

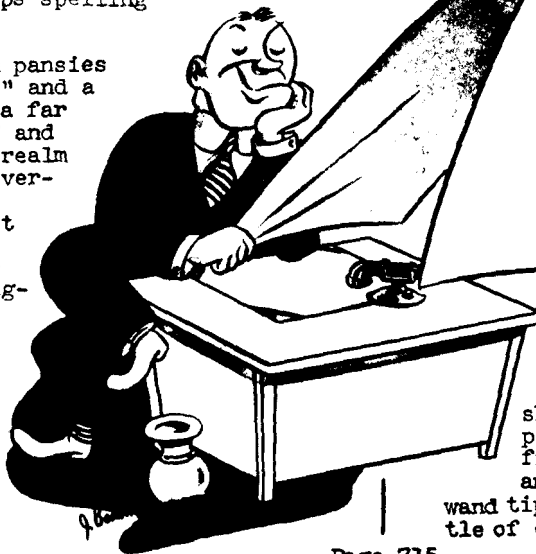


New Year Ramble

The editor of this less than erudite sheet looked us over with more than a bloodshot eye when we returned from a Thanksgiving-Christmas-New Year's survey of our personal first line defenses against old age and a threatening pile of worn out typewriter ribbons. He depends upon our fancies for finding fairly decent material for him to cut and slash into workable wizardry.

We had let the fellow down, and through him, he made it all too clear, we had let the readers down. Somewhere in a well hidden recess of our mind there lays a thought we had during our absence from the chains of conjuration. It was an honest opinion that during such a festive and jovial period The Jinx would not be missed. Undoubtedly the time of the year helped make us feel that we could "catch up" with things very easily. The wrongness of that now has us in the position of the man being tortured by the dripping of water onto his head. Instead of water, though, it's the click of keys as we hunt and punch that keeps spelling out "Wise guy!"

It's a long way from pansies and petunias to a "pass" and a "peek." Likewise it is a far cry from "double-lifts" and "billet switches" to a realm of cavalier carpenters versus pernicious plumbers versus us. Be that as it may The Jinx's future farm-in-the-making home should insure a more vigorous pair of cats on this page and allow the production of many ideas which time and a bottleneck (You don't mean me, big boy! Ed.) of too little assistance has kept from getting into print. With that much out of our fur



perhaps we can be excused for saving just once more, before burying it until the next yule log burns, that admonition of old man Omar in his nautical poem, "The Ruby Yacht," to wit:

"Ah, fill the Cup - what Boots it to repeat
How time is slipping underneath our feet:
Unborn To-morrow and dead Yesterday,
Why fret about them if to-day be sweet?"

The mere looking at of the mail, literature, and bills that piled up gave us a leval and otherwise unstimulated case of jitters. And so, with a sympathy-provoking glance at ye editor, we dug out that well worn notebook and have placed it reverently to our right. We can ask only that the reader sit back and ramble over this issue, considering us for the time being

a sort of battle conscious reporter just returned from a fight for freedom, and using this means to get once more into the swing of sorcery.

Just to show you anything can happen in this week's array of 5000 words we'll

tell you the little known fact that the old master conjurors didn't pick and cherish their wands without reason. The length of a magician's wonder-stick should be equal to the distance from the performer's elbow to the tip of his first finger, measured inside the arm, wrist, and hand. Close up workers used to cover wand tips with soft leather to deaden the rattle of coins and other palmed objects on wood.

A simple idea that seemed to make quite an impression in some remote spot when it was done by one of those magus knights-of-the-road happened when a borrowed watch was about to be returned after a bit of manipulation. A slight but sharp snap was heard and the watch crystal seen to be cracked. After a bit of chinookery the accidental damage was magically repaired. The glass of the watch was prepared by wetting it and then laying across it a hair. The similitude to a crack is very good by artificial light. We don't know exactly how that person made his moves but we succeeded in duplicating the effect by putting a hair on a paper napkin. The borrowed timepiece was used for a counting trick and its face easily moistened during that time as we were constantly sipping from a glass of water. When laid upon the napkin for a second the hair was picked up perfectly. We didn't try to make a "click" surreptitiously. We just picked up the watch, snapped our finger against the face while saying, "You can't do that with every watch, you know." Then we looked down quickly, let the race be seen, and said quickly, "Oh, I'm sorry. I would have to do something like that at a time like this."

This same person had another cute stunt he was using at bars where he would get someone interested and say that he'd bet a drink he could outguess them twice out of three times on an even money bet. Asking for a penny he'd take it in one hand and put both behind his back for a second. Bringing them forward closed into fists he ask quickly, "Where's the penny now?" The first time he'd win. The second time he'd lose. The last time he'd always win. It simply was a case of having a penny in his left hand at the start. No one knew what was going to happen until after a penny was put into his outstretched right hand and both hands put out of sight. Whichever hand the chump indicated could lose for him BECAUSE THE SHARPSHOOTER WOULD IMMEDIATELY OPEN THE OTHER HAND AND SHOW THE PENNY THERE. Without a moment's hesitation both hands would go behind the back and he'd ponder. In front again, and with a hand pointed to, he'd snort in disgust, "You got me", and open THAT hand. Quickly the hands would go out of sight and he'd apparently worry for a second. On the last try he'd repeat the first manuevre, opening the hand NOT indicated, laugh loudly, toss the penny on the bar, and say, "Bartender, my friend here will put nine more with that and I'll have the beer." I asked him later why he did it three times instead of once and he earned another beer by acquainting me with some low down psychology. That's when he "spilled" the secret of the two coins, thinking we knew it, whereas we had been completely stymied by his "routine" and "savoir faire". He said that it was difficult to get anyone to bet on another man's game when one-time even-money bets were offered. He'd found that trying to get two out of three on an even money proposition appealed better, like \$4.98 reads cheaper than \$5.00. He knew the value of letting the other fellow win the second time, for it not alone made things appear on the level, but it clinched things by opening the hand actually pointed at instead of always showing the other. And he had carefully (after getting caught a few times) figured out his anti-climax bartender sentence to prevent any check-up. His confidence and assurance was magnificent. I also admired his parting remark to me, "What the hell, it's fair enough. It's an even money bet, ain't it? He's got one penny, and I've got one penny."

As many of us know only too well, the Copyright Act gives little or no protection to magical material and the Patent Laws are about as effective as a silk shirt in a snowstorm. We

find a notation here that Mr. Albert Schafer evidently devised an ingenious scheme to combat the "brain thieves" and "routined act robbers. The act is written up in book-form, the patter is part of the dialogue of the story, and the properties and their uses are mentioned in the course of the narrative. On the title page appears the mystic words, "All dramatic rights of the story strictly reserved." A few cheaply printed copies are made and the Laws of Copyright observed. Anyone who then proceeds to steal the act in toto or salient part is open to court action where one can get more stringent results and a greater willingness to apply the rod than from the usual run-around and non-effective efforts of magical societies. It just occurs to us that, in view of the number of present day fiction writers who relate the adventures of magicians, there might be a chance of having one's routine and setting incorporated in one of their stories. It wouldn't be necessary to expose methods if an exact performance were described with, possibly, a replica of a program included. We'd like to learn more about this. It seems as though there's a basic bit of relief against copyists here, and, as far as we know, it is attacking the age old problem of professional magi from a new approach.

Here's a card-reading effect that has been holding down a notebook page for years. I must have figured it would fit in with some routine one day. The performer shows a new deck and has the seal checked. The cards are removed and well shuffled by anyone who then reinserts them into the case. Holding the cased cards at arm's length the performer names one after the other, removing that card from the case facing the audience. This could be handled in such a way as to make it quite showy and impressive. The seal need not be removed although most of the revenue stamps easily peel off the enameled card boxes. In the lower left corner of the front (side opposite that to which flap is attached) cut a hole with a razor blade to let the pip corner of a card inside look out. Then



"Sword-swallower or no sword-swallower— you gotta quit nibbling between meals!"

get a finger "shiner" button. Gambling supply houses carry them in stock and some magical dealers have them. I got mine from Dr. E.G. Ervin who gets a lot of use from an excellent "shiner" convexed and finished so well that it is only a quarter-inch in diameter. Put it on the inside of the right forefinger. Hold the deck with the left thumb over the hole while the seal is checked. Then break the stamp and dump the cards out into a spectator's hands, saying, "Have you them all?" and letting him see that it is so. After the mixing by several people, hold the case while the cards are replaced face down. Step back to the front and remark, "Perhaps some of you think I saw by manner or chance the first card." Remove it with the right hand using second finger and thumb. Look at it. "The --- of ---." Toss it away. "However, it would have been difficult if not impossible for me to have seen the next card, but I feel that it is the --- of ---." During your talk your right hand comes up to the lower corner of the case grasping it between second finger and thumb while the right first finger naturally comes to a position where the pip of the next card in case is very plainly revealed. It is removed. "And it would be impossible for me to know the position of any other cards except for my peculiar talent. That which is called, 'The mind's eye.'" And from that point you are on your own. The hole in the case is old, The "shiner" is not new. The combination, though, sort of intrigues.

We've never had any success worth mentioning with puzzles, contests, etc. Six years ago we tried to start a "you send an effect" and "we'll find a method" department but it was so close to being a stillborn idea that we shuddered away from it. Then we sold ourselves on "card squiggles" with a dignified list of judges and a not valueless set of prizes. The deadline is April 19, 1941 at high noon for your idea(s) or sketch(es) showing how the pips of any card in a pack can be made use of in a picture drawn on the face of that pasteboard. So far the returns have just dawdled along. Is it a scarcity of ideas, pure procrastination, or just a plain lack of interest? We wanted to get enough of a variety to complete a deck and then add them to an issue printed on one side of the paper only so they could be a nice den exhibit. Methinks, though, I'll probably finish by printing the winning squiggles, take care of the awards, and then forget the whole thing.

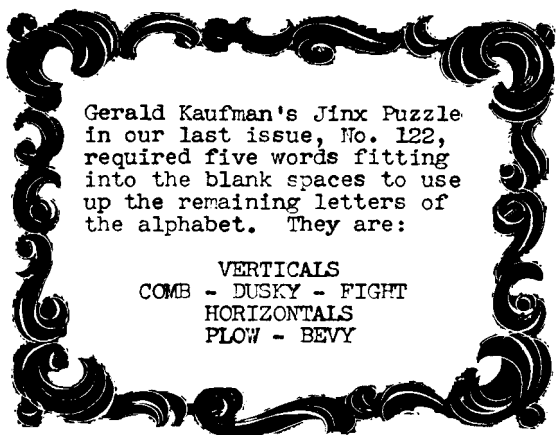
Max Holden has informed us that, due to Jinx delinquency over the past few weeks, a rumor is going around about The Sphinx now trying to buy US out. That this is not true should be evident to everybody on The Sphinx subscription list. Mr. Mulholland has worked too long and too hard to build the oldest magical journal from its Wilsonian appearance and policy into a publication which can be shown without shame to editors and publishers of this country's best looking magazines. As editor of a reputable trade monthly of such obvious class John is able to enter and sojourn within a circle where he can promote magic to higher and higher pinnacles. It is on such a plane that Mr. Mulholland finds solace for any lack of a controlling stockholder's profit. We factually know that he accepts no salary from the corporation for his position as editor.

And so, while the gentleman may have considered us as a desk editor to his monument of magic, we are certain it could only have been for our personal accomplishments and not in any remote manner connected with The Jinx. The sheet is a separate entity from us and cannot be sold, bought, or bartered. When we close up the typewriter for the last time, the paper, and all

for which it may stand in magic, will be tossed into the air like a bride's bouquet. If anyone mentions that aforesaid rumor to you, you or you, just say that it is a crass canard.

We've heard of cats living 17 years. Perhaps they can and do live longer. Even so that gives us a bit better than ten years to go without seeming extremely abnormal. Do you remember, on issue No. 65, when we first discovered, on the masthead, our cats had had kittens? The ultimate salvation of The Jinx then seems to be upon the shanks of the twin boy kitties. Both are doing well (They're bigger than their mother now! Ed.) and learning how mama and papa conduct themselves with a sense of humor, decorum, ethics, and values, even if on a low grade of paper.

This sounded like a swell little "aside" trick when told me but at the writing I see a pretty little fault, or chance for one. The performer puts a cigarette in mouth or has a candle needing a light. Picking up a penny (drawer) match box he pushes out the inside container and removes a match. He lights the cigarette or candle. Closing the box he gives it a finger snap, and, upon reopening it, takes from within a silk handkerchief. The box, complete, is tossed into the audience. The rest of a routine follows. The preparation consists of glueing half matches upon a piece of cardboard which fits loosely into the drawer as to width and is half as long as the drawer. A bit of black sateen of a size as to fit very loosely within the drawer of the match box is glued onto the underside of the match fake at one end. To set up, put the "gimmick" into the drawer. Put the drawer into the box half way, the match heads first. Lift up the loose (half) end of the sateen and poke, starting at one corner, a silk handkerchief into the drawer underneath the entire fake. Close the drawer. Mark the front and back on top of the cover. Lastly push the drawer a quarter-inch out at the front and insert one match with its head in the same direction as those glued onto the fake. Close the box. To present: pick up the box and push it half way out at the front end. Matches are seen apparently filling the inside. Remove one - THE one. Light and use it as the occasion demands. Close the box, snap it with the fingers several times. Now push the drawer out again, BUT from the other end. The box has been turned around. Take the bit of black sateen together with the end of the silk underneath and pull all from the drawer. The left hand tosses the unprepared match box into the crowd while the right fingers crumple up the fake match gimmick behind the silk and get away with it in any meritorious fashion. Outside of the gimmick problem at the finish the trick is real sweet for close up gatherings. It is hidden when the silk is pro-



Gerald Kaufman's Jinx Puzzle in our last issue, No. 122, required five words fitting into the blank spaces to use up the remaining letters of the alphabet. They are:

VERTICALS
 COMB - DUSKY - FIGHT
 HORIZONTALS
 PLOW - BEVY

EDITRIVIA

duced, for it's behind, but from then on it is up to each individual's prowess.

In the U.S.A. today there exists a feud between an association (ASCAP) of music composers and publishers and another association (BMI) of broadcasting company sponsored independents in the song writing field. At this writing the latter group has the edge on the "air" while the former has the edge on music of popular fancy. Herbert Hood, for long an associate of N.Y. music publishers, (and longer a silent associate of our best masters of subtlety) is on the side of ASCAP. Without taking a part we like his argument mentioning magic. Mr. Hood says that the best composers are with ASCAP and listening to music by outsiders (BMI) is like watching an imitator of Cardini and other approved and accepted artists. You may have to watch the imitation, and, to a certain extent, he says, you will be entertained. However, he finishes, you will know that there is someone else who can do the same thing but give it that unknown something which keeps him always the superior. We aren't for ASCAP in many ways, but we approve heartily regarding magic because it is so true.

Dante continues on his way through our eastern states, garnering press space on and off stage often because of his ability, innumerable times because of his press agent's omnipotence in vulnerable territory, and sometime's at the expense of his public relation's counsel.

Dante Socks P.A., Who 'Slighted' Lead Femme, and Thus Hangs a Court Story

Philadelphia, Dec. 31. Samuel Friedman, press agent for the 'Sim-Sala-Bim' show, yesterday (Monday) swore out a warrant for Dante, the magician, charging the Danish sleight-of-hand artist with socking him in the jaw in the lobby of the Ritz-Carlton hotel here. Friedman said the one-sided battle happened on Friday night (27) and started when Dante accused the flock of 'sighting' Moi-Yo Miller, leading femme in the company, in his publicity.

According to Friedman, Dante accosted him in the Ritz lobby as he was posting a couple of letters and said, 'Well, Friedman, I see you got your notice' (earlier, Friedman had received his two weeks' notice from Rombat Van Reemsdyke, company manager). 'Now I'm going to make sure you're getting it,' said Dante, and with this let loose with a right hook to Friedman's jaw, the fack said.

'I didn't want to hit him in return,' said Friedman, 'Dante is a man close to 60'. Since he was socked, Friedman said, he's been under the care of a physician. Friedman said the alleged 'sighting' of Miss Miller started after a 'kidding' remark he had made to her that he 'wouldn't get any more stories in the paper

about her', after she had refused to allow him to have a copy of the show's souvenir program.

'Dante asked me to apologize to her,' said Friedman. 'I went into her dressing room and started to explain and she flew off the handle. The next day she complained that her name was left out of the newspaper ads. As a matter of fact, we never mentioned her name except in the large weekend advertisements. It was then that Dante got sore and socked me.'

Dante said he 'wouldn't discuss' the incident. Van Reemsdyke said he gave Friedman his notice on the grounds that he (Friedman) antagonized people. Friedman left Sunday for Pittsburgh and the assault and battery warrant was sworn out by his attorney, B. Nathaniel Richter.

\$200 Bail for Dante

Dante was arraigned last night (Mon.) before Magistrate Benjamin Schwartz on a body warrant charging assault and battery. He admitted that he had struck Friedman, but said the latter had cooked the battle up as a publicity stunt to plug 'the hand is quicker than the eye' angle. Friedman's attorney denied this and asked the magistrate to set \$2,500 bail on Dante for a further hearing Saturday (4), when Friedman could be present. After some haggling bail was set at \$200, which was provided by Miss Miller, cause of the fight in the first place.

Yesterday (Mon.) the ads carried Miss Miller's name.

VARIETY

Wednesday, January 1, 1941

This press notice might well have been lost in the shuffle, despite the fact that it bears heavily upon a magus' public life rather than private. The little push that toppled it off the fence into here was the statements of a N.Y. 'er who, after Jinx No. 65 made its appearance, said that for \$100 we ran in that issue a full page replica of the Variety ad announcing Dante's forthcoming return to America. For that much money we would have given him the

entire six pages - were our policy geared to such a tremolo.

Ken Crossen, who let magic play a goodly part in his "Green Lama" yarns, found a baby boy at home on Dec. 26. Mrs. Crossen named the find Stephen Foster in honor of Ken's renowned ancestor. Papa's tall tales were published under the "nom de lama" of Richard Foster. --- As to literature we are swamped for reading time. Jean Hugard and Fred Braue have done a "must" book of 448 pages. It is titled "Expert Card Technique" and Carl Jones has published it with an eye towards the banishment of manuscripts and booklets about magic. 318 illustrations make an awful lot of tricks clear. If Jean, with his knowledge, plus Carl, with his paper and typography, keep this up, well ---. Bernard Zufall's No. 6 Memory Trix covers Facts and Figures. Complete and bound this modern treatment of memory will be an asset to those who desire a start-to-finish act of remembrance superlative. We may be out of order to suggest, but it can be a hope, that the last of the set be devoted to a routined performance from curtain to curtain with all essential patter themes outlined. Too many - much to many - in fact practically all magic books lay down trick after trick, and give no thought to the amateur who needs a suggested balanced program. Such buyers read and assimilate the material, certainly, but their time and performing occasions do not give them the opportunity of learning by trial and error, that greatest stepping stone to success of the professional. AUTHORS OF MAGICAL METHODS ARE DUTY BOUND TO OFFER A SUGGESTED PROGRAM FROM THE MATERIAL CONTAINED WITHIN THOSE COVERS. A writer of a magical work can't make much profit. The field is too small. I doubt if 15 copies would be sold were sales limited to full time professionals, and that figure is not kidding. AN AUTHOR CAN NOT JUSTIFIABLY SELL IDEAS AND TRICKS UNLESS HE ACTUALLY HAS PERFORMED THEM, and then he should, in all fairness to customers, explain the presentation conditions. This procedure can be a "type precedent" for future magic works until such a time when all material sold will necessarily include information now sadly lacking. We still dislike public magic shops and easily obtainable secrets of an art which should be learned by apprenticeship or grueling self attainment. Only then can one value his knowledge and power for entertainment. Only then can a magician escape from the classification of mountebank.

The eulogy about De Voll's one man levitation, two issues ago caused rumbles. Freer's apparatus got plenty mention here. On trusted authority we have it that the former's outfit is usable anytime, anywhere, with no set up. The performer walks, dances, sits or stands at ease. Yet he can levitate an 150 lb. person. The same authority says that, while De Voll may have heard of the effect, he didn't have details by sight or writing. At any rate, regardless of the priority outcome, make way for the circus sideshow-carnival expose of 1941! With a "natural" such as this, for the tent platforms, the Headless Lady will be parked in a short basket next to the decayed corpse of the Sawed-In-Two woman. Banners will be repainted except for the line "See How It's Done For 5¢." The "magicians" will eat fish and chips for a season and then drip back to orange juice and crumpets awaiting a new conception from someone who MUST wave his wonder before an avid and, for the moment, adulating coterie, when he could well enough keep it for his private dates and build a reputation. Dunninger is right.

Theo Penneiman