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MAGICAL REVELATIONS

MAGICAL REVELATIONS

By “MERBAK”

[AUTHOR OF “DINKUM MAGIC”]

A Book of Exceptional
Magic

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Sydney
Australia

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AN APPRECIATION

BY HERBERT HOLMES.

Merbak, who in private life is perhaps better known as J. Albert Briggs, is undoubtedly the outstanding figure in Australian Magic.

For more than twenty years he has been a prolific writer on magical subjects; our leading manufacturer of tricks and illusions; and a performer whose entertainments are the last word in surprise and novelty.

When I read the MSS. of this volume I did not imagine there could be so many good things left to divulge, and I am sure readers will agree with me that the title of the book is well chosen.

I have personally seen Merbak perform many of the tricks described in this book, and so completely mystifying were they, that the simple explanations are indeed a revelation. In commending the volume to the magical fraternity, I do so in the hope that it will be the forerunner of many others from his pen. For, Merbak's knowledge of Magic is so extensive, that it is like a well that never runs dry.

H.H.

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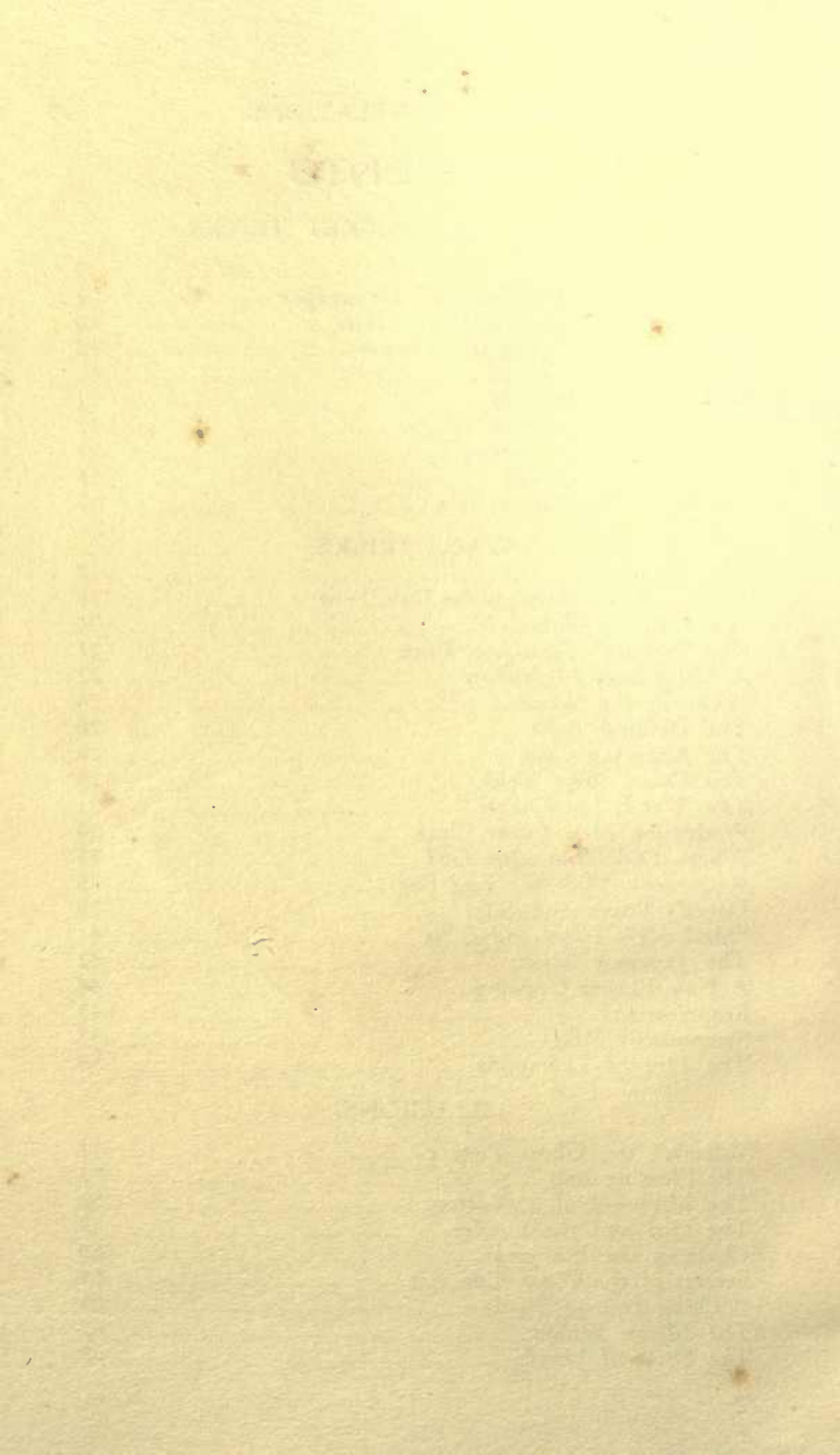
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THE ANNIHILATED GLASS.

A genuine solid glass tumbler literally dissolves before the eyes of the spectators. At least, that is what the advertisement says; but, unfortunately, some magical dealers take big liberties with the truth.

A silk handkerchief is placed into a tumbler, and both placed in a paper bag.

Biff! The bag is crushed flat. Both glass and contents have disappeared.

The genuine solid glass tumbler is made from very thin celluloid, and although it looks like a glass, it can be crushed flat without any trouble. The bag is made double, and after the vanish the front of the bag, which is empty, is torn out, then crushed up and tossed aside.

THE BEST TORN AND RESTORED NEWSPAPER.

The effect is well known. A sheet of newspaper is torn into several pieces. These are closed up. A little squeezing, and the sheet is opened out fully restored.

You require two sheets exactly alike. One is folded neatly, and a narrow strip of tin is laid across the folded sheet, and turned over for about half an inch at each end. This holds the paper flat. A dab of liquid glue is applied glueing the tin to the folded sheet, and then again behind the full sheet, near the centre top. In this way the paper can be held by the top corners when showing.

It is torn up, and the pieces brought together. The tin strip is now bent back over the torn pieces, and the bundle turned round, bringing the torn pieces to the back. Now open up, and show restored.

THE FLOATING AND VANISHING GLASS.

Effect.—A glass of water is covered with a small silk handkerchief, and held in the air with the right hand. A pass is made over the glass; the hands removed, leaving the covered glass floating in mid-air. The handkerchief is given a jerk, and the glass disappears.



A double handkerchief is used, in which is sewn a wire shape as shown. The ring has a rod about five inches long attached to it, which lies flat against the handkerchief when it is held by the corners. This wire has a hooked end to fit over the thumb, and when the thumb is placed in the hook it will hold the ring inside the handkerchief, and make it appear as the glass. The handkerchief is placed over the glass of water in such a way that the wire projection is at the rear and sticks straight out at the back.

The glass is dropped in a well. The thumb engages the hook, and the other hand supposedly raises the glass of water, but in reality only the wire ring. The hand holding the glass is removed, and gives the appearance of the glass floating under the handkerchief.

To vanish, grasp a corner of the handkerchief with the free hand, and jerk it off the thumb of opposite hand.

THE NEEDLE THROUGH THE THUMB.

The left thumb is covered with a borrowed handkerchief, and the performer deliberately pushes a darning needle right through the thumb, and invites a spectator to pull it out from the other side. The thumb is, of course, shown no worse for the operation.

The only requirements are a thumb tip and the needle.

A small hole is drilled through the tip, at the base of the thumb nail, and the hole should be a rather neat fit for the needle, as it makes it more effective, by making some resistance as the needle is pulled out.

In connection with this trick, "The Magic Wand," an English quarterly publication, published some time ago a good "getaway" for the tip. Having impaled the thumb (covered by the handkerchief), the performer remarks: "Will you, Sir, please pull my thumb through the handkerchief? I will hold my wrist so that you cannot pull the hand off as well."

As you make the latter remark you seize the right wrist with the left hand—both are under the handkerchief. At length the handkerchief is removed, and the hands are seen to be empty. This is the secret: Bend the thumb so that the fake can be gripped by the little finger. Instantly bring back the thumb to be pulled by the spectator. When the left hand goes under the handkerchief to seize the wrist, the thumb tip is taken by the fingers of the left hand and pushed up the sleeve.

We hope Mr. Geo. Johnson will pardon the liberty we have taken in quoting from his magazine; but the move is too tempting to pass by.

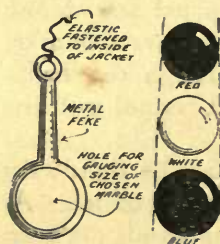
THE CARD AND THE CRYSTAL.

A card is selected from the pack and handed to the performer behind his back. He then looks in a small crystal, and immediately names the selected card.

This is a very effective trick, and the secret is pure cheek. The crystal is merely used as a "red herring" to draw the trail from the actual secret, and possesses no specialty—a large glass marble will do. When the card is returned, performer tears a corner from it on which the index is printed, and then he reaches for the crystal. The torn portion is concealed in the fingers, and easily read when attempting to read a vision in the crystal. When showing the card afterwards, be careful to cover the torn corner.

MARVELLOUS DIVINATION.

Effect.—Three coloured marbles—red, white, and blue, are handed for examination. One is chosen, and handed to the performer behind his back. Then turning towards the audience, but still keeping his hands behind him, he announces the colour of the selected marble.



For this effect you require a metal fake as shown in the illustration. This is attached to a length of elastic, and hangs under the coat behind. The marbles vary slightly in size, and when one is handed to him, he pulls down the gauge, and tries if the marble will pass through. White just goes through.

Red passes through easily, and blue will not pass through at all. After finding the colour of the marble, the fake is released, and passes up out of sight behind the coat.

THE CARD AND RIBBON.

This is a very fine novelty. A pack of cards is fanned, and any card is selected and returned to the pack. Performer then makes a break in the pack, and shows the top card, stating that this is the one selected. The person who selected the card denies that the card shown is the one he selected. So, apologising for his mistake, the performer states that he will employ a novel way of finding it. He thereupon shows a length of narrow ribbon to which is attached a coloured paper sticker, and attaches this to the card shown. The other half of the pack is now replaced on top, and the assistant is asked to pull on the ribbon. As it emerges attached to the card, a mild sensation is created, for the ribbon is found to be attached to the card actually selected, and the most minute examination fails to show any clue to the mystery.

The ribbon is $\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide, and about a foot long. About five inches from one end gum an inch paper disc, preferably of a bright colour. Now, immediately behind this gum another disc, half an inch diameter, but towards one end of the large disc. The only other preparation is to fake a card by punching out a hole $\frac{3}{4}$ in. in diameter in the centre of one end of a playing card, and then trimming it out at the ends so that it is $\frac{3}{4}$ in. wide all the way.

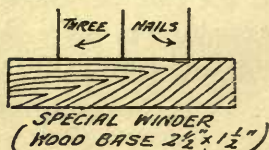
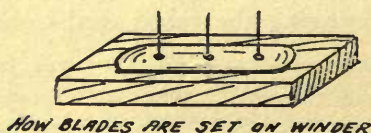
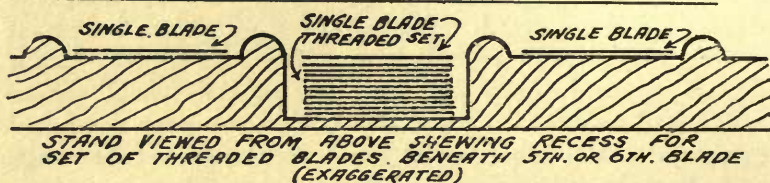
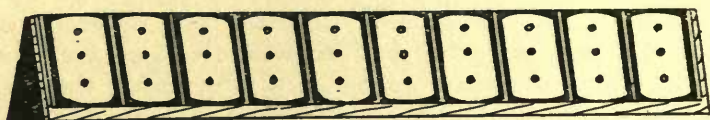
This card is placed on top of the pack with the hole towards the body. The pack is fanned, and any card may be selected (except, of course, the top one). Now divide the pack, and have the chosen card replaced face down on the faked card, and immediately place the other half on top, then square up the pack. By riffing the cards it is a simple matter to break the pack at the prepared card, and you brazenly show this, with the thumb covering the slot, as the chosen card. Naturally, you will get an indignant denial, so you offer to find it in a magical manner. Show the ribbon, and attach the disc. Actually, the small sticker is attached to the card lower down; that is, under the faked card, and really the selected one. Replace the other half, and allow the spectator to gently pull the ribbon, and there is the card he selected. If you want to give the pack for examination, make the pass bringing the faked card to the top, and palm it off.

SWALLOWING RAZOR BLADES.

This trick has attained a great measure of popularity. The effect certainly is sensational, and far ahead of the Needle Threading Trick, from which it was evolved.

Effect.—Ten razor blades are taken, one at a time, and laid on the tongue. Then they are apparently swallowed, followed by a yard or so of thread. A drink of water is then taken to wash them down. After a few gulps performer places his finger and thumb to his lips and withdraws the cotton; and, at intervals on the thread, are the razor blades.

There are several methods of working this trick, but we confine ourselves to one of the best. Our illustration shows a small stand with 10 divisions, in each of which is a razor blade. If you look at the next drawing you will see that one of these divisions is made about $\frac{1}{8}$ in. deeper than the rest, and concealed behind the loose blade is a set of 10 threaded. This division is about No. 6 in the row. You commence by taking the first blade from the stand and placing it on the tongue, repeating with the others until you come to No. 6, where you have the prepared bundle. This is arranged by having the blades threaded at intervals on a yard of



thread, and the end of the thread wound round the blades, and the thread knotted several times near the end so that it can be gripped between the teeth. When you come to this you pick up both blade and bundle together, and as you put them in the mouth, with the bundle unobserved, you slide the threaded set into the right cheek, and place the loose blade on top of the others on the tongue. The remaining blades are then continued with. Now pick up the glass of water and pretend to drink. This is merely a ruse to get rid of the blades, which are ejected quietly into the glass.

Falling to the bottom, they will be unobserved, and the water deadens the fall. The glass is returned to the table, and a small reel of thread picked up. Break off a length and slowly draw it into the mouth. It only remains now to withdraw the threaded blades in as dramatic a manner as you can assume, the loose cotton being withdrawn at the same time. The edges of the blades should be dulled, otherwise you may get a nasty cut.

THE PIERCED CIGARETTE.

A neat nickel tube is shown. It is of sufficient length and diameter to just take a cigarette, and through the tube a number of small holes are drilled. A cigarette is placed in the case, and a cap over the end. Now, a number of pins are passed through the holes piercing the cigarette. The cap is removed, showing the cigarette is still filling the tube. The cap is replaced, and the pins withdrawn. The cigarette is then emptied out and passed for examination; but there is no sign of any punctures such as the pins would make.

The secret lies in the construction of the tube. But my improvement of being able to show the cigarette when it is actually impaled makes the effect more bewildering.

In Fig. 1 is shown the construction of the tube. A is the barrel of the tube. B is an inner sliding tube, which must fit tightly, so that some pressure is necessary to make it slide.

Figure 2 shows the cap. C is the cap itself; B an inner cap which fits the tube, and holds a short piece of cigarette. E is a plunger which fits in the end of the cap, but really looks like a domed cap. The closed end of the cap is slightly thicker on the inside, for a reason which will be explained.

When about to perform the trick you hand the tube for inspection. Receive back the tube, and to further prove that there is no false bottom or obstruction in the tube, you take a pencil and measure the length inside and out to show

they correspond. Really, however, when measuring the outside you slip back the thumb nail about a quarter of an inch, and then inserting the pencil in the tube, you push out the sliding tube. This quarter of an inch gained is sufficient to push out the tight-fitting end, and when the cigarette is placed inside, and cap placed on, the slide can be pulled further out by gripping in the fleshy part of the closed hand.

Three pins are then taken and pushed right through the holes in the tube. As the holes are drilled in line, the pins pass right through, and are shown projecting at the opposite side. The cap is now taken off, and the cigarette shown to be filling the tube.

Finally, withdraw the pins, and when removing the cap it is pressed down before doing so, and grips the inner shell holding the stub of cigarette. The sliding tube is pushed back into its former position, and you can hand it around for examination.

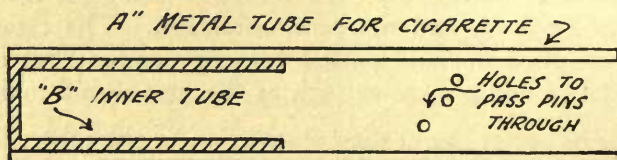
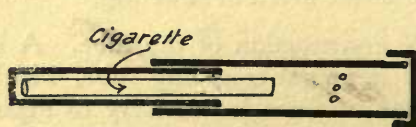


FIG.1. Construction of Tube



The Tube in action



FIG 2.

DETAILS OF CAP (FIG 2.)

1) Plunger 2) The Cap itself 3) The Inner Cap.

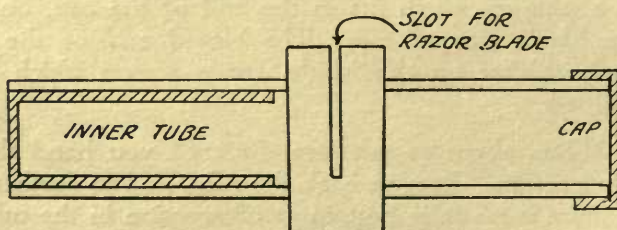


FIG 3. " CUTTING A CAPSTAN IN TWO "

CUTTING A CAPSTAN IN TWO.

The construction of this tube is similar to the foregoing trick, except that in place of the holes for the pins there is a slit cut through the tube, and guides soldered on either side of the slit.

The working is very similar to the Pierced Cigarette, but in this case a safety razor blade is used to apparently saw the cigarette in two.

Care should be taken to make the sawing appear natural. You must operate as though there was some obstruction to cut through, and not make it too easy to cut.

THE JEWEL.

For this trick you will require:—

A small box four inches square.

Two sets of blocks 2in. diameter and 1½in. thick. Of these, two each are coloured green, yellow, white, and blue. There are three similar blocks coloured red, and two black; one of these latter being slightly larger than the other in diameter.

A shell, Fig. 2, to fit over five of the blocks. This is black inside, and the outside decorated to imitate five blocks—yellow on top, then red, green, white, and blue. The larger black block just fits the top of this shell.

A three-fold decorated screen. This stands 8 inches high, and the legs at the bottom are 3 inches high, so that when placed around the blocks the lower three blocks are visible.

A paper bag with false bottom—see Fig. 3—the bottom being raised to accommodate one of the blocks underneath. The bag is filled with confetti.

A decorated cover, shown in Fig. 1, which fits neatly over the fake, Fig. 2.

A black shell to fit over a block, Fig. 4.

The arrangement of the articles on the table as shown in Fig. 1 makes a very artistic lay-out. The blocks, or stones as we shall call them in working, being arranged in pyramidal fashion as follows:—

Black
White, Blue
Yellow, Red, Green.

The box may be examined, after which confetti is

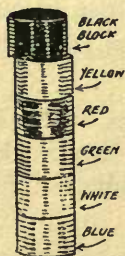
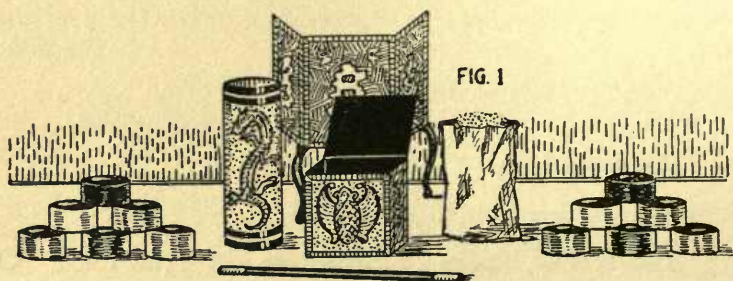


FIG. 2

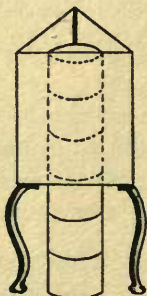


FIG. 5



FIG. 3



FIG. 4.

poured from the bag into the box until it is about two-thirds full. Then to show the hands are empty, the bag is laid on top of the confetti in the box. When it is removed the red block is left behind, and more confetti poured on top,

then the box is closed and handed to a lady to hold.

One of the colours is now chosen—red being forced by any of the many methods known to conjurers.

The blocks on the left are now stacked as in Fig. 5. First blue, then white, green, yellow, red, and black. Actually, there is no black block, because what purports to be one is really the shell (Fig. 2), which is painted, or covered to match the black block, both inside and out; and as the screen is folded around (as in Fig. 5), this shell is pushed down over the red block. It should be mentioned that all the blocks are painted black on top.

The stones on the right are now stacked—blue, white, green, yellow, and black. The red is left out. The fancy cover is placed over these. Inside this cover, however, is the shell (Fig. 2) with the large black block on top.

The screen is now removed from the first set, and the red block is missing. Actually, of course, it is covered with the black shell; but to the audience the red block has disappeared.

Now the cover is lifted from the blocks on the right, and the red block is seen to have found its way under the cover, there being now six blocks instead of five.

Once again the cover is placed over, and this time the shell is gripped and removed with the cover. Again the red block has disappeared; and when the lady is asked to look inside the box she finds the missing stone.

This effect is by Hans Trunk, and published by permission of Herr F. W. Conradi, of Berlin.

BLOWING SILKS THROUGH THE DYE TUBE.

This is a novel way of working the Dyeing Silk trick.

Simply roll a sheet of paper into a tube; push a white silk into the tube. Then blow through the tube, and out the silk comes dyed a bright colour. You push it in again,

and another blow, and out it comes a different colour.

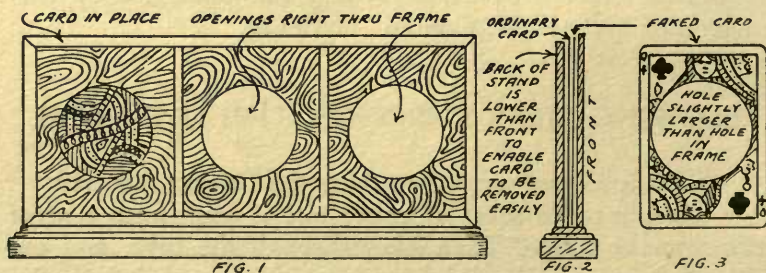
The fake tube is divided into four sections longitudinally, and in each of three of the compartments you place a different coloured silk. One compartment is left empty. The tube is loaded into the paper roll by any favourite method. Then a white silk is pushed into the empty compartment. Place the tube to your mouth, and blow out the white silk. This is to prove that the paper tube is empty. Now again push it in, and next time blow through a different compartment, and out it comes dyed a glorious colour. You return this, and next time blow through a different compartment, and it comes out dyed another colour.

Always return the silk to the compartment you blew it from, and then there is no fear of mistakes.

"CHERCHEZ LA FEMME."

This is the latest addition of the "Three-Card Trick," and, used with giant cards, is most intriguing.

A frame with three compartments, each to take a card, and each having a hole right through the centre. In the two outer compartments two cards representing Knaves are placed, and in the centre one a Queen. All the cards may be given for examination. The stand may be turned round showing the back, as the holes in front and back correspond, and the centre of the backs of the cards can be seen.



Now, the position of the Queen and one of the Jacks is changed; and then the audience is invited to locate the Queen. Naturally, they will select the compartment in which it was placed, but their choice is a mistaken one, because the performer lifts out the selected card, and shows it back and front. It is a Knave; and the Queen is shown to have returned to the centre. Another similar move is repeated; but always the audience fails to locate the Queen.

The secret is absurdly simple. Besides the three unfaked cards shown, there are three others, as in Fig. 3. Of these two are duplicate Queens, and one a duplicate Knave. The centre of these is cut out a little larger than the circles in the frame. The Knave is placed in the centre compartment, and the Queens in the outside compartments. The genuine cards are placed behind these. It is now plain just how the trick is worked. You can show each card either as a Knave or Queen, just as you wish. By lifting out the genuine card, or both cards together, you show it as a different one.

THE "MASTER" FOUR ACE TRICK.

You will require a small stand, the height of the cards, and with divisions for four cards. In each of these you place an examined Ace, face out. And on each Ace place three indifferent cards, also faces out. Now each pile is turned round with the backs to the audience, and the audience are invited to select any pile between "One and Four." This naturally leaves them only 2 and 3, and by "conjurer's choice" you select whichever of these suits you. Turn it round, and fan out, and these are the four Aces. The remaining piles are taken one at a time, and each shown to contain four indifferent cards. This method is essentially suitable for stage use with Giant cards. Again the secret is absurdly simple; but the working is so clean that it is very effective.

The stand is backed with black cloth or paper. In No.

2 compartment place four duplicate Aces; and in the other compartments four indifferent cards in each. In front of each of these is placed a piece of black cardboard to match the backing of the stand. The cards are placed faces to the cardboard. When you turn each pile round you also turn the extra cards with them, bringing the duplicates to the front.

Why worry over sleight of hand?

A CHOP SUEY NIGHTMARE.

Effect.—On the stage is a frame in which are displayed 6 china dinner plates. This is mounted on legs standing about five feet high. On the table, which is covered with an ordinary cloth, is a stewpan, and a tin containing fruit. The plates are taken from the stand and stacked on the table. The cloth is removed from the table to show that it is plain and devoid of any concealment. The stewpan is inverted over the plates, and the lid put on. The fruit is emptied from the tin into the hat. The tablecloth is again taken and held in front of the stand, but only for a second. When it is removed the plates are back on the stand. The lid is removed from the stewpan, and the fruit discovered therein, instead of the plates. The hat is now shown empty. This combination effect is one to make the audience sit up and take notice; or would be a fine finish to any act.

Its construction offers no great difficulties. The stand is of a size to take six plates in line. It is really a shallow box about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep. Concealed behind the top moulding is a spring roller, carrying a black velvet blind. The back of the frame is also covered with velvet. Six plates are stacked in front of this, and the blind drawn and held by a small catch. Then six duplicate plates are stacked in front of the blinds.

The bottom of the pan is constructed to hold the six plates, and the rim on the lid is about 1 inch deep. This

fits inside the pan, but is of sufficient size that, when inserted in the pan over the plates, it fits rather tightly over the top plate. The reason for this will be apparent when we describe the plates. Actually, the stack of plates covered by the pan are not the ones taken from the stand. They consist of the rims only of five plates built around the circular tin box, with a loose, genuine plate on top.

A top hat is used. This has a compartment inside which can be opened or closed by means of a hinged flap, velvet covered. When the flap is closed the hat appears to be empty. The canister which holds the fruit is a little larger in diameter than the faked stack of plates. It has no bottom; but has a division at the middle.

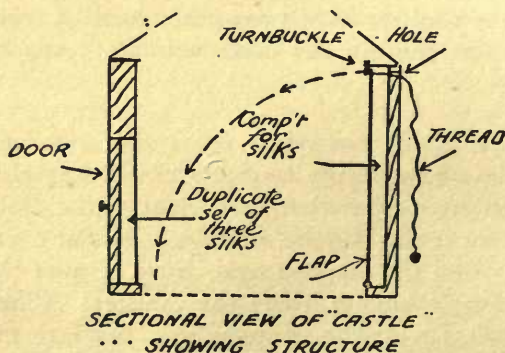
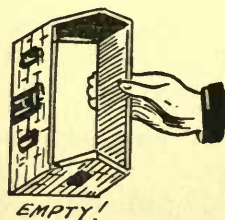
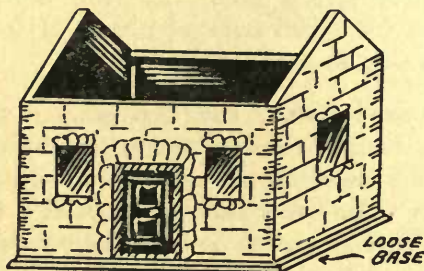
Preparation.—In the hollow of the faked stack of plates place duplicates of the fruit you intend using; put the ordinary plate face over, and stand on the table. Then drop the canister over the lot. The fruit can be artificial. Good imitations of cloth, filled with cotton wool are obtainable, or even rubber fruit, and either of these answer admirably. In the upper part of the canister have your other load of fruit. With the hat and stewpan on the table you are ready to work.

Working.—The plates are taken from the rack and stacked on the table alongside the canister. Indicating that the table is without any preparation, you remove the cloth and hold it up to show it also is quite ordinary. Under cover of this an assistant lifts the canister and drops it over the genuine plates, picking them up inside the canister. When you remove the cloth, he, or she, empties the fruit into the hat, and retires from the stage with the canister. You then invert the stewpan and drop it over the plates, and push on the lid, making sure it grips the top plate. Again take the table cloth and wave in front of the stand for a moment. Your assistant pulls the cord attached to the release, and the blind flies up showing the plates. The flap in hat is swung over, and hat is shown empty. Lid removed from stewpan, and pan shown full of fruit.

BABES IN THE WOOD.

The properties consist of a box on the lines of the well-known Japanese production box; but even if you have this it would be better to construct a new one instead of adapting the one you have.

In the box illustrated there are two compartments, but only one inside flap. Ingress to the other compartment is made via the door in front, which should have a small ball catch to keep it shut.



The load compartments should be $\frac{3}{4}$ in. deep, and about 10 in. x 8 in. Attached to the flap is a black thread which passes through the back, and is fastened on the outside to a small bead.

Six charm silks are employed. Make these 18 in. square.

The centres have designs of a boy's head, a girl's head, and the head of an ogre respectively, each being in duplicate. Shade the outside borders in distinctive colours.

The only preparation is to place one of the ogre silks in the rear compartment, and in the front three silks knotted together, with the ogre in the middle. They are placed so that they can be easily withdrawn when the door is opened.

The story is told as follows:—"One fine day two little playmates strolled away into the woods." (Show boy and girl silks.) "So intent were they on the gathering of wild flowers that they wandered deeper and deeper into the wood, losing all sense of their direction. The declining day found them a long way from home, and completely lost. They commenced to retrace their steps, and as night fell they came upon an old ruined castle. This was supposed to be empty, and reputed to be haunted." (Remove bottom, and show empty. As you replace, release the flap.) "They went up to the door and knocked, but no answer came.

Again they knocked, and then chanced to look upwards. Gazing down at them from the battlements was the ugliest face they had ever seen." (Take ogre silk and lay over front.) "They were too terrified at the horrible spectacle to run away, and leaning over, the giant reached out two massive hands and hauled them over the top." (Drop all three silks into castle, pull thread closing flap, and lock by means of a small turn-buckle.)

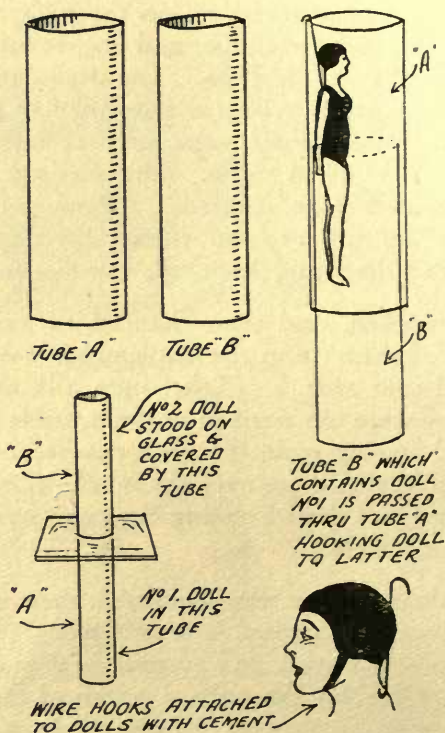
"When their absence was discovered, their parents were frantic, and hastily organised a search party. The woods were scoured without avail, and eventually they came to the ruined castle. Climbing the walls, a search of the inside was made, but in vain." (Again remove bottom, and show castle empty.) "The party were about to wander away in despair when a noise was heard to come from the castle.

Then the door burst open, and the missing children emerged, with the ogre secured between them. Needless to say, they grew, married, and were happy ever after."

THE BATHING BELLE.

I am indebted to Mr. George Rees, a vice-president of The Australian Magicians' Club, for this simple, but effective, item:—

Two nickel tubes are shown to be empty. One is placed on a china plate, and a square of plate glass laid on top of the tube. A celluloid "bathing beauty" is stood on the glass and covered with the second tube.



When the top tube is removed, the lady is missing, and the glass is shown to be flawless. When the lower tube is lifted, it is seen that the lady has apparently changed her mind, and also her abode, for she is standing on the plate, having passed through the sheet of glass.

Construction and Working Details.—The tubes are of similar length, but the diameter of "A" is slightly larger than "B." The square of plate glass is about 8in. square, and two slender celluloid bathing girls, which can be obtained at most good toy shops. These are prepared by having stiff wires with a hooked end, and of such a length as to extend about $\frac{3}{4}$ in. above the top of the head.

At the outset, one of the dolls is hooked inside "B." "A" is shown empty, and "B" dropped through it. This leaves the doll hooked inside "A," as in the illustration. You explain that the tubes are made this way, so they will be more convenient for packing. "B" can now be shown empty, and "A" is casually placed on the plate. The glass is placed on top of the tube.

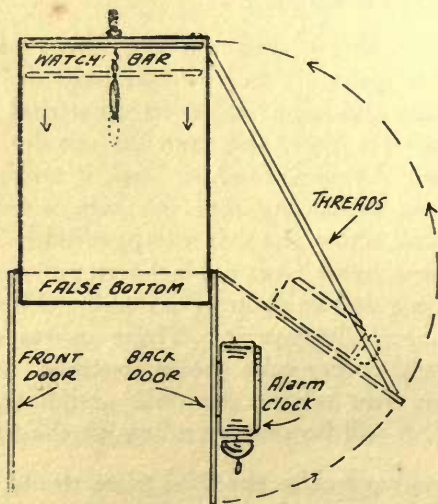
The doll is now placed on the sheet of glass, and covered with "B" tube. You now take hold of "A" and lift it, with the glass and other tube, to show that "A" is still empty. Replace on plate, and then lift out the doll in tube "B," and show. As you return it, hook it on to the side of the tube. After explaining that the lady is rather elusive, lift the tube and show she has disappeared. The tube is lowered with one hand over a black art well and the hook released, allowing doll to drop in the well. The other hand lifts the glass, and displays it. These moves synchronise, and the glass and empty tube shown together. As you raise the lower tube, you release the doll, and if the feet have been weighted, it will be seen standing on the plate.

An alternative to the sheet of glass would be to use a small gramophone record, and after the passing through you could explain that the beauty passes through the small hole in the centre, as a result of overdoing a course in "slimming."

THE ALARMING CASE.

A cabinet with doors back and front. Both doors are opened, giving a clear view right through. From the centre of the top, inside, is a screw-eye. A watch is produced, and hung on this hook. Both doors are closed. Almost immediately the front door falls, revealing a clock hanging from the hook ringing merrily. It is removed, and shown to be genuine.

There is very little preparation required with this trick. The clock is suspended on the back door, which is opened first. Two lugs are soldered on either side, and these engage in two screw-heads in the back door.



There is a lever on the back door, which, when pulled over, pushes over the lever holding the alarm trigger. Also, when this is pushed over it pushes another lever fitted inside the top of the box, which holds the front door shut.

The screw-eye on which the watch is hung is screwed into a false top, which slides up and down the box. Two cords are attached to this, as shown in the sketch, and fastened to the back door. When the back door is opened, this

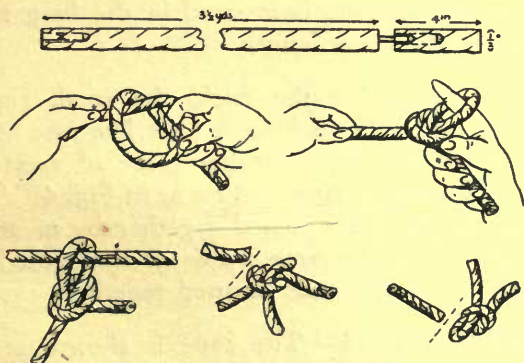
false top is pulled to the top of the box, and the moulding around the inside of the box, being the same thickness, is not noticed.

The sides are not hinged directly to the bottom, but there is a 2-inch wide strip nailed inside, to which the doors are hinged, thus giving a 2-inch compartment at the bottom. The false top descends, and the watch (which should be a flat-backed one) falls flat into this, and the false top covers it over.

THE DANTE ROPE TRICK.

We don't know who invented this cut and restored rope trick—certainly not Dante; but it will always be associated with Dante's name in this country.

A rope two or three yards long, and about half an inch in thickness, is cut several times and restored. That is the bare effect, but the apparent fairness of the cuts and genuine restoration have a marvellous effect.



You will require some good cotton rope of firm texture, and having a tube-like opening through its entire length. The exact length is not material—anything from two to three yards. Also a short piece of the same rope about 4 inches long.

Two pairs of metal fakes. These are about $\frac{1}{4}$ in. thick, and are made as male and female fasteners. As shown in drawing one, one is merely a tube, and the male fastener is a short length of $\frac{1}{4}$ in. rod, with portion of its length turned down to fit the tube very tightly, and then a saw cut is made down the centre, making a spring-locking clip. Fine holes are drilled through each half of the fasteners, so that when inserted in the centre of the rope (or tube) they can be secured by pushing fine brads through the rope holes in the fake, and then cut off flush with the rope on the opposite side.

If the rope is liable to fray at the edges (which should be cut with a safety razor blade to make a clean cut), they should be dipped in a solution made by dissolving some scrap celluloid in acetone, which makes a quick-drying, transparent cement. A pair of dividers will be found handy to measure the distance from the end of fake to hole, so that you can ensure inserting the pins at the right places. When the ropes are joined up, even at a short distance the cut is invisible.

One set of fasteners is inserted in the long rope, and the other set in the short length.

Before commencing the trick, the small rope is attached to the long one, making it look like one long rope. In the centre of the rope another piece of rope about 4 inches long is knotted, being tied on as in Fig. 4. Then the two ends of the rope are joined together by means of the clip fasteners. The appearance now is that you have one length of rope with the ends knotted together.

PRESENTATION.—The rope is shown, and taking a pair of shears, it is cut near one end of the short piece of faked rope, but leaving the fastener in the end of the long rope. Now the ends of the rope are tied together. The method of tying this knot is the whole secret of the trick. The routine is shown in Figs. 2, 3, and 4. But under cover of this tying, the long end of the short piece is tied around the longer rope. The small projecting tip is detached and

palmed off, and, when tied, the other end of the short piece is detached from the main rope, and the fasteners re-inserted, so that the result is as at Fig. 4. This is rather difficult to convey in print, but with the rope and illustrations will be quite clear on demonstration.

You now show the rope with two knots diametrically opposite, and then ask the audience to choose either of the knots. This is the usual conjurer's choice, for no matter which knot is selected, you cut away the first knot, and show the rope restored. The second knot is now cut away, as in Figs. 5 and 6, and the rope shown as a continuous joined rope. Finally, you cut the rope into two pieces, knot them together, cut away the knots and show restored, and toss the rope for examination. This last cutting and restoration can be done down among the audience, as it is merely the old "cut and restored string" or turban method that is employed. You should have a small box handy in which to toss the clippings, as these will contain the metal fakes. You can, for effect, occasionally toss one of the clippings to the spectators.

THE WATCH DU DIABLE.

This is a fine trick which gives scope for plenty of comedy, and has a very surprising finish.

Performer takes his watch from pocket, and wraps it in a handkerchief. A cloth bag is shown empty, and laid on the table. The handkerchief is lifted by one corner, shaken out, and watch has disappeared. Showing his hands to be empty, he reaches in the bag and produces the watch. He now explains that the watch can become invisible or visible at will. The watch is placed in the bag again. He then pretends to take it out and slip in his trouser pocket. The bag is shown to be empty. Everybody laughs; but he turns out his pocket to show it is not there. A boy is now invited on the stage, and asked to feel in the bag, but he reports it to be empty. Ask him to feel again and make

quite sure, and as he does so, the performer works around to his back, causing him to turn round, and the audience grin as they see the watch in the middle of his coat. This is removed and dropped into the bag, when the performer says he will explain just how the trick is done. He takes out the watch and shows it in his hand, and then places it again in his trouser pocket. "So far," he says, "the watch has been visible; but now it will become invisible." He pretends to remove it in his closed hand, and squeezes it, and then shows it has disappeared. Naturally, the audience suspect it is still in his pocket; but the pocket is turned inside out and shown to be quite empty. The bag is now again turned inside out, and performer holds it in his teeth while he shows both his hands empty. The boy is again asked to feel inside the bag, but there is nothing there. Once again performer turns the bag inside out, and the watch is seen sticking out from the folded cloth. The boy is invited to take it out, and the bag turned back again.

"Now," says the performer, "the reason the boy could not feel the watch was because it was hidden behind this." And "this" is a ringing alarm clock, which is produced from the bag.

You will require:—

Three watches, preferably of the flat back type. To one of these a needle point is soldered to the back, behind the 12 o'clock position, and pointing down at a sharp angle. This latter is attached on the trousers leg on right side just under the coat, and easily getatable.

A cloth bag similar in construction to the egg bag, but much larger, say about 12in. x 10in. This need not be black. Place one watch in the pocket.

A Devil's handkerchief, of the improved type.

An ordinary alarm clock. The only preparation to this is to fasten a bit of fine wire, or thread, around the hair-spring to prevent movement; otherwise, if you set the alarm, and the clock ticks, it may have passed the hour, and not

ring when you require it. Set the alarm, and hang it by means of a S wire hook behind the top rail of a chair. The chair should be on the right of the table you are using.

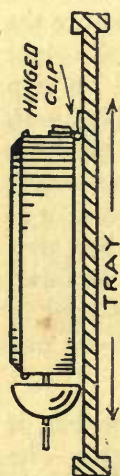
Working.—Show the bag empty, and lay down on the table. Take watch from your pocket. The handkerchief is folded in four, and the watch dropped in the pocket. Then taking the handkerchief by the corner, shake it out, and watch has disappeared. It is then produced from the bag. The moves with the watch and bag are similar to those with the egg bag, and require no explanation until you invite the boy up on the stage. As he is coming up, you secure the hooked watch from under coat, and placing him in the right position, invite him to make a bow to the audience. To help him do this correctly, the left hand is placed on his chest, and the right hand on his back, and you help him bend his body. Also, you attach the watch to his coat. After working the boy around so the watch is seen on his back, it is detached, and openly dropped in the bag. You then pretend to show how the trick is done. The watch is taken out, shown, and placed in the pocket. Actually it is placed in the top of the pocket, and hooked there, so that you can turn the pocket inside out without it showing.

Again follows more "egg-bag moves," and the bag is finally turned inside out, revealing the missing watch. The boy takes the watch, and you momentarily lay the bag over the rail of the chair with the right hand, while you ask him to listen if the watch is still going. The bag is then brought away with the clock behind. Again you turn the bag inside out, or rather back again to its original state; but turn it towards you, and around the clock. Then inserting the hand, move the lever, setting the alarm ringing, and produce the clock.

This latter move may sound difficult, but it is not so. It only requires the necessary nerve, and I have worked this trick before clever magicians, and got away with it. Its advantage lies in the fact that the audience imagine the trick to be finished, and the finale comes as an unexpected surprise.

THE PRODUCTION OF A LARGE CLOCK ON TRAY.

Showing a large foulard on both sides, the performer reaches in the air, and pretends to catch something underneath it. An assistant has entered with a large tray, and stepping behind the performer, holds it for him to place his "catch" thereon. When the cover is removed, a giant alarm clock is seen ringing merrily.



The clock, which is about 12in. diameter, with a 3in. wide rim, has no back. It is suspended behind the tray on a spring clip attached to a hinge. The tray, which is oblong in shape, has a raised edge on both sides, so that both sides of the tray appear to be the same.

The performer comes forward with a large cloth, which is turned on both sides to show its emptiness. He then throws it over his left arm, which is held horizontally from the elbow away from the body, and apparently materialises some large object under it.

Meanwhile the assistant has entered with the tray, which is held in front of his body. As the performer carries the supposed object under the cloth towards the tray, the tray, which is now masked by the covering cloth, is brought to a vertical position, with the clock laying on top. The performer reaches under the cloth, and lifts the clock to an upright position, at the same time setting the alarm ringing. The cloth is then thrown aside. The rim of the tray should not project more than a quarter of an inch on each side. The alarm I use is what is known as an "air-bell." This is a double alarm, operated by pressing a bulb which lies just under the rim at the top of the clock, and is pressed as the clock is brought into an upright position.

WHERE DID THAT ONE GO?

Two small cabinets are shown to be empty. They both have doors on top and front. In one a small alarm clock is placed. A moment later the doors are opened, and the clock has disappeared. Naturally, the performer goes over to the other box, placed on another table, and opens the front door, but the clock is not there. He goes back to the first one, but it is still empty. Suddenly a ringing is heard in the opposite box, and on opening it he finds the clock.

The two cabinets are both alike, being about 9in. high by 6in. x 6in. There are doors on top and front, similar to the old type dice box. In each box, running diagonally from the top front to the rear bottom, is a nickel-plated mirror. The sides and bottom in front are covered with black velvet, and a narrow strip surrounds the front to mask the presence of the mirror.

In the rear (concealed) compartment of one is placed a Baby Ben alarm clock. A thread is attached to the alarm lever, and passes through a small hole in the side of the box.

This box is first shown empty, and placed on a table on the left of the performer. The other box is also shown, and closing the front door, a duplicate Baby Ben is dropped in the rear compartment, and the door on top closed. When the front door is opened, the clock has disappeared. The other box is shown empty, and performer secures the thread as he turns to again inspect the first box. This is again shown empty. Then he pulls on the thread, and this releases the alarm in the second box. The top lid is lifted and the clock brought out, still ringing.

Further comedy can be worked into this effect by having a third clock, with a repeating alarm, concealed under the coat. These alarms ring for a couple of minutes, then they are silent for a minute or two, and then ring again. If after showing both boxes empty this alarm is set going, the clock will appear to be ringing somewhere in the air. Performer turns around to look for it, when it immediately

stops. As soon as he turns, facing the audience again, it commences ringing again. He pretends to search for the missing elusive clock, but each time he looks for it it stops ringing. When this has finally run down, he pulls the thread for the clock in the box, and makes the re-appearance of the clock.

A COMEDY WITH THE EGG BAG.

A large bag is shown. It has a network lower corner, and is turned inside out and back again. Performer now makes a cackling noise, and an egg appears in the network corner. This is removed. He now requests his lady assistant to lay an egg. Naturally, she is somewhat disconcerted, and her cackle is (on this occasion) a very modest one. The result is seen in a very small egg. A male assistant is now requested to oblige. His voice is loud and raspy, and this time a large egg appears, covered with red spots, for the assistant boasted a fiery wig. At this stage, the stage mechanic rushes on with a megaphone to his lips. He cackles down the megaphone, and a monster egg, entirely filling the bag, is the result.

Various other comedy effects will suggest themselves, according to any peculiarity possessed by the performer's assistants.

The bag should be about 2 feet wide, and 18 inches deep. A long pocket inside the top of the back of the bag is loaded with eggs of varying sizes and colours. An opening at one end into the bag allows them to roll, or be pushed out as desired. But a different method is used for the last production. This egg can be fully a foot long, and proportioned to shape like an egg. So that both megaphone and bag can be shown empty, a special folding stand is employed. This is a twofold stand, with a triangular tray top, in the centre of which is a hole to hold the large egg after production. In fact, this is the ostensible purpose of the stand.

When the mechanic enters, the performer takes the megaphone from him and turns it on the audience. This is really done to show that it is empty. Then shaking his head, and looking at the bag, as if to suggest that the idea is out of the question, he drops it behind the screen. Then he invites the assistant to show what he can do. The latter, however, shakes his head, and points to the megaphone, indicating that he will not go ahead without it. So the performer agrees to risk it. The mechanic picks up the megaphone, and the performer opens out the bag and places the mouth around the mouth of the megaphone. Whereupon, the assistant delivers the goods in the shape of an egg that entirely fills the bag. This is removed with difficulty, and placed on the top of the screen.

As will be surmised, the screen hides the large egg. Behind this is a duplicate thin cone, that fits neatly inside the megaphone. This, however, is not so long as the megaphone, being about six inches shorter, and has three stout wire legs soldered at intervals around the bottom. The object of these is so that when this is behind the screen, which is raised on legs about five inches from the floor, the audience can see under the screen, without seeing that it conceals anything. The principle is similar to that used in the "Ladson Butler Flower Growth." The egg has a wire loop attached to the pointed end of the egg, which passes through the mouth of the cone, and is hooked inside the mouth piece of the cone near the top. When the megaphone is dropped behind the screen, it is dropped over this fake, which fits neatly inside it. When it is again lifted out, the assistant grips it by the mouth, and lifts the two together. He then places his hand near the bottom, and feeling for one of the wire legs, holds it firmly inside.

Care is taken that in the subsequent moves the interior of the megaphone is not shown. Once the mouth of the bag is placed around it, the assistant removes his hands to the mouthpiece. One holds this, and with the other he unhooks the egg. By holding the bag round the mouth of the megaphone, the performer prevents the premature appearance

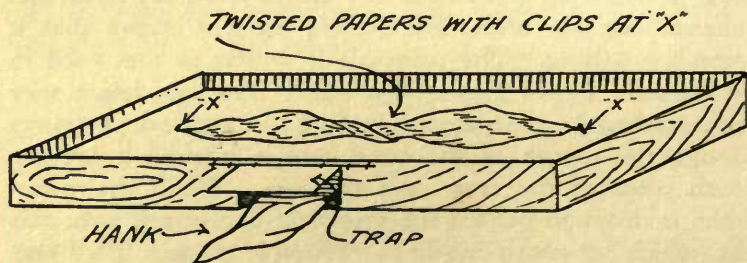
of the egg. But as soon as the mechanic speaks his piece, he releases it, and allows it to fall into the bag. At the conclusion, an assistant enters and removes the egg, and the stand is folded flat, showing that there are no attachments to it.

This effect allows scope for plenty of comedy, and will prove delightful entertainment.

MERBAK'S TRAYS AND SILKS.

This effect, which was shown by me for the first time at a magicians' club entertainment tendered to the international magician, Chefalo, when he was on a visit to Sydney, proved so mystifying that it has always been associated with my name, as it has proved a complete mystery whenever performed, and is now disclosed for the first time.

The effect is as follows:—Two long, shallow, black trays are shown, and three silks—red, white, and blue. One of these is freely selected, and a small gummed sticker is



attached to the centre, and initialled by any member of the audience. The three silks are now knotted together, with the selected one in the centre, and laid across one of the trays, the marked one in the centre, and the outer silks overlying the ends of the tray. The other tray is now inverted on top, and two large rubber bands snapped around the ends of the trays. They are now held tightly together, and two of the silks are always in full view. Three pieces of coloured tissue paper are now shown—blue and two other colours.

The two latter pieces are now wrapped up in the blue tissue, and given to a member of the audience to hold.

The trays are now opened up, and the marked silk has disappeared, for when the outer silks are lifted, the two coloured pieces of tissue paper are found tied between them. And when the assistant opens his parcel he finds, instead of the tissue, the missing marked silk.

This seeming impossibility can be worked at close quarters—in fact, I was down among the audience when I wrapped up the tissues, and it was composed mainly of magicians. So, therefore, it can be considered to be clean working.

Now for the secrets involved: Of the trays, which are 16in. long by 5in. wide and 1in. deep, only one is prepared. In the middle of one of the long sides a piece 4in. wide is cut out. Along one edge a stout wire is nailed, projecting half an inch at each end. This is now replaced in the side, and two staples nailed over the projecting wires, so that you have the piece hinged so that it opens out from the bottom. To the bottom of the tray in the centre of this opening a 9in. length of thread is nailed, and a black shoe button is fastened to the loose end. Two pieces of coloured tissue paper 5in. square are now taken, and attached together by twisting the ends and applying a tiny dab of seccotine, the idea being to make them appear to be tied together. The outer ends are now twisted, and a small Excelsior clip attached with the points straightened out. The joined tissues are laid in the centre of the tray, with the clip points upwards. Now the thread is laid across the centre, with the bead lying on the tray bottom. The three silks are tied together by means of slip-knots, with the selected one in the centre and laid across the tray. The knots of the outer silks are pressed down on to the points of the clips, and the button is brought over, and pushed through the bottom of the hinged door. In showing the trays, the top tray is laid carelessly across the prepared one, and although not shown, there is never any reason to suspect the trays. The second tray is now inverted over, and the two trays fastened together by means of the elastic bands (these can be cut from an old motor inner

tube). During this operation the trays are brought to the rear of the table, and a pull on the bead pulls the centre silk through the opening. As the outer silks are held by the trays, and the centre silk is only held by a slip-knot, it can be pulled clear of the opening and concealed in the palm.

Now pass down among the audience with the three pieces of tissue paper. The silk is held in the right hand. The two smaller pieces, 5in. square to match those in the trays, are given to a person on your left to examine, and the blue, which is larger, to someone on the right. The two duplicate pieces are taken and bunched up, and placed in the right hand. Now take back the blue piece in the right hand. The left hand is placed underneath, with the two pieces of tissue, but instead of these being pushed into the centre of the blue piece and wrapped up, the silk is substituted. The bundle is screwed up, and given to an assistant to hold over his head. This saves an over-display of curiosity on his part, and you return to the platform.

The trays are opened up, and taking the silks by the outlying edges, they are lifted up, and the two pieces of tissue paper are seen to be apparently tied in the middle of them, instead of the marked silk. The assistant can now be invited to open up his parcel, and you have a truly dramatic denouement.

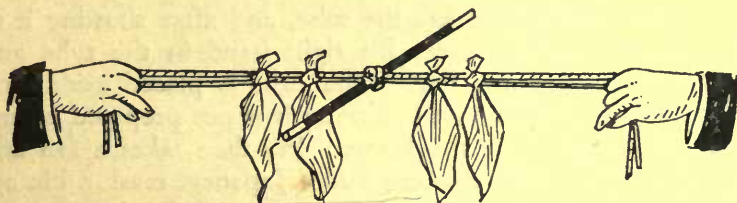
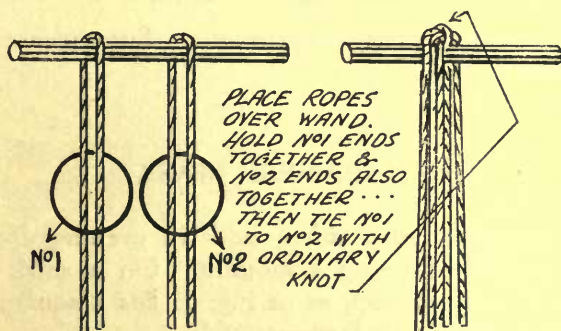
The idea of the tray was suggested by a trick which was invented by Mr. Edward Bagshawe, a prominent English magical writer.

Our illustration shows the tissue papers lying across the prepared tray. The thread has been omitted to save confusion, but the trap is shown, and no difficulty should be found in construction.

DANTE'S UNCANNY KNOTS.

This trick, when worked by Dante during his recent Australian season, produced a wonderful effect. It is really a wangle on the "grandmother's beads," but a revelation of how an old trick can be made new.

Effect: Two cords are shown and tied around a walking stick, and the ends of the cords held by two spectators. On either side of the stick two silks are tied around the cords. Now two ends of the cords are taken and tied in a



AFTER HANDING ENDS TO ASSISTANTS, TIE 4 SILK HANDKERCHIEFS ROUND CORDS AND SLIDE THEM UP TO WAND. NEXT TAKE TOP CORD TIE IT IN A KNOT AND GIVE ASSISTANTS THE OPPOSITE ENDS TO HOLD.

knot, and passed back to the spectators. The silks are now slid to the centre, the stick is withdrawn, and the two cords are seen as at first.

This is a really fine effect, as the ropes are shown separate. They are laid over the wand, as shown in the drawing. Then they are brought close together, as in the

second drawing. Now comes the misdirection. No. 1 is tied to No. 2 with an ordinary knot. That is the whole secret of the trick. The handkerchiefs, which should be large ones to create the best effect, are tied at intervals, two on each side of the stick, or wand, and the ropes handed to two assistants to hold. Now slide the handkerchiefs to the centre, take the two ends of the top cord, and tying them in a knot, pass back to the assistants, giving them the opposite end to hold. Slip out the stick, and tell assistants to pull gently on the cords. The handkerchiefs fall to the ground, and the ropes are just two loose ropes, as at first.

This is a very pretty experiment. But—please don't use 9in. silks.

THE JAPANESE MASK.

The performer may either work in evening dress, or dress the part by donning a kimono. On a small table, which has a frame on top, as in Fig. 1, lies a square cardboard tube, decorated in Japanese style.

The performer takes the tube, and after showing it to be entirely empty, places his right hand in the tube and pulls out a Japanese flag. The tube is placed aside, and after waving the flag, and showing it is not prepared in any way, he hangs it on the frame. He then takes a fan and fans the flag, which changes into a Japanese mask. He approaches the mask, and draws from the mouth a long, green, silk ribbon. As he does so, the eyes light up a green colour. Then a long red ribbon is withdrawn from the mouth, the eyes meanwhile showing a vivid red; then a yellow ribbon, and the eyes shine the same colour.

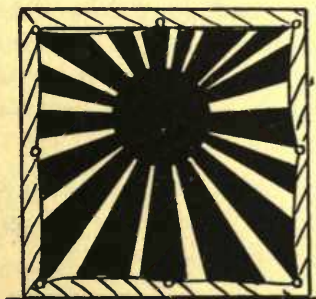
The whole of the ribbons are now draped over the mask, hiding it. Then they fall away, and the mask has changed to an illuminated Chinese lantern.

Requisites:—

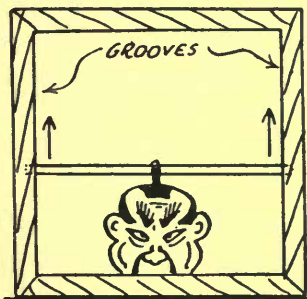
1. A Japanese flag the size of the frame. This can be

entirely to performer's fancy, as the size makes no difference. Rings are sewn to the flag so that it can be attached to the frame. The flag is hidden in the left coat sleeve.

2. A square cardboard tube. About the middle of one side is a small opening concealed by a flap, or panel, which can be opened from the inside. To make the flag appear, the performer pushes his right hand in the tube and through the opening, and obtains the flag from the left sleeve. As the tube covers the left arm, this process is not observed by the audience.



JAP. FLAG ATTACHED TO FRAME BY RINGS



MASK BROUGHT UP UNDER COVER OF FLAG.



THREE REELS OF RIBBON ON SMALL ROD FITTED BEHIND MOUTH



GLOBULAR LANTERN FASTENED TO BACK OF MASK

3. The frame is constructed with grooved uprights, and the mask, fastened to a narrow board which runs in the grooves of the uprights, lies below the level of the table. As the flag is hung on the frame, it covers the bottom first, and the mask is pulled up as the flag is straightened out and

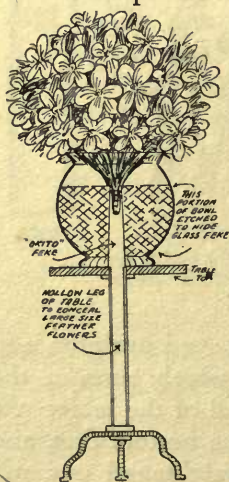
slides upwards into the frame. When it is desired to show it, all that is necessary is to remove the flag.

4. The mask and lantern are really a combination affair. The lantern is the same diameter as the mask, which is fastened on to one side. It will be found necessary to stiffen the lantern, so that it becomes firm. The lantern is fastened to the back of the head, and when closed only the mask is seen; but if the lantern is opened, the mask goes to the back, and the audience sees only the lantern. The ribbons are hidden in the mouth of the mask, and the lantern illuminated with a small battery. Two wires cross behind the head, just above and below the eyes, and along these slides a metal sheath fitted with three pairs of coloured discs cut from coloured gelatine. As each ribbon is pulled in turn, the hand slides along the sheath, showing the next, and appropriate, colour.

When the ribbons are draped over the mask, performer reaches behind and opens the lantern. The head swings to the back, and the ribbons fall, revealing the lantern.

A NEW FLOWER GROWTH.

The performer exhibits a large glass bowl, which is placed on a table, filled with water, and covered with a large silk cloth. The cloth is seen to slowly rise, and on being taken away, the bowl is filled with flowers.



The centre of the bowl has a glass tube, fixed as in the well-known "Okito" tumbler. The lower portion of the bowl is etched to hide the presence of the fake tube. The table has a hollow leg, and the plant—a feather bouquet—is concealed in here, and slowly pulled up by means of a thread to assistant. This is the latest flower production, and creates a wonderful effect.

RESURRECTION.

The performer turns back his sleeves, first the right and then the left, and shows each hand back and front as he does. Then bringing the hands together, he slowly evolves three silks—red, white, and blue.

Now a pack of cards is taken from the pocket, and three spectators each select a card, and each also selects one of the silks, so that each card is identified with a colour.

You now request that as you have no further use for the cards, they be torn in small pieces, and taking a tumbler from your table, you collect the torn pieces. The tumbler is now filled with confetti, and closing the lid of the box, the tumbler is now stood on top. You now impress on the audience what has been done up to this stage. Three cards have been selected, and with each card one of the silks produced has also been selected. What you now intend to do is to further associate the silks with the torn cards, and show how strong is the affinity of the various colours on those particular cards.

The blue silk is now taken, shown on both sides to be empty, and laid over the mouth of the tumbler. Standing some distance from the table, you wave your wand gently. Presently there is a movement under the silk, and it slowly rises from the glass. You remove the silk, and show the card with which it was identified standing up from the centre of the pack. This is repeated with the other silks and cards. Then the three silks are tied together, given a shake, and they are transformed into a flag.

You will require:—

1. Two large glasses. These are in duplicate, and one is prepared by inserting a double partition down the centre. In this partition is a cavity which will take six cards, threaded as in the De Kolta method for the rising cards. It may be difficult to obtain tumblers of a suitable shape, but two small honey jars will be found to answer the purpose, and as these

are obtainable in figured or moulded patterns, this will be a further advantage.

2. Red, white, and blue silks in duplicate.

3. A box to hold confetti. This should be a little higher than the jars, and about two and a half times as long as the width of the jars. The box has a partition down the centre, dividing it in two compartments, but the division does not reach the top by about three-quarters of an inch. Over one of these compartments you glue a piece of cardboard, and glue confetti over it. This compartment also has no bottom or back. It is best to glue confetti all over the interior. The box is then filled with confetti.

Place a set of cards in the faked tumbler, arranged with three duplicates of the cards you intend forcing, and arranged for rising. Leave about a yard and a half of thread hanging from the glass, and attach this to the wand, which is laid on the table. This tumbler is placed immediately behind the box.

The three silks can be balled up tightly. Stick a small pin through them to prevent unrolling, and place under the left armpit. In the act of pulling up the left sleeve, these are secured in the right hand, and then both hands brought together, and silks materialised.

The cards are duly forced, either by sleight-of-hand or the use of a forcing pack; but you must remember the order of the cards in your prepared tumbler, so that you can remember to place the right coloured silk for the respective card. If you can force from an ordinary pack, have the cards selected in the order in which you intend them rising.

Now the cards are torn up and collected in the tumbler. Stand the glass on one corner of the box while you fill it with confetti. Let this trickle slowly in, to prove that you do not load anything. When filled, stand so that you can take the tumbler in your right hand and close the lid of the box with your left. As you do this, momentarily drop the tumbler behind the box, and into the open back of the box, and holding it against the side of the box, move the latter

aside. If this has been carried out correctly, it will appear that you have merely lowered the glass to move the box, and the prepared glass, which is now seen, will be accepted as the one you have just filled with confetti.

Now stand the glass in the centre of the table, and lay over the mouth of it the silk which is associated with the first card to rise. Pick up the wand, and move away from the table until the thread becomes taut. Incidentally, this thread should pass through an eyelet in the rear edge of table to ensure a backward pull. As you wave the wand, you gradually pull on the thread, and the card rises under the handkerchief. The latter is removed, and the card shown, and you repeat with the remaining silks and cards. As each silk is removed it is laid on the table. In your coat pocket furthest away from the audience (this depends on which side of the table you work the rising cards from) you have a flag arranged for the "Blendo" effect. This is a double flag, with an opening in one corner, in which is sewn a metal ring. A heavy wire ring, $1\frac{1}{4}$ in. in diameter, but flattened, answers the purpose. In the opposite corner inside (not diagonally) is a short length of tape, to which is sewn a spring tie-clip, and outside, at the same corner as the clip, is a catgut loop. To arrange this, pull the clip through the metal ring, and then pleat both ways neatly and tie with weak cotton, taking care that the gut loop is free of the bundle. To transform the silks, you conceal the flag in the hand, and turning the back of the hand to the audience, lay the three silks over the hand with one corner apparently held between the finger and thumb. These corners are clipped in the spring fastener, and both hands brought together. The hand holding the silks pushes the tips of these through the metal ring, and holds the ring between finger and thumb. Insert the thumb of the opposite hand in the gut loop, and with the fingers break the thread. The hands are now drawn sharply apart, and the silks disappear inside the flag quicker than the eye can follow. The flag can safely be shown on both sides, and then laid aside.

SYMPATHETIC SILKS.

The performer enters with six silk handkerchiefs hanging from his finger and thumb. They are duplicate sets, coloured orange, yellow, and green respectively.

"I call this problem the Sympathetic Silks," he says, "because it was suggested to me by reading the story of two Indian girls who were so attached to each other that if an injury was inflicted upon one of them, the other felt the pain. I found that a similar affinity existed between silks of a like colour, always provided they came from the same silkworm. You will note I have here three silks—orange, yellow, and green" (as he pronounces the colours he takes the respective silks)—"and, again, orange, yellow, and green."

Three of the silks are laid aside on the table, and the other set are knotted together.

"These three silks I shall knot together. Will you please observe that they are securely tied. Will you, sir, just pull on those two silks and see if you can separate them? They are secure? We will lay these aside on the seat of this chair. And now, in sympathy, we find the other three silks have become knotted together." The three silks first laid on the table are taken up by one tip, and held—knotted together in a string.

"And now I will roll up this bundle of silks and mesmerise them." The silks are balled up and fanned with the hand. "Of course, it doesn't really mesmerise, but just makes them giddy, and when in that state the knots fall apart." The silks are allowed to flutter to the floor separated. "And to complete the circle of influence, the other set of silks have also separated themselves in perfect sympathy with their sister set." The remaining silks are lifted, and come up from the table one at a time.

All you require for this delightful trick are six silks. These should be fairly large—27in. squares are not too large; in fact, a large size makes the trick easier to work, besides being more spectacular. The colours are not material, but the colours suggested have been found, from experience, the

most suitable. White should not be used on any account.

The only preparation is to knot one set of silks together with slip-knots. To do this correctly, tie the orange silk around the yellow. That is, you only tie with the orange silk. You will find if this is correctly done that only a slight pull is necessary to pull the yellow silk from the orange. Now, at the opposite diagonal corner of the yellow silk tie the tip of the green silk in the same manner. Make the knots sufficiently tight to hold the weight of the silk, but not too tight that you cannot *easily* pull them apart. This completes the preparation. But this is not the whole secret. During the progress of the trick it is necessary to tie the other set of silks together in such a manner *that they will free themselves*. This is accomplished as follows:—Take two silks by the corners and just cross them. During this tying (?) keep the second finger under the supposed knot, and between the silks. Now turn the corner of the silk you hold in your right hand back behind the other, and then tie in a knot. You can now hold the silks below the knot, and allow anybody to pull on the tips of the silks, and it will appear to be tightening the knot. Actually, however, the silks are merely twisted, although this will not unravel unless you throw the whole weight of the silks upon the knot. The third silk is attached in a similar manner, and the silks rolled up in a ball. Then by picking up the silks one at a time they will lift separately.

In presentation, the three knotted silks are placed between the fingers and thumb of the right hand, the silks hanging down over the back of the hand. The knots are in the centre, and the silks can be arranged so that the knots are entirely hidden in the folds, and by taking each tip separately, in quick succession, the silks appear to be quite separate. In front of these place the second set of silks. They should be arranged in the order of presentation—orange in front, and green last.

Take the first set, showing each one, and lay over the back rail of a chair. The colours for the second set are now called rather quickly, and the tip of each silk taken as you

call the colour. This set is then laid on the table. The silks on the chair are now taken and knotted as explained, and in balling up, before laying on the seat of the chair, ruffle them a little to dissolve the knots.

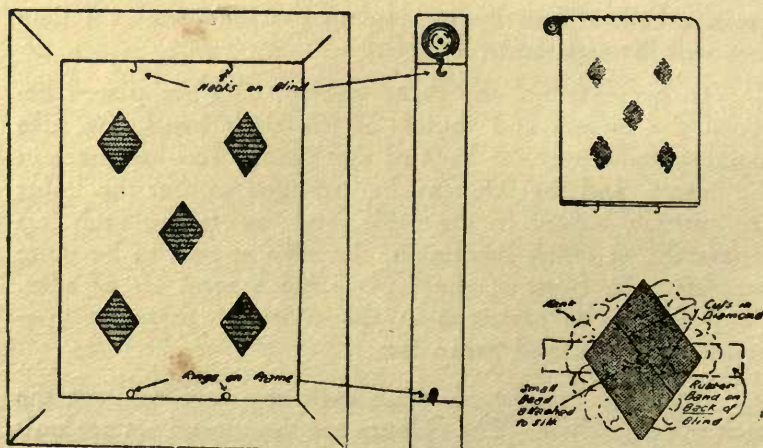
Now take one tip of the silks on the table, and pulling gently, show them knotted in a string. In balling these up, grip the centre silk near each knot, with the finger and thumb of the left hand. Now gather up the two lower corners of the other silks, and roll into a bundle. In doing this you pull with the finger and thumb on the centre silk, and the knots will be pulled free, so that the silks are actually rolled up unknotted.

Hold the bundle in your left hand, and make a few passes with the right hand over it, fanning the knots apart. Then show the silks separated, and conclude by lifting up the silks from the chair one at a time.

THE FIVE OF DIAMONDS.

For this effect I am indebted to Mr. Harold J. Watson, a South Australian magician.

A large frame is shown, and covered with a cloth. A playing card is forced—the Five of Diamonds. This is



vanished by any method which happens to be favoured by the performer. The cloth is removed, and there is a giant Five of Diamonds in the frame. From each of the corner pips a silk handkerchief is produced, and from the centre one a Union Jack.

The frame is merely a skeleton. The large reproduction of the card is really a blind on a spring roller. Each of the diamonds is slit across the centre, and rubber hinged to open outwards. Behind each of these is concealed a silk or flag, held folded flat against the back of the diamond, and held by an elastic band. A red button is sewn to one corner of each silk, and projects from the centre of the diamond. The blind, which is rolled up behind the top cross-bar, has a metal rod sewn in the bottom, with two hooks attached, as in the drawing. The covering cloth also has a metal bar along one short edge, and this is caught in the hooks, and pulls them down, and engages them in the rings in lower edge of the frame. Incidentally, a spring blind can be substituted for the covering cloth. The blind is best made from the white ducoed cloth used for talkie screens, but a white rubber cloth makes a good substitute.

"MIRAX," THE MIRACLE PICTURE.

On the stage is an easel with a framed board on it. The performer, presenting the experiment, says: "I have here a beautiful frame of special construction, of which, I am sorry to say, the glass is broken. Although good enough for any picture, just at present it is empty. I will open the back and show you it is free from deception." The back is taken out, or it may be hinged to open, and replaced. "That, however, will not prevent it being of use." Replace on easel.

"Now I come to an important item: A papyrus found among the pyramids of Egypt in the sarcophagus of Rhameses I., and for a long time enshrined in a veil of mystery. Fortunately, it came into my possession. How, I need not explain. It were better so.

"This document of Pharaoh's time is blank on both sides, and to prove its authenticity it bears the ancient seal, which I can assure you is genuine. I shall roll it up and place it in this massive golden container."

The "document" is a sheet of drawing paper, on which in one corner is an imitation seal. The container is a long tube made on the principle of the ghost tube, and the tube has caps at each end. In the concealed compartment is a

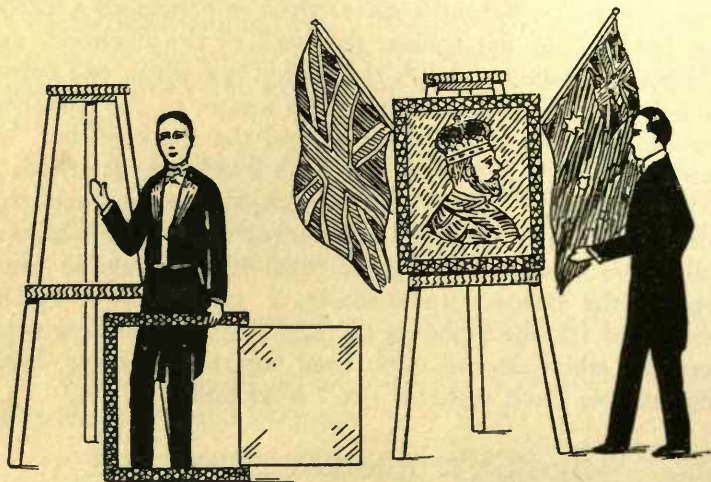


FIG 1

FIG 2

similar sheet of paper, with the name of the picture you intend to produce written across it in bold characters. After placing the paper in the tube, and replacing the cap, it is handed to a spectator.

"Now, will some trustworthy gentleman hold it for a while? You look rather modest, sir, but you'll do alright. Hold it this way with both hands. Bravo! Wonderful! I would trust you with the Commonwealth Loan. Just put the little finger out a little more." Much innocent fun can be got by placing the assistant in a pose.

"Stay where you are, no matter what happens. I am going to pass a current of 500,000 volts through the tube, but it won't affect you." Tie a ribbon around the tube, and

connect it to the frame on the easel.

"And now I want the name of a celebrity. King George? Thank you. Let us open the tube, and see what the oracle has to say about it." The tube is opened, and paper withdrawn, and scrawled across is the name of "King George." There is a flash from the frame, and a picture of King George fills the frame, and from either side flags are hanging.

Little explanation is required. The picture which appears in the frame is attached by means of tapes to a spring roller in the frame, similar to that illustrated in "A Patriotic Finale" on page 27 of "The Conjuror" for July, 1934. The flags are concealed in the uprights of the easel. When the container is opened, the cap on the opposite end is taken off, and the duplicate sheet of paper in the hidden compartment withdrawn.

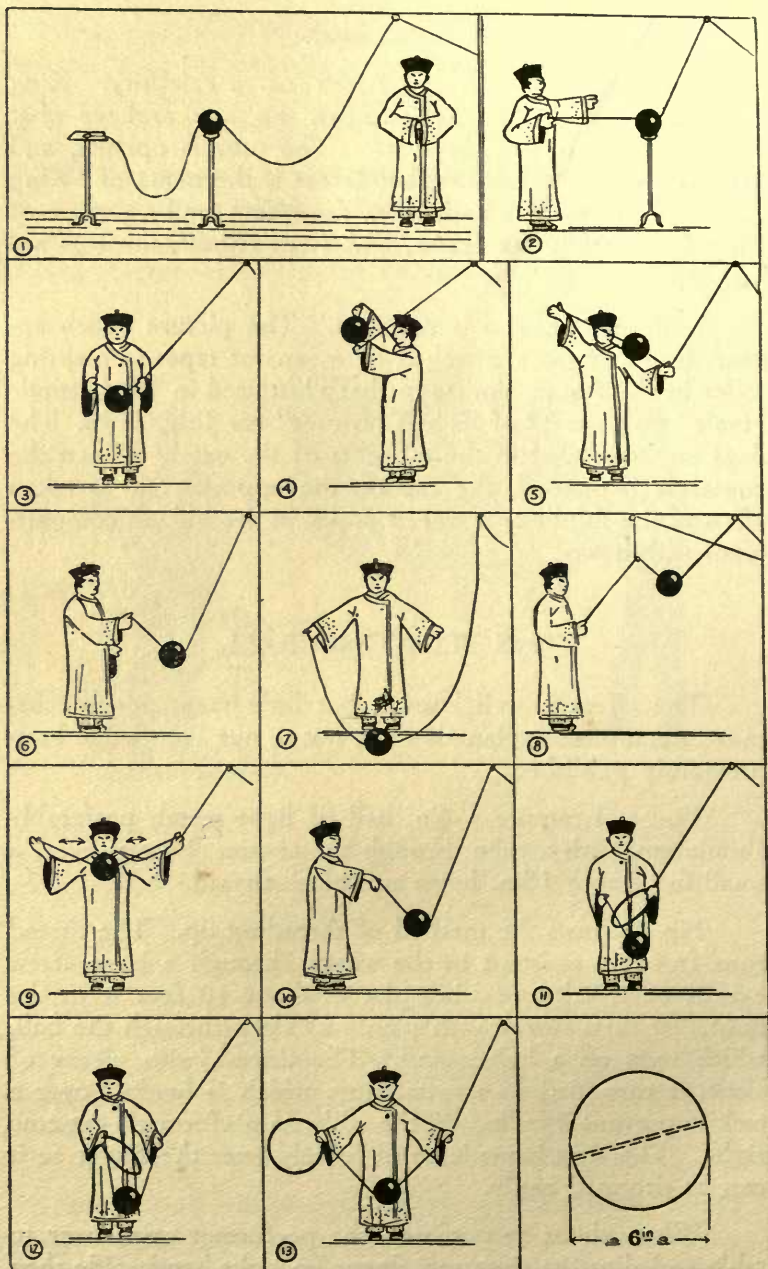
THE FLOATING BALL.

The effect is well known, but little seen, possibly because a complete explanation has not to our knowledge been previously published.

You will require a 6in. ball of light metal, preferably aluminium, with a tube through the centre; 2 screw eyes; a small fish hook; 18in. hoop and black thread.

Fig. 1 shows the method of threading up. The thread runs from an assistant in the wings, through a large screw eye in outer edge of wing placed about 10 feet from the floor. It then swings with plenty of slack through the ball, which rests on a light stand. The thread, with plenty of slack, is then tied to a metal ring, which is hooked over a tack to prevent it falling off the table on performer's extreme right. The ring is made to fit loosely over the finger so it can be dropped easily.

When about to perform, the performer steps over to table and slips the ring over finger on right hand. He then



turns to the right and comes down stage, announcing that he is about to perform the "Floating Ball." Meanwhile assistant enters, and moves the table with ball down to centre of stage.

Fig. 2.—Performer turns towards the ball, and stands in such a position as to bring his right hand, the ball, and screw eye in a direct line. He pretends to mesmerise the ball, both hands and fingers making passes over and around it. Assistant slowly takes in the slack thread, and the ball slowly rises from the standard and slides towards performer.

Fig. 3.—When the ball reaches the position shown here, performer slowly turns to face the audience, and engages the thread between first finger and thumb of left hand.

Fig. 4.—To turn round, he raises his hand high enough to allow the thread to pass over his head, and then turns to the right.

Fig. 5.—At this point in the turn he pinches the thread between thumb and finger of left hand, and backs round to the right and faces audience, thus avoiding the little jerk that would otherwise affect the ball. This will be more readily understood when practising.

Fig. 6.—To cause the ball to pass some distance from him, he causes the ball to come into position, as in Fig. 3. He now turns quickly to the left, and with a swing of the right hand sends the ball sliding away from him along the thread. The assistant at same time pays out enough thread to hold the ball hand high, so it will not return to performer.

Fig. 7.—Assistant now lowers ball to floor, and performer walks round the back of it, steps over it, and passes round to right into former position.

Fig. 8.—As the performer walks round, after stepping over ball, he engages a small black fish hook in the main thread. This must be very small, and is attached to the end of a second thread which passes up through the second screw-eye, which is placed in centre of stage in a batten, and extends to assistant. The hook hangs within easy reach of the performer. A small chalk mark on the floor will serve

to indicate its position. When he steps over ball, he walks to the right and turns his back on the audience, and in making this turn he gets the hook on to the main thread. Assistant now slips the loop of his end of the main line over a nail, and slowly draws in on the hooked thread, causing the ball to rise several feet from the floor. As it rises, performer steps towards it, and passes underneath. He slowly backs away, making passes all the time, and the assistant lets out slack, and the ball floats towards the performer, and into his hand. The fish hook is now released, and pulled up out of the way.

Fig. 9.—With the ball in this position, assistant enters from rear.

Fig. 6.—With the ball in this position, performer steps slowly forward and goes down the run-down. In fact, he can go anywhere, and allow audience to feel the ball, so long as the thread is not seen. Assistant simply pays out slack, or takes it in, according to the performer's movements. While doing this, the palms of the hands should be about 6 inches from sides of ball, and hands kept moving. Of course, if you allow the audience to feel the ball, the hands should be closed on the ball, covering the holes.

Fig. 10.—With the ball in this position, assistant enters from rear and hands the hoop to the performer in his left hand. He slowly swings it under the ball as if dishing it up.

Fig. 11.—The hoop is now brought up over the ball and grasped with right hand, the left releasing its hold.

Fig. 12.—The hoop is now brought actually on the thread, and can be passed freely over the ball.

Fig. 13.—The hoop is swung back into this position, and assistant takes it and hands it to the audience for inspection. The fact of performer changing hands with the hoop makes a perfect illusion.

The performer then causes the ball to float back to the standard. The thread is snapped and pulled clear by assistant, and performer throws the ball up in the air several times,

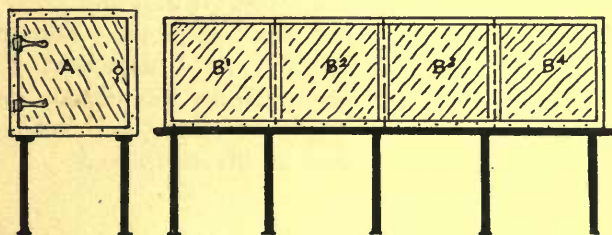
proving its freedom.

Some performers commence by having the ball brought on stage in a box, and conclude by making the ball float back into it. The working is just the same; it is just one of those little artistic touches which make for individuality.

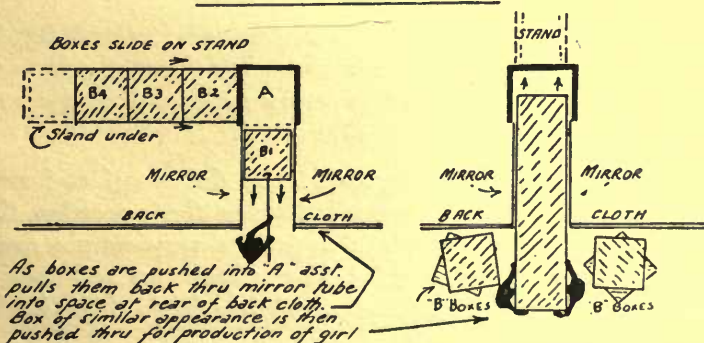
One final hint: Always test your thread before working.

THE MILLION DOLLAR MYSTERY.

In the centre of the stage stands a small cabinet about 2 feet square, raised on legs a little over 4 feet long. The box is actually a slender framework, having doors in either side and front, and a lid on top. These are all opened, and the box shown empty. Alongside the box is another stand, on which rests a long box made up of four or five sections. This is about 18 inches square, and 6 feet long. Opening the side door, this is slowly pushed into the cubical cabinet; but it fails to make any appearance at the other side. When



— FRONT VIEW OF THE ILLUSION —



— HOW THIS STARTLING ILLUSION IS DONE —

it has finally disappeared, the side door is closed, the front door opened, and the box is pulled out from the front. It is *then* shown to be solid, and when opened up contains a lady assistant.

Although the conception is very clever, the secret is rather obvious. The long box, in the first place, *must* be collapsible, and the one finally produced *must* come from the rear.

With good camouflage, however, the *modus operandi* can be well concealed. Extending from the rear of the cabinet are four mirrors. These are bevelled at the edges to hide the join, and the backcloth has a diagonal figured design, which is reflected in the mirror. A flimsy nicked framework, which I can best describe as similar to a spider's web, is attached to the rear of the cabinet, and hides the mirror between this and the backcloth. The long box, which is pushed into the side, is made up of cubical sections, and as each one enters the cabinet an assistant at the end of the mirror-covered tunnel hooks a rod on to it and pulls it along the tunnel, and out behind the backcloth. The long box which emerges from the front is just a plain box. One performer whom we have seen perform this illusion produced several of these boxes in quick succession, each one on being opened disclosing a member of his company.

THE GIRL AND THE LADDER.

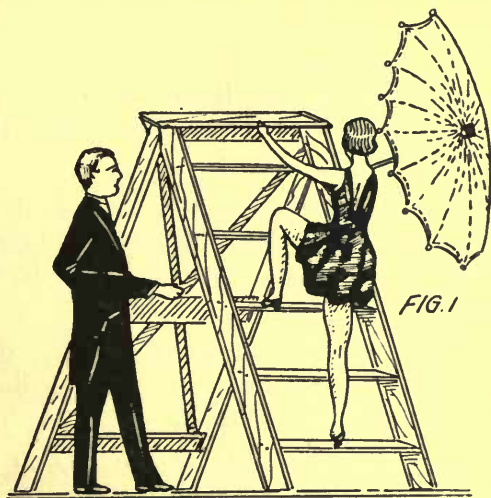
The effect in this case is much the same as one that has been used a great deal by magicians; but the methods in the illusion to be described are so vastly superior that the weak points have been altogether eliminated.

Assistants carry a step-ladder on the stage, and set it up in the centre of the stage. During the operation they walk all around it, proving that it is a very simple everyday article, and any magician in the audience will look in vain for the blind which usually backs the back of the ladder.

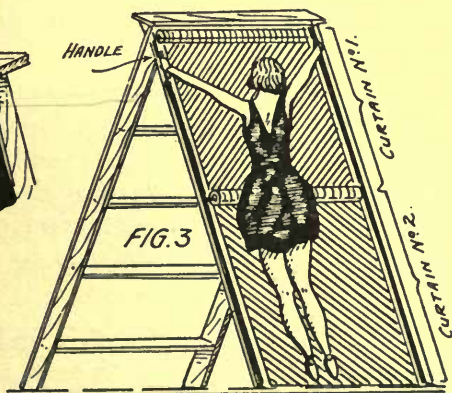
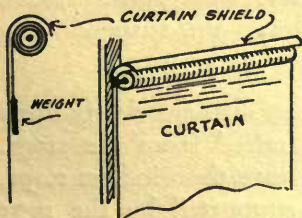
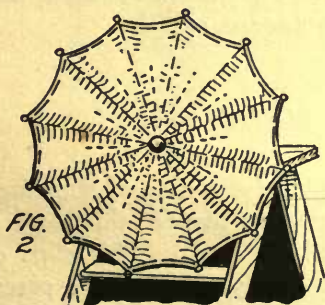
A girl climbs the ladder, carrying a large parasol. When

she reaches the top she crouches on the top step, and commences twirling the parasol.

Suddenly, the spinning parasol topples over and falls to the stage, where it is deftly caught by the performer. But



... ASCENDING THE LADDER ...



... REAR VIEW WITH BLINDS DOWN ...

the girl has completely disappeared!

Although the secret on which the illusion depends is a well-used one, the routine is so carefully prepared that the effect is most amazing.

There are two curtains at the back of the ladder concealed by the braces, and rolled at the beginning of the illusion. When the step-ladder is set it is possible to walk behind it, thus silently demonstrating that there is no place for concealment.

The girl enters and moves towards the ladder, and as she mounts the steps, with the umbrella outspread, an assistant steadying the ladder releases the blinds, which match the back cloth.

With the girl on top of the ladder, the audience still imagine they can see right through, as the braces on the steps break the field of vision.

After crouching behind the parasol, the girl slides down the back of the ladder, holding to concealed handles, and using the bottom brace as a foot-rest. From this position she twirls the parasol, and finally pushes it forward, thus producing the effect of an instantaneous vanish.

CHEATING THE HANGMAN.

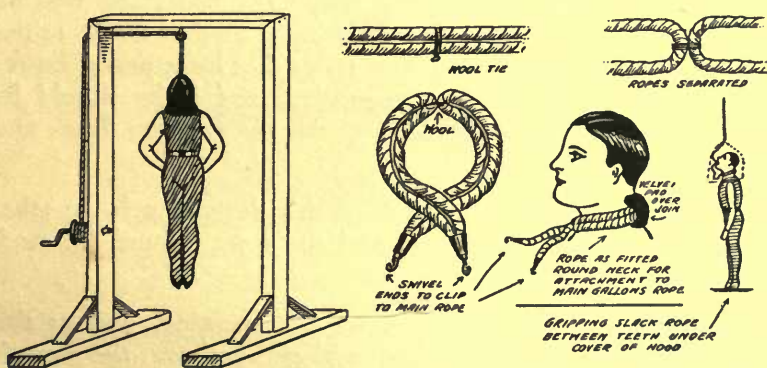
A gibbet as illustrated occupies the centre of the stage. The performer invites a committee to inspect this, and to place a double rope noose round his neck. This clips on to the main rope running through pulleys. A hood is placed over the performer's head; and then, with hands folded across his chest, he is ready to be drawn up, suspended by his neck.

The committee steps aside, and an assistant slowly turns the windlass, and the performer is raised from the stage. When he is about two feet from the stage the windlass stops, and he is left suspended, hanging supported by the rope

around his neck.

The music suddenly ceases. Slowly he unfolds his arms, and the body quivers. The drums begin to roll; slightly at first, but with the tempo gradually increasing. The hanging man slowly raises his hands above his head, and catches the rope. There is a jerk of hands on the rope; a crash of cymbals, and the performer falls to the stage a free man.

Explanation. — The artist has caught the effect and methods employed in a very realistic manner. The gallows framework stands about 10 to 12 feet high. The top bar has a pulley and guide for the rope in the centre on the under side, the rope passing through one upright, over another pulley, and down to the windlass, which is attached to the right-hand post. A black hood which slides over the rope is attached to a cord, and when this is released it slides



down the rope and over the performer's head and neck. The only other requisite is a double rope to go round performer's neck, and terminating in snap hooks for attaching to the main rope. So much for the apparatus, which is very simple. In the illustration showing rope around performer's neck will be seen a velvet pad. This is ostensibly for the purpose of protecting the neck; but, actually, it hides the join in the double ropes.

The presentation commences by inviting two gentlemen

on the stage to inspect the various articles used. The performer then removes his coat and collar, and introduces the double ropes, which are held side by side, and the velvet pad. Holding one end of the ropes, he invites one of the committee to pull and see that they cannot come apart. The pad is then shown, it being explained that this is to protect the skin at the back of the neck, which is very tender. While the pad is being examined, the performer has placed his finger and thumb between the ropes and given them a twist, which has the effect of reversing the ends. The two ropes are now held together at the centre by a single length of 3-ply wool, being prepared as in the well-known "Ropes and Rings" trick. But in this case the experiment is far more risky than the "Ropes and Rings," so care must be taken that the wool is not too strong. Also, as this has been found the best method, you are advised to employ it, and not try pins or clips. The velvet pad, having been returned, is now twisted over the join in the ropes, and passed round the neck, and tied together under the chin, thus forming a double noose round the neck. The performer now states that his assistant knows how long he can remain suspended, and if he should be unable to release himself in time, he will cut him down and endeavour to save his life.

Having delivered himself of this short speech, he takes his place under the gibbet, and the rope around his neck is secured to the hoisting rope.

All is now in readiness for the hanging, and as this would not be complete without a black hood over the victim's face, this is now lowered over his head. When the hood is lowered over his head the performer reaches up to move the rope slightly, as if to make it more comfortable. This is really THE critical move, because it is done to secure enough slack to get a GOOD GRIP of the rope between the teeth.

Having accomplished this, performer folds his arms, and assistant slowly turns the windlass, which tightens the rope and pulls the performer into a hanging position, apparently hanging from the rope around his neck; but, as we know,

actually suspended by the rope from his teeth. After a slight pause in the music, for effect, he slowly raises his hands. One grips the main rope, and the other feels for the join at the back of the neck. This latter is quickly snapped; there is a wriggle of the body, and the performer falls to the stage, clear of the rope, and falls on the stage in a dazed manner.

It would be difficult to find so dramatic and spectacular an illusion which can be built so cheaply as this illusion; and if it is carefully rehearsed, with due attention to detail, the effect will be all that can be desired.

Just one or two hints that have been found absolutely necessary to observe. The ability to suspend by the teeth requires some practise. Use wool of the thickness stated. Do not attempt to drop until you feel the loop has given way, otherwise you may dislocate the neck. The lack of the necessary details will thoroughly discourage attempts to "pinch" by other performers.

SECRETS OF THE GREAT RIFLE ACT.

If only for the fact that it has meant the death of several prominent magicians, the Bullet Catching act must stand as one of the best known feats of Modern Magic. And yet the real secrets are not very well known.

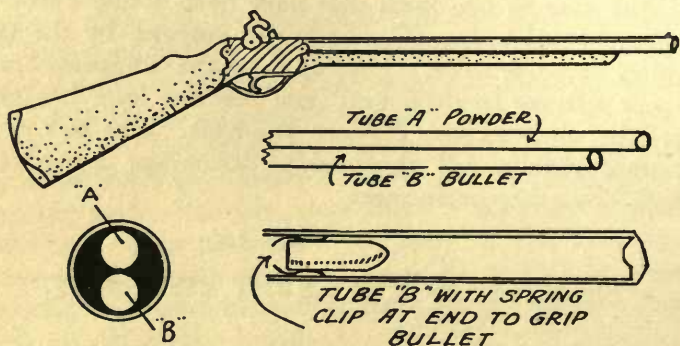
We shall pass over the old-time method which employed the old-fashioned muzzle-loading pistol, and bullets of plum-bago, or black lead, and confine ourselves to the two best methods employed by modern magicians.

Mention of this act calls to mind Chung Ling Soo, whose death, shot from his own gun, and dying in harness, caused not only a pang of regret, but much speculation. With the latter we shall not deal, because it is a mystery only Chung Ling Soo himself could solve, and he has solved his last mystery. This was probably Soo's most spectacular illusion. Four bullets were taken to the audience by an assist-

ant to be examined and marked. Soo then took the bullets and loaded them into four rifles, after he had put in charges of powder, and wads of paper or cotton wool.

Four assistants then took the rifles and fired them at Soo, who caught the bullets on a plate held in front of his chest.

While returning to the stage the assistant exchanged the marked bullets for four others, which were handed on a plate to Soo. The barrel of each rifle was divided down the centre. That is, there was really two tubes in one. This is shown in the accompanying drawings. In tube A, the pow-



der and plug was inserted, and the bullet pushed down tube B. At the stock end of B was a spring clip, and when the bullet was pushed down by the ramrod it engaged in the clip, so that even the shock of the powder discharge would not dislodge it. Some theorists were of the opinion that one of the barrels was corroded through, and the shot expended itself through tube B instead of A; but nothing definite has been established.

To our thinking, the best method was that used by an Australian magician, Jean Hugarde, who, twenty years ago, was one of the bright lights in Australian magic. Hugarde used to invite the local rifle clubs to send along four of their best shots at each entertainment, using their own service rifles with marked bullets. And so cleverly was the act arranged and performed, that the riflemen were among the

most mystified of his audience.

Needless to say, the rifles were not faked in any way. The cartridges were taken down for examination on a specially prepared tray, with a sliding bottom, which contained four duplicates. And the assistant merely had to slide the bottom of the tray, and the performer took the duplicate cartridges for loading the rifles. These were specially prepared. The bullet was extracted, and a dummy end fitted shaped like the bullet, made from waxed paper, and painted with aluminium paint. So that this should not be observed by the marksmen, as Hugarde loaded the rifles he dipped the bullets in powdered talc "to make them slide easily down the barrel." The assistant continued his journey with the tray behind the scenes, and with a pair of pliers extracted the marked bullets from the shells, and brought them in with a banner made of black velvet with a red heart sewn in the centre, on which the performer caught the bullets.

The guns being loaded, an assistant marched the marksmen down to the rear of the hall. Hugarde held the banner in front of his heart, and the order was given to fire. Immediately four chalk marks were observed on the heart in the centre of the target, and the four marked bullets dropped to the stage. So careful was Hugarde to details that the bullets were even rifle marked, and warmed in readiness for the finale. They were passed to him in a pocket at the rear of the target, which was constructed on the lines of the card banner—a double flap falling down and revealing a duplicate heart with the chalk marks.

WALKING FROM A SHADOW.

This illusion is based on the principle that when a shadow of a person or object is thrown upon a specially prepared screen, the shadow will remain on the screen, even if the person or object moves away. It therefore allows the presentation of many amusing and mystifying entertainments.

Setting: A window frame is set on the stage. It can be a simple stand, three-fold screen, or a cabinet. It should, however, be mounted on feet about the stage to discount any suspicion of traps, and the blind should be on a spring roller, so that it may be raised or lowered at will. It is set fairly well back in centre of stage. Behind this is a lantern, or spot-light, focussed to play on to the screen. It must also be adapted to take various coloured screens to throw different coloured lights.

The effects obtainable are as follow:—

1. Performer steps on stage and demonstrates the absence of any properties, except the lantern and the screen. The screen is drawn, and the light focussed on it, and the other lights in the building are switched off. He walks behind the screen. Every movement is visible to the audience in front. At last he takes a pose, and remains in a still position. Colour screens are inserted, and various colours thrown on the screen. Then he walks away, and in front of the screen—**BUT HIS SHADOW REMAINS ON THE SCREEN.**

2. Performer now again walks behind the screen, and takes up another pose. Instantly the blind flies up. Both shadow and performer have disappeared.

3. To prove that there is no preparation, or shadow slides are used, any member of the audience is allowed to stand behind the screen and take up any pose he desires. He then walks away, and his shadow remains.

4. A girl steps behind the screen fully dressed. Her shadow is visible. She disrobes, and her silhouette appears on the screen. Finally, she dissolves in thin air.

The Secret: The window shade is coated on the side away from the audience with luminous green paint.

The colour screens used, which are best arranged on a circular disc to revolve either behind or in front of the lens, are arranged in the following order: Red, Green, Blue, and Blank. The latter entirely cuts off the light.

First the Red screen is used, and the performer can move freely, because this has no effect on the blind. Then the performer calls Green, and assumes the position it is desired the shadow will show. Then Blue is thrown on, and then performer again calls Green. The assistant at the lantern, however, switches over the blank, but the screen glows with a luminous green, and performer can then step in front, leaving his shadow behind. Or the performer can change places with a girl; or, in the case of the disrobing effect, the girl can hurriedly dress again, all movement behind the screen being unseen by the audience.

In order to clear the shadow from the screen for the next effect, all that is necessary is for the white light to be thrown on the screen. The shade can be rolled up with the shadow still on it, and unrolled with the shadow still there. But if it be unrolled with a white light showing, it shows clear.

A remarkable illusion that is inexpensive, and can be carried in your suitcase.

THE "MERRY WIDOW" ILLUSION.

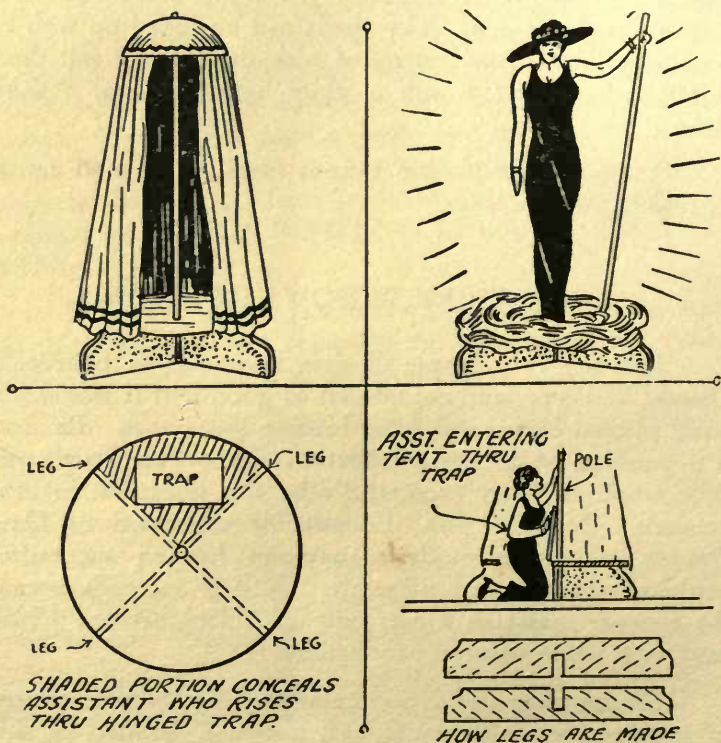
This is a very simple illusion, invented, we believe, by Oswald Williams, and considered so good that it was shamelessly pirated by several other leading illusionists. Its secret is dependent on a clever utilisation of the "black-art" principle employed very successfully by this illusionist in other illusions. In fact, with the possible exception of David Devant, no other modern magician has so successfully exploited this magical principle. And it succeeds because the average magician thinks only of "black art" as a black cave with white painted productions.

On the stage stands a circular platform on a framework of cross-pieces. Our artist has, however, omitted to show that these are fretted out, so that they can apparently be seen through. The two rear "legs" are covered with material to match the backcloth, and a carpet, or stage covering of simi-

lar material is used. On the pedestal stands a bathing tent suspended from a canopy on a centre pole. The curtains are drawn for a moment, and then fall away revealing a slender lady wearing a large "Merry Widow" hat, and holding a long stick.

The simplicity is so well shown in the illustrations that very little description is required. The lady is hidden behind the rear compartment, and enters through a trap in the base-board. The hat is concealed in the canopy, and the stick is in the centre pole of the tent.

Simple; but both effective and spectacular.



THE SHOW OF HANDS.

This illusion, which is described by Oscar S. Teale, in his book, "Higher Magic," was a feature of the show of the late Robert Heller.

The performer enters at centre of stage with a candlestick in each hand. He advances, holding the candles first high, then low, as he searches the stage as if in search of something. Then he deposits one of the lighted candles on the floor behind a draped cabinet which occupies the centre of the stage. This cabinet is raised on legs about 14 inches high, so the candle gives a clear view underneath. The remaining candle is placed alongside the cabinet. Then he cautiously creeps down towards front of stage, and raising his hand for silence, directs attention to the cabinet. The curtained sides of this are now raised, showing it to be empty.

A lady assistant now enters from the side of the stage. The performer rushes at her, and dragging her near the cabinet, ties her wrists behind her, bundles her in a sack, which is tied at the mouth, and the load carried inside the cabinet. The curtains are drawn, and standing apart, and gazing at the cabinet, the performer calls out in sepulchral tones: "At last I have got you. Now escape—if you can!"

For a few minutes there is a commotion in the cabinet. Then the assistant's garments are thrown out through a trap in the top on to the stage in front of the cabinet. Simultaneously, the assistant calls for "light." Performer shrugs his shoulders, advances to cabinet, then turns back and asks the audience: "Would you? Do you think it's safe?"

Whereupon a voice comes again from the cabinet: "I'm in the bag."

"Oh, you're in the bag, are you?" says the performer, and with an air of apparent doubt he opens the curtains and peers in. Then satisfied that such is the case, he guides the assistant out of the cabinet, and off the stage. He then essays an apology to the audience for the failure of the experiment in a manner that only tends to befog the

audience. But while he is speaking white hands appear emerging on either side of the front curtains. The interest of the audience soon shows the performer that something is going on in the cabinet, and he turns and beholds the "show of hands."

Taking a revolver he fires at the cabinet, and the curtains fall apart, revealing the assistant fully dressed, and with the bag over her arm.

Just how Heller worked this illusion I do not know. Mr. Teale offers no explanation whatever, and I do not think any satisfactory solution has so far been suggested. Although a writer in "The Sphinx" some years ago did suggest that it could be worked with a cabinet with a double side for concealing a duplicate assistant. This, however, does not meet the bill, as it is not possible to show the interior empty—a most necessary essential. Also, you could not have curtained sides to fall down at the finish.

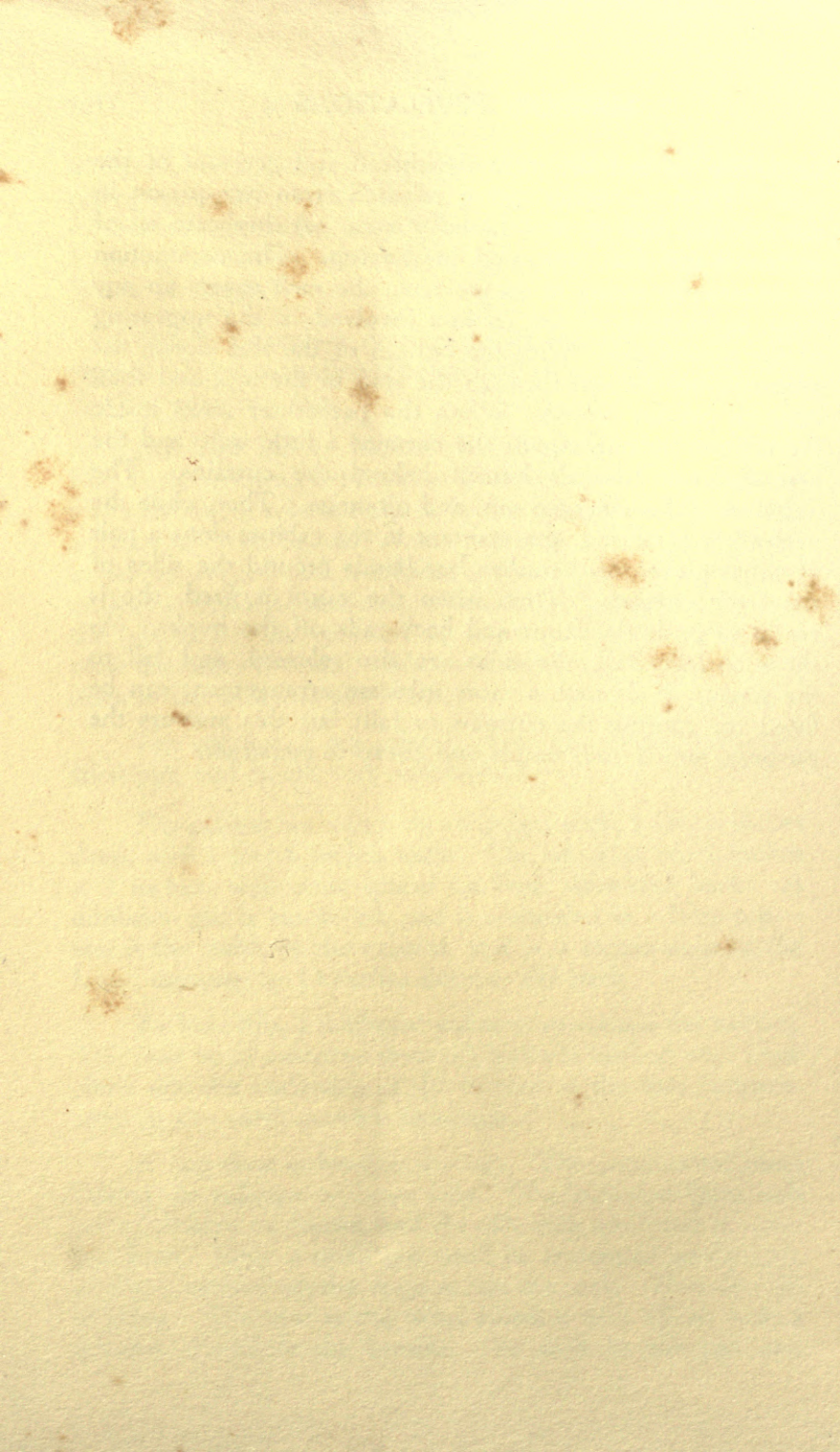
The solution I am offering here has been thoroughly tried out, and found very satisfactory:—

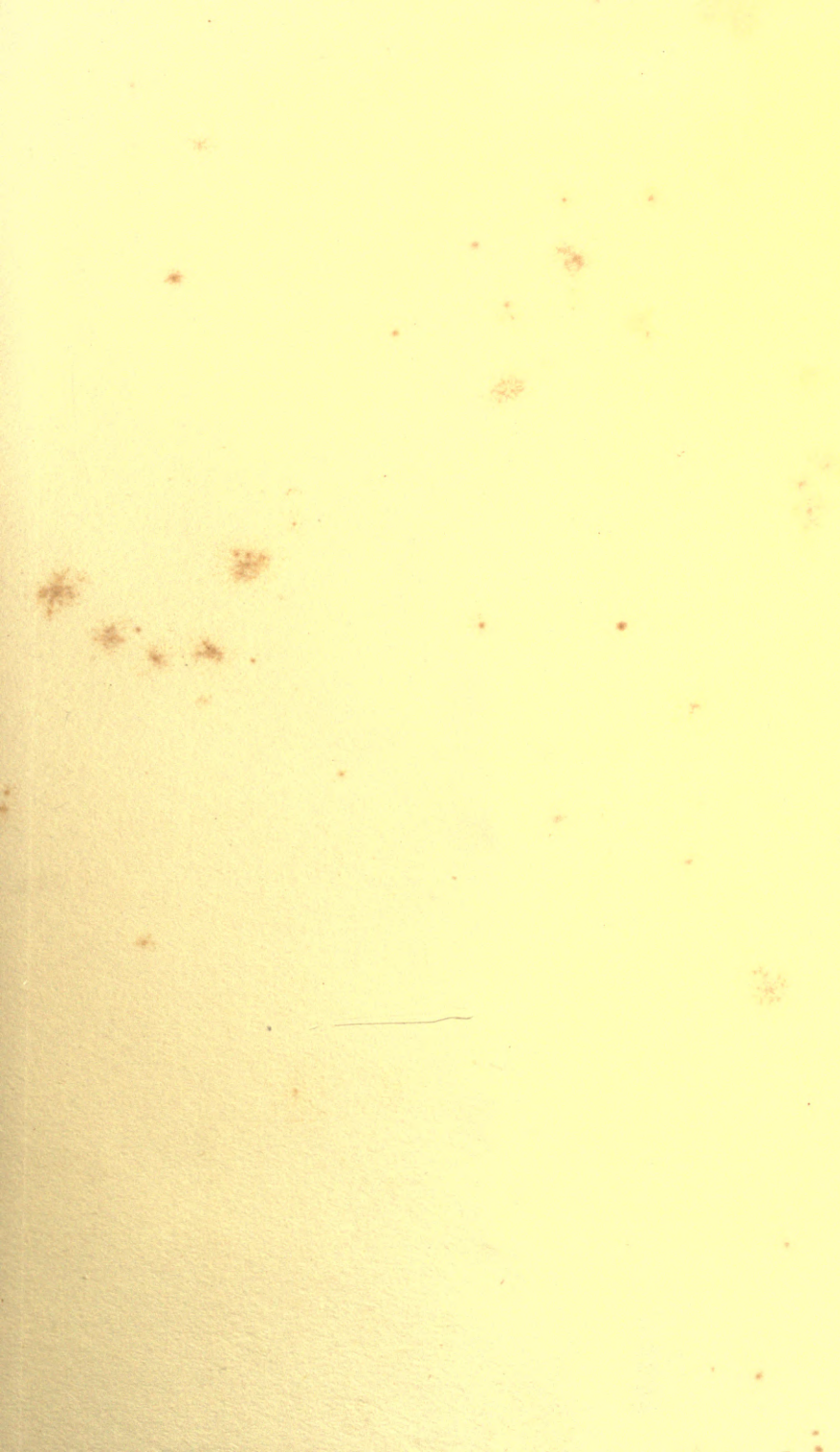
The cabinet is about 6 feet 6 inches high, 3 feet 6 inches deep, and 2 feet 6 inches wide. The uprights are 2 inches x 2 inches, with cross braces on both sides and back. A duplicate girl is employed, and is concealed in a false top—this is the width of the cabinet, and is 9 inches deep at the front, tapering to 12 inches deep at the back.

To hide this, a scalloped vallance surrounds the cabinet. This may be of coloured material, but it is backed with black cloth, and the underside of the bottom of the load compartment is also cloth covered to match.

A trap-door is fitted in the top. The curtains are hung behind the vallance on brass rods. The back and front rails are suspended on hooks, and the side rails are fitted to overlap these. Only a small girl need be concealed in the top, as she is carried off the stage inside the sack. Now for the working. The sack is the usual Hindoo sack effect, with a running thread in the bottom. As soon as the girl gets

inside the cabinet she pulls the thread and gets out of the sack. Then the other girl is released from her prison in the top, and tied up in a duplicate sack. A duplicate set of garments are also concealed in the top. The commotion of apparently trying to escape from the sack covers up any noise or shaking of the cabinet involved in the appearing of the second girl. With the bottom of the trap down, the garments are thrown through the trap in the top, and then door to cabinet closed. When the performer looks inside the cabinet he only opens the curtains a little way, and the first assistant conceals herself behind the curtains. The duplicate girl is dragged out, and off stage. Then while the performer is talking, the assistant in the cabinet dons a pair of white gloves, and pushes her hands around the sides of the front curtains. Then when the pistol is fired, she is ready to push the front and back rails off the hooks. As these curtains fall, the sides are also released, and fall to the stage. If desired, a more intricate arrangement can be fitted for causing the curtains to fall; but this answers the purpose, and is both simple and cheap to construct.





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