a new problem and commence to write your patter around it, or even writing out new patter for an old effect, I believe in writing out the straight tale first, then going over it and marking the weak points and strengthening them, then going over it once more and noting where it can do with a gag or joke to break the monotony so to speak. A good humorous line said in the right manner at the proper time will get a better laugh than a whole string of quick-fire meaningless gags. On the British Stage, David Devant was an idealist so far as patter was concerned, as he was on the Technical side of Magic. To give an example; when working the "Eggs from Hat" his phrase "This hat is felt" was said in such a way that even the dullest of the Spectators could not fail to see the point.

Look out for "SENSATIONAL SECRETS" ready about February 1930.

