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Tricks and Magic Made Easy



Made Easy Series

TRICKS AND MAGIC MADE EASY

BY

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NEW YORK
EDWARD J. CLODE

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JUL 30 1919

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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Tricks and Magic Made Easy

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

INTRODUCTION

MAGIC has offered a never-failing source of entertainment to mankind throughout all the ages of history. Indeed, it has had no rival in its power to divert, to charm and to enthrall with its ever-varying array of wonders. Its sway has been universal both as to time and as to place. In the ancient days, magic played a chief part in religion. Everywhere, among primitive peoples, the priests were not only ministers of the gods, but also wizards, workers of miracles cunningly devised to awe the devout and to hold

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them fast in the bondage of superstition.

As men grew wiser, they came to understand that the marvels exploited by priestcraft were merely artfully contrived illusions, by which they had been deceived. Magic as a genuine science became discredited with the growth of learning, and at last disappeared almost completely throughout the civilized world. To-day, magic is taken seriously only by savage tribes in the remote parts of the earth, and by a few fanatics who seek to gain supernatural ability through study of the occult.

Magic, in our own time, no longer plays the hypocrite. It is, on the contrary, an unabashed trickster. Its ways are all of guile, and it openly flaunts its deceitfulness as a prime virtue.

Magic has lost nothing of its fascination through this honesty in the confession of dishonesty. The magician presents himself before those whom he would entertain with the avowed intention of befool-

Introduction

ing them again and again, and yet once again. He boastfully matches his wits and skill against their powers of perception. He mystifies, confuses, startles, turns actualities topsy-turvy, surprises and amazes, but always he delights. He challenges the intelligence of all beholders, demonstrates their foolishness, and in so doing gratifies them exceedingly. He gives a pleasure that never grows stale to old and young alike, to men, women and children.

Of course, the art of the prestidigitateur requires a lifetime of study and practice to attain its perfect expression. Nevertheless, many of the seeming miracles are capable of very simple explanation. There are almost innumerable tricks that depend for their astonishing effect solely on the superior knowledge of the conjurer. Such feats require no training in sleight-of-hand. Still another large class of illusions is of such a sort that the operation makes only a small demand on the dexterity of the performer. In preparing this

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volume, care has been taken to select for the student of magic only such tricks as are easily accomplished, requiring either no legerdemain, or so little as to be easily mastered by following the simple and explicit directions in the text.

Thus, magic is in truth made easy. Yet it retains to the full all its powers to puzzle, to baffle and to delight. The student who familiarizes himself with the pages that follow will find himself equipped for a most agreeable popularity as an entertainer in any company.

I

TRICKS WITHOUT SLEIGHT-
OF-HAND

TRICKS WITHOUT SLEIGHT- OF-HAND

THERE are many tricks that may be performed with an ordinary pack of playing cards, which require no sleight-of-hand. Because of the ease with which the learner may accomplish these, some of the best among them will be described at the outset.

DISCOVERY OF A CARD

FOR this trick, a certain number of the cards are dealt from the pack, and laid face upward on the table in three separate piles. Before beginning the distribution of the cards, one of the company is asked to select mentally a particular card.

If twenty-one is the number of cards, there will necessarily be seven cards in each of the three heaps.

When the twenty-one cards have been thus arranged in three piles on the table, you must ask the person who has chosen a card to tell in which heap it is. Then, you gather up the three piles of cards, but in doing so care must be taken to

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place the pile containing the selected card between the other two piles.

You next distribute again the twenty-one cards, face upward on the table, in three piles, exactly as before. You then request the chooser of the card to indicate the particular pile in which his card is now lying. On receiving this information, you again gather up the cards from the table, being careful as before to place the pile containing the card between the other two piles.

You must now distribute the cards for the third time precisely as the other two times. But, while doing so, you should note the center card in each one of the three piles—that is to say, the fourth card in each pile.

One of the three must be the selected card.

For the last time, you ask the chooser of the card to point out the particular heap in which it is lying. Immediately upon his doing so, you will announce the card,

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without even examining the pile. Or, if your memory of the three center cards in the piles is in the least uncertain, you may glance at the various cards in the heap before making the announcement. It is only necessary to remember that the center or fourth card in the pile must be the one selected after this third distribution.

Any other number of cards may be used instead of twenty-one, on condition that it be odd and a multiple of three. The selected card after three distributions into the three piles will be the central one of the packet. Thus, if fifteen cards are used, the heaps will contain five cards each, and the central card will be the third. If thirty-three cards are used, each pile will contain eleven cards, and the center card will be the sixth; and similarly for any other odd number.

GATHERING THE KINGS

YOU prepare for this trick by placing the four kings together, along with two jacks, which are set between the first and second kings. In performing the trick, the presence of the two jacks must not be revealed. The four kings, however, are shown to the spectators. In order to hide the jacks while this is done, the four kings should be held fanwise in the hand, care being taken that the jacks behind the second king are exactly even with it so that they cannot be perceived.

After the kings have been thus exhibited, they are folded together, along with the jacks, and all six are laid face downward on the top of the pack. The cards are

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then in this order: king, two jacks, three kings.

You now announce that you are about to distribute the kings as widely as possible throughout the deck.

Draw off the top card, and, in doing so, allow the spectators, as if by accident, to perceive that this is actually a king. Place it on the bottom of the pack.

Next, draw off the second card, but avoid giving the observers a sight of it, since this is one of the jacks, not a king. Place it about a third of the way down the deck.

Now, draw off the third card, which is also a jack, and, without permitting it to be seen, place it two-thirds of the way down the deck.

Again draw off the topmost card from the deck. This is the fourth card of those placed upon the deck at the outset, and it is therefore the first of the three kings that followed the two jacks in your original arrangement. You may carelessly display

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this king to the spectators. Then replace it on the top of the pack.

You now declare that you will bring the four kings together by simply cutting the cards. Since the first king has been placed on the bottom of the pack, and the two jacks that followed it have been removed and placed further down in the deck quite out of the way, the other kings, all three, are left together on top. Necessarily, when the cards are cut, the top and bottom cards are brought together.

So, you cut the cards, and then ask someone to look through them, whereupon the four kings are found assembled in the middle of the pack.

Any other two cards may, of course, be substituted for the jacks in this trick. They are suggested merely on account of their resemblance to kings, which might prevent detection of the deception if one of them chanced to be exposed during the performance of the trick so that spectators had a glimpse of it.

NAMING THE PACK

THIS is a feat of memory. As a matter of fact, however, the amount of memory involved is not so prodigious as it may seem to the company.

You announce that you will name all the cards of the deck in their order. Before attempting the trick, two measures of preparation must be taken—the first mental, the second physical. The first is the learning of a doggerel couplet; the second is the arrangement of the pack of cards in a certain order. The couplet is an old one devised to enumerate the cards of a suit according to their value. It is as follows:

“Eight kings threatened to save
Ninety-five ladies for one sick knave.”

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As examination of the lines will show, the nonsense words are readily to be interpreted as: eight, king, three, ten, two, seven, nine, five, queen, four, one, six, knave.

Now it is necessary to have in addition an order of the suits. For example, let the sequence be: diamonds, spades, hearts, clubs. You must memorize this order, and hold it constantly in mind in connection with the couplet, while privately arranging the whole pack to conform to this system.

In such preparation of the cards, first lay the eight of diamonds face upward on the table. You will remember that eight is the first card indicated in the couplet, and also that diamonds is the first suit in the order you have established.

Now, on the eight of diamonds, lay down the king of spades. You will remember that the king is indicated by the second word of the couplet, and that spades is the second suit according to your arrangement.

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The next card must be the three of hearts. This is to be followed by the ten of clubs.

On reaching this point, you have used all four suits, and you must now proceed to a repetition of them in the same order in connection with the values indicated by the succeeding words of the couplet.

So, we continue by laying down the two of diamonds. The seven of spades is next, and after this, the nine of hearts and the five of clubs.

Thus, the four suits are completed for a second time, and for the next cards we must repeat them in their order yet again while following the values given in the couplet.

It is obvious that after thirteen cards have been thus laid down in order, the couplet will have been exhausted. It then becomes necessary to continue by beginning the couplet again, using it with the order of the suits just as before.

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It will be seen that in arranging the whole pack the couplet containing the thirteen values of the cards must be used four times, while the order of the suits must be used thirteen times.

Having completed the arrangement of the cards secretly, the announcement is made to the company that you will name each card in its order.

With the pack lying face downward on the table, you mentally recall the first word of the couplet and at the same time the first suit of the order as arranged. This gives you eight and diamonds. You therefore state that the first card is the eight of diamonds. You then pick up this card from the top of the pack, and show it to the spectators.

You then similarly recall the second word of the couplet, kings, and the second suit, spades, and declare that the next card is the king of spades.

In like fashion, you proceed with the enumeration of each successive card in

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the pack, to the utter mystification of the company.

The trick is a very old one, but it is not generally known, and it is very effective.

It is best for this trick to have a duplicate deck of cards already arranged, and to substitute this prepared pack when required.

THE MAGIC PAIRS

THIS is a trick that depends on the use of a formula, or set of words, memorized by the performer.

You deal twenty cards from the deck, laying them face upward on the table in a series of pairs, arranged vertically. You then ask any number of the persons present to choose each a pair from the ten pairs displayed on the table, and to hold the two cards in memory.

You pick up the cards from the table, taking care to keep each pair united. But you may gather up the different pairs in any order you please, so long as the two cards in every pair are not separated.

The twenty cards are next laid face upward on the table a second time. But now

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the arrangement of them is in four rows, with five cards in each row. And it is now that you are to make use of the secret formula on which the trick depends.

The cards in this distribution are not laid down in the ordinary way, that is from the left to the right for the five in the first row, and then again from the left to the right for the five in the second row, and so on. Instead, you must place the two cards of each pair in certain positions indicated by the formula. The formula is: *Mutus dedit nomen Cocis*, which is the Latin for, "Change gave name to the Coci." The sentence is made up merely for the sake of the trick.

It will be seen that in these words there is a total of twenty letters, corresponding to the number of cards, the ten pairs. Moreover, each of the words consists of five letters, corresponding to the five cards of each row for the new arrangement. Finally, it must be noted that the twenty letters contain ten pairs. Thus, for ex-

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ample, there are two *u*'s in the first word, *mutus*. The first letter of this word, *m*, occurs also as the middle letter of the word, *nomen*. The third letter of *mutus*, *t*, is the last letter of the word *dedit*. The final letter of *mutus*, *s*, is also the final letter of *Cocis*. In similar fashion, the other pairs of letters are distributed through the various words.

You must have a mental picture of the formula:

M	U	T	U	S
D	E	D	I	T
N	O	M	E	N
C	O	C	I	S

Now, in laying down the pairs of cards on the table, you must distribute them so that each pair will take the place of a pair of letters in the formula. Thus, your first card will take the place of the letter, *m*, at the beginning of the word, *mutus*.

The second card of the first pair must

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not be laid down beside the other. Instead, you must so place it as to take the position of the other *m* in the formula. This *m* is the central letter of the word, *nomen*, which forms the third line. You therefore make the second card occupy the middle place in the imaginary third row on the table.

In laying down the second pair of cards, you give them the positions of the two *u*'s in the first word, *mutus*. Thus, the first card of the pair is laid in the second place in the row, and the other card of the pair in the fourth place of the same row.

The other pairs of cards are similarly distributed, making them in each instance assume the places of the repeated letters of the formula.

The method is clearly shown in the following chart, where each pair of cards is represented by repetition of the corresponding figures from one to ten in connection with the letters that serve as guides for the arrangement.

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M	U	T	U	S
1	2	4	2	8

D	E	D	I	T
3	5	3	10	4

N	O	M	E	N
9	7	1	5	9

C	O	C	I	S
6	7	6	10	8

The twenty cards having been laid down on the table according to this system, you next ask those who have selected pairs to indicate in which row, or rows, the pairs are displayed. If some one states that the two cards selected by him are in the first row and the third, you instantly name those two cards. You are able to do this because according to the formula, *m* is the only letter that appears in the first row and in the third. Since you have arranged the cards by pairs to correspond with the pairs of letters in the formula, you know

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that the first card of the first row and the central card of the third row compose this pair.

If another person declares that both the cards of his pair are in the first row, you immediately name for him the second and fourth cards as his selection, since these take the place of the letter *u* in that row, and the *u* is the only letter thus repeated in the row.

In like fashion, all of the chosen pairs may be readily named. It should be noted that any number of persons may select pairs, since the result will be exact in every instance. When more than ten persons make a selection, there will, of course, be duplication of the pairs to a greater or less extent.

It is advisable to have as many persons as is convenient make their choice at the outset, when the ten pairs are first laid down on the table. It is not expedient usually to repeat the trick. The particular method of distributing the cards in the

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four rows when done a second time may give a clue to the method. But, if it is desired to repeat the trick, care should be taken to follow a different order in arranging the cards. For example, instead of giving the first pair the places of the letter *m* in the first and the third line, you may make them the first and third cards in the second row, corresponding to the two *d*'s in *dedit*, and then make the second pair of cards stand for the two *c*'s of *Cocis* in the bottom row. This variation will tend still further to mystify the observers. In fact, the pairs may be distributed in any order preferred, so long as each two cards occupies the two places of a particular letter.

THE TURNED CARD

THIS is a very old and simple trick, but it is none the less very effective oftentimes. It consists merely in arranging the twelve court cards in a horizontal row on the table, and then telling the company to reverse any one of the cards while your back is turned, after which you will touch the card thus changed.

Close observation of the court cards reveals the fact that practically always the margin at one end of a card is somewhat wider than at the other end. When you lay the cards on the table, you must take care that all the cards have their wider and narrower margins in line. That is to say, that each of the cards in the row of twelve has its wide margin at the same

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end as has the card next to it, and similarly for all the others.

You direct that one or more of the cards shall be reversed, while your back is turned, or even while you are out of the room. After this has been done, a glance at the row shows which card or cards have been turned, and you name these.

You should note that sometimes the company agrees to reverse all of the cards, or none, and you should be alert against being puzzled by this manœuvre.

It is better not to repeat the trick often. Nor should you, before doing the trick a second time, restore any changed cards to their first position, which would tend to give a clue to the manner of performing the trick. You must instead keep in memory the alterations made, and so be able to observe the reversing of these cards as well as of the others.

THE MAGIC SQUARE

THIS is properly a puzzle, rather than a trick, but it will be found an excellent source of entertainment.

The requirement is to place sixteen cards, the four aces and the twelve court cards, in four rows of four each, in such a manner that no one row, whether horizontal or vertical, shall contain two cards of the same suit or of the same value.

This may be accomplished easily enough as follows:

Lay down any four cards of the same value in a diagonal line of the square that is to be formed. Then lay down a second diagonal line of four cards having the same value. For example, the first diagonal might be composed of four kings,

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while the second might contain four aces. But here it should be noted that the two central cards of the diagonals must be so chosen that the conditions of the puzzle are observed in the matter of the suits. Thus, with kings and aces for the diagonals, the two central kings must be of the same color, whether red or black, while the two central aces must be of the opposite color. Likewise, the end cards of the diagonals must be of different colors for the different values. The kings as end cards might be either black or red, and the aces at the ends of their line would be of the opposite color. Having reached this point in the arrangement of the cards, the completion of the task offers no difficulty. But, for convenience, one arrangement of the cards according to the terms of the puzzle is presented on the next page.

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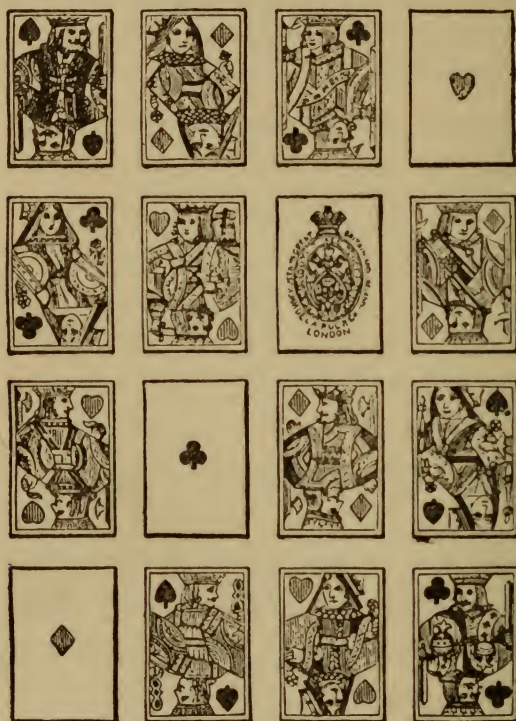


FIG. 1.

THE ROYAL COURT

THIS is a trick that depends entirely on the arrangement of the cards.

Take the twelve face cards, that is, the king, queen and knave of each suit. Distribute these on the table face upward in three rows of four for each row. In doing so, you must take care to see that all four suits are in the first row. That is to say, there must be no duplicates in suit. But the value of the four cards is of no importance. Only, each card, whatever its value, must be of a different suit from the other three in the row.

Now, in laying down the second row, the first card must have the same suit as the last card in the first row. Then, the second card must have the suit of the first

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card in the first row; the third card must have the suit of the second card in the first row, and the last card of this second row must have the suit of the third card in the row above. Thus, the second row also has the four suits, as did the first row. And, again, the value of the cards is of no importance. For the third row, the beginning is similarly with the suit of the last card in the preceding row. The second card in the third row has the suit of the first card in the preceding row: the third card, the suit of the second card in the preceding row: the fourth card, the suit of the third card in the preceding row.

You next gather up the cards, one by one, beginning with the last card of the third row, and placing on it in their order the last card of the second row, and of the first row. You then lay on these the third card of the last row, and after it in their order the third card in each row above. You continue with the second card of the last row and the second card of each row

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above in order. The series is finished by laying down the first card of each row, beginning at the bottom as before.

Having thus assembled the face cards, offer them face downward to any one for cutting. They may be cut any number of times, but they must not be shuffled.

Now, lay the cards face upward on the table. Four cards are first laid down in a row. These are followed by four more similarly laid down on the first row, and the remainder of the cards are distributed in like manner.

It will be found that in each of the four heaps, the three cards comprise the king, queen and knave of the same suit, though not necessarily in this order.

THE ASSEMBLY

PLACE the sixteen court cards and aces together anywhere in the pack. Then, offer the pack to be cut, with the purpose of separating this assembly of the high cards. You must take care, however, that only a simple or whist cut is used: the pack must not be shuffled. Any number of persons may thus cut the deck any number of times.

On receiving back the deck you should secretly notice the bottom card. If it be one of the high cards, you should yourself give a final cut to the pack, declaring that it is merely for luck.

It is well to allow one of the spectators to run over the cards and thus to disclose the fact that the assembly of high cards

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remains absolutely undisturbed by the numerous cuts.

As a matter of fact, it is quite impossible by cutting to separate such a collection of cards in the pack, except by bringing part to the top and part to the bottom, and such separation will be ended by the next cut, which must bring the two parts together. It is against this possibility of separation that you need to take precaution by observing the bottom card, and then adding a cut if required. But only rarely will this be necessary. The trick is simple, but it will be found baffling to most spectators, who are totally unable to understand the ineffectiveness of the cut in this instance.

DISCOVERY OF FOUR

IN this one trick, four cards selected by four different persons are readily discovered by the performer, in the following manner:

Four cards are given to a member of the company, a second four to another person, and a third and fourth four to two others. You direct each of those holding these cards to choose one mentally, and to shuffle his packet of four containing it as much as he pleases.

For your own part, you must take care to remember each of the four persons according to the order in which you now take back the cards.

You receive one of the packets and hold it in the left hand, face upward. Bear

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in mind that the person from whom you take these cards is number one. You similarly take a second packet, which you lay face upward on the first in the left hand. The one from whom you receive these is to be remembered as number two. The procedure is the same for the remaining two packets, taken from the persons whom you designate to yourself as number three and number four respectively.

You next deal the cards from the left hand, laying each face upward on the table. In this distribution, you place the cards from left to right in a row of four, and repeat this operation until all are displayed on the table. There are thus four heaps, with four cards in each heap.

A brief reflection at this point will explain the manner of the trick. The four cards received from number one were the first four cards laid down. Therefore, the card selected by number one is the bottom card in one of the four heaps. Similarly, the four cards held by number two now

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make the second card in each of the heaps, and the card chosen by him is the second card in one of those piles. The card selected by number three is likewise the third card in one of the piles, and the card of number four is the fourth.

After the cards have been thus laid out, you ask each of the four persons to indicate the particular pile containing his card. You can then instantly name the cards selected, because the card of number one is the first or bottom one in the pile he points out; the card of number two is the second card in the pile pointed out by him, and the cards of number three and number four are respectively the third and the fourth cards in the heaps indicated.

This trick may be performed also for three persons, giving three cards to each, and afterward distributing them in three piles. Or it might be done, if not too much of a tax on the memory, for a larger number of persons up to seven, making in

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each case the number of cards given to each person correspond to the number of persons, and having a like number of separate piles in the final arrangement.

DISCOVERY OF TWO

THIS trick was invented by the author, and has been frequently used by him during many years, without the method of it ever having been detected by the observers. At the present time, it is employed often by professional magicians. In spite of its effectiveness, it is exceedingly simple, and for that reason is included in this portion of the book. Indeed, in its very simplicity is found the reason for its power to mystify those beholding it.

In performing the trick, you give one half of the pack to one person, and the other half to a second person. You direct these two individuals each to draw out a card. While each retains the selected card, you take back the other cards. You

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then direct each of the two persons to look secretly at the card he holds, and to remember it. When they have done so, you return to each of them a half portion of the deck, and bid them place their cards with the others, and shuffle them to any desired extent. When you finally receive back the cards, you are able after glancing through them rapidly to name both of the chosen cards, and you may end the trick by simply announcing what cards were drawn, or in any one of the ways to be described later on for concluding a trick. One such method will be given under the next heading as an ending to this portion of the book.

The means by which this trick is accomplished is arrangement of the cards, and not sleight-of-hand, although it is necessary to deceive the observers in one particular as to what is actually done with the cards themselves.

You prepare for the trick privately by separating a pack of cards into its two

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colors. To one person, you must give that portion of the deck containing all black cards; to the other person, that portion of the deck containing all red cards.

You next bid each of them to draw out a card, and to retain it. You then take back the other cards from them, holding the packet of red cards in one hand and the packet of black cards in the other hand.

You now direct the two persons to look at their cards and to remember them. After they have done so, you give to each again a half of the deck, with instructions to place therein the chosen card, and to shuffle it as much as he will with the others.

It is at this point that the trick is essentially accomplished, for you must give to each of the two that portion of the pack which was originally given to the other. In doing this, it is not necessary that you change the cards you hold. All that is required is that, to the person from whom you took the cards into your left hand, you

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should now give the cards in your right hand, while you should give the cards in your left hand to the other person from whom you took back the cards into your right hand.

Since all of the cards given to one individual were red, and to the other black, the card retained by the one person must be red, and the card retained by the other person must be black. By your changing of the two portions of the deck, one of the two persons places his red card among the black cards, while the other places his black card among the red. No amount of shuffling can alter the fact that there is thus one red card in the black half of the deck, and one black card in the red half of the deck. On receiving back the two portions, you bring them together, but without shuffling. By swiftly running over the cards from the end, you will note the one red card among the black cards, and the one black among the red.

THE PERMANENT CARD

THE following is a remarkably effective way of concluding a trick when it is desirable to display in an astonishing manner a card selected by one of the company. Thus, it might be used in connection with the foregoing trick. Instead of giving the two parts of the prepared deck to two persons, you should give only half, to one person, for example the red cards. You then bid him draw out one of the cards, and after he has done so, you take back from him the other red cards. You now direct him to observe the card he has retained. When he has done so, you offer him the black half of the deck, bidding him replace the card and shuffle. On taking back the cards, a glance

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through them enables you to find the card chosen, since it will be the one red among the twenty-six black cards. But you do not announce the card. Instead, you proceed to the conclusion of the trick, in this wise:

On discovering the selected card, you advance one card beyond it, and then cut the cards so that the chosen card will be next to the top card. It is necessary now to shuffle the cards a little, in order to mingle the red and black, but in doing this care must be taken to maintain the position of the top two cards.

You next lay face downward on the table nine cards in three rows of three cards each, and then another nine on top of these, making eighteen in all. As you lay these cards down from left to right, it is obvious that the chosen card, which was next to the top of the deck, must be the second card laid down on the table, and it is now therefore the bottom card of the two in the middle of the first row. This

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location must be carefully remembered, since it is of vital importance to the trick.

When the cards have thus been distributed, you ask the chooser of the card to select one of the vertical rows. After he has indicated his choice, your procedure depends on whether or not he has chosen the middle row, which of course includes his card. If he has chosen the middle row, you immediately pick up the other two rows, and throw them aside. You then ask him to choose one of the three pairs of the middle row left lying on the table. If he now selects the top pair, of which the bottom one is his original card, you now leave this pair, but take away the other two pairs. You finally bid him select one of the two cards left. If he selects his own card, you cast aside the other, and direct him to turn over the one he has selected, when to his amazement he discovers that it is in fact the card of his original selection.

But if, of the two cards, he should indi-

Tricks Without Sleight-of-Hand

cate the one not originally chosen by him, you simply cast this card aside in a matter-of-fact manner, and remark that there now remains only a single card out of the eighteen laid down, and bid him turn this over. When he does so, his astonishment is unbounded to recognize in it the card of his choice.

It is in this various method of treating the person's selection of rows and cards that the secret of the trick is to be found. The student would naturally suppose that an intelligent person must notice the difference between leaving a row on the table or throwing it aside after it has been selected. But the intelligent person does not so notice.

Thus, for example, if at the outset he should choose either of the other rows instead of the middle row, you instantly cast this row aside, and bid him choose again one of the two remaining rows. If now he chooses the third row, that in turn is cast aside, and afterward the procedure

with the middle row, which is the only one now left, is exactly as described above. But if instead of choosing the third row, he chooses the middle row, your action is the same as before, for you cast aside the third row, and continue with the trick in the manner described above.

So, too, in reference to the middle row: whatever pair is chosen, your procedure must be the same. As a matter of form, you ask him to choose one of the pairs. But, unless he chooses the top pair which contains his card, you cast aside the pair he chooses, and bid him make another selection, when again you cast aside his choice, if it be not the top pair. It is indeed curious that you are able in such fashion either to retain his selection on the table, or to remove it, without his ever discovering the flagrant deception, but so it is.

II

SLEIGHT-OF-HAND WITH
CARDS

SLEIGHT-OF-HAND WITH CARDS

THERE are three sleight-of-hand requirements that are essential to the performer for most of his tricks with cards. The three are the shifting of the cut, the forcing of a card and the false shuffle. Some explanation of the three will now be given, taking them in their order.

SHIFTING THE CUT

THE shifting of a cut is of vital importance for the accomplishment of innumerable tricks. Whenever any of the cards are arranged in a certain position, it is necessary to maintain them in their order, but, at the same time, it is also necessary, in order to deceive the spectators as to this fact of arrangement, to offer the cards for cutting. After the cut has been made, the performer must restore the pack to the exact condition it had before being cut, and he must do this without permitting anyone to detect the operation. Such a shifting of the cut has been commonly called by magicians, "making the pass." It may be done in many different ways, and it may be successfully accom-

Sleight-of-Hand with Cards

plished by the use of either both hands or only one. Usually, however, the use of both hands is by far the more effective, because it permits the greater speed and secrecy. The description that follows gives in detail the best method of shifting the cut by the use of both hands. It is given here at the outset in order that the student may immediately begin the practice of it. It is essential that he should attain a considerable degree of proficiency in performing this feat if he would attain reputation as a magician.

In picking up the cards after the pack has been separated into two parts by cutting, you must take up first from the table with the right hand the portion that belongs properly underneath, and lay it in the left hand. You then pick up the other portion and lay it also in the left hand above the other, but in doing so you take care to thrust the little finger of the left hand forward, so that it remains between the two portions, thus keeping them sepa-

rate. This operation of the little finger is concealed from the spectators by the right hand, which remains palm downward covering the whole pack.

The little finger is maintained in its position between the two halves of the pack, and the other three fingers of the left hand are closed over the top of the pack. The thumb of the left hand also lies over the top of the deck. Now, by a pressure on the ends of the lower part, the second finger and thumb of the right hand move the lower section of the cards a little to the left within the angle of the left thumb. At the same time, by a pressure of the little finger of the left hand underneath and the three fingers of the left hand above, the upper part of the pack is moved to the right. The effect is still hidden by the right hand. But this separation of the two portions is sufficient so that the upper portion firmly held between the little finger of the left hand below and the other three fingers above, may have its

Sleight-of-Hand with Cards

left edge tilted upward. In the same moment, the thumb and finger of the right hand, pressing on the ends of the lower section of the cards, tilt the right edge of that portion upward, lifting it clear of the left edge of the other section of cards, and a little above. By a closing movement of the left hand, the two parts of the deck are again brought to a level, but now the portion between thumb and finger of the right hand, which was originally underneath, slides into place on top, and the shifting of the cut has been accomplished.

Although a description of the process requires so long in the telling, the actual operation requires only the tiniest fraction of a second. When performed with a reasonable degree of skill, it is absolutely invisible to even the most observant spectator. The student should practice making the pass very slowly and carefully until he has familiarized himself with its various movements. He must attain perfect cer-

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tainty as to each detail, before making any least effort toward speed. When by careful slowness he has acquired sureness, he should continue the practice until the necessary rapidity also marks his execution of the feat.

Shifting the cut with one hand is often useful, but it should never be attempted except when the attention of the company is diverted by the action of the other hand. By skill, this shift may be rendered almost invisible to the spectator, but not quite, since there is lacking the concealment offered by the other hand in the method already described.

In making this shift, the cut cards are first laid in the left hand, just as for the first method. But, now, before the right hand is removed, it slides the upper part of the pack a little way to the left. At the same time, the first and little fingers of the left hand are bent under the lower section of cards, and the other two fingers of the same hand are pressed on the top of this

Sleight-of-Hand with Cards

section, on the margin left by the sliding of the top cards to the left. The right hand is now taken away, and the whole pack is held between the thumb of the left hand and the fingers in the manner described, with the upper part of the deck extended to the left beyond the lower part.

The base of the thumb is now pressed against the left edge of the upper section, so that the right edge is tilted upward. At the same time, the fingers move to the right, carrying the lower section with them, and by further movement of the fingers the left edge of this lower section is tilted upward, until it clears the tilted edge of the other section, and extends above.

The pressure of the thumb is relaxed, allowing the upper section to fall level on the palm of the hand. In the same instant, the fingers close, bringing the lower section to rest above the other. The first finger and the little finger in this movement slip from beneath to join the other fingers on top of the deck. Thus the por-

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tion of cards that was underneath is now above, and the cut has been shifted.

The student will find that this method needs considerable practice, but careful repetitions until the exact movements are acquired will result in a skill such that the shift may be performed easily during the dropping of the left hand to the table as if merely to even the edges of the cards.

FORCING A CARD

FORCING a card is one of the constant requirements in the performance of card tricks. To a great extent, the precise details must vary according to the individual performer and the particular circumstances in each case. It would be quite impossible to cover all these, but the underlying principle is very simple, and, once it has been mastered, there remains only the necessity for such practice as shall make it readily available at all times and easily variable according to changing conditions.

The only preparation required is knowledge as to the location of a certain card. Perhaps the simplest method is to observe secretly the bottom card of the pack, and

then to cut the cards while holding them in the two hands, and to keep the little finger between the two parts after the cut is made. The student should note here that in thus cutting the cards he is to follow exactly the procedure already described for making the pass with two hands. By this means, he conceals the fact of the cut from the spectators. Thus, if the cards have been thoroughly shuffled, they cannot suspect that he knows a particular card in the central portion of the deck. Nevertheless, he does possess such knowledge, since the card that was on the bottom is now lying next above his little finger.

You offer the pack so that someone may draw out a card. In doing this, the pack remains lying in the left hand. The right hand seizes the upper part of the deck, the thumb on top, and all the fingers below, their tips resting against the known card, which is indicated by the position of the little finger of the left hand. You spread the cards slightly, as if inviting the person

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to choose one. As his fingers approach any card, the fingers of your right hand slide forward the known card. At the very instant when the fingers of the chooser touch the cards, the known card must project a little beyond the others, so that the reaching fingers naturally fall on it, and it is drawn. It is advisable often to make a slight, almost imperceptible movement of the whole pack thus spread in readiness for the choice, so that by this movement the known card is brought actually within the grasp of the chooser, quite without his knowledge of the fact that it is being substituted for the card he had meant to select.

In performing this trick, the student must be alert to study his failures in order to guard against a repetition of them. It is well to practice with someone in your confidence, in order thoroughly to familiarize yourself with the method before attempting its use for deception. Practice will develop an astonishing amount of skill

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in the fingers of the right hand, so that, as the pack is held loosely spread out in the two hands, the known card, by the pressure of the finger tips on which it rests, may be moved from the middle of the deck to the bottom and back to the top—indeed, here and there as required. Often, the chooser will change his mind, and, after seeming about to take a card near the top, reach suddenly for one at the bottom. But, in such case, the known card follows his movement easily and swiftly, first to the top, then to the bottom. Faithful practice offers the only way to success in this matter of forcing a card, and its rewards are sure, bringing to the performer a facility to win the admiration of those whom he entertains.

THE FALSE SHUFFLE

OFTEN in performing a trick, it is necessary to shuffle the cards with apparent thoroughness, while yet preserving unchanged a certain order in which they have been placed. Thus, it may be desired to maintain the position of a particular card on the bottom of the pack; or on the top; or at some point near one or the other. In such case, the shuffling must be done in such a manner that this special card is undisturbed.

If it is required to maintain the bottom card or cards in that position, the pack may be held in the left hand, and shuffled seemingly as usual. To accomplish this, care is taken when raising the cards in the right hand to have the clasp of the left

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hand relaxed, so that the thumb and finger may lift out part of the cards for the shuffle, while leaving the bottom unchanged. The cards so lifted are shuffled in the ordinary way above the others. A second portion may be similarly drawn out and shuffled without disturbing the bottom of the pack. It is impossible for the spectators to perceive that the bottom part of the pack is not lifted up.

If the requirement is to maintain the top of the pack unchanged, it is necessary only to shuffle in the usual manner, taking up as much of the pack as may be desired from the under portion, and shuffling these over on the upper portion. The one peculiarity in this operation is that the cards thus shuffled over are so dropped as to project their forward end a little beyond the original top cards now below them. Then, when the shuffle is completed, it is merely required to pick up this lower part of the deck, and restore it to its place on top, thus securing the desired result by

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what appears to be the final operation of the shuffle.

Either of the false shuffles may be continued for any length of time in the same manner.

It is even simpler to effect a false shuffle when the two halves of the pack are laid on the table, and there riffled. It is now necessary to begin the mingling of the two portions of the deck after letting the bottom cards first fall without admixture, if the arrangement of the bottom part is to be preserved; or to complete the mingling before reaching the top of the deck, if the particular order is located there.

This false shuffle also may be safely repeated any number of times without danger of detection.

Certain other instructions as to sleight-of-hand will be given in connection with various tricks for which they are requisite. But the foregoing are the most important features of sleight-of-hand in connection

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with cards, and proficiency in them is constantly demanded for successful performance. The student is advised to practice them diligently, in order to gain the mastery before attempting to make use of them in public.

THE INDICATED CARD

THIS is perhaps the simplest possible form of a card trick done by sleight-of-hand. Holding the deck in the left hand, after having observed the bottom card, with the fingers of the right hand over the top end of the cards, you draw the cards back a little one by one, descending from the top. At the same time, you invite the spectators to halt you at any preferred card. When the choice is made known, you draw back this card, together with all the cards above it, and hold out this portion of the pack with the face of the bottom card toward the company, and you name the card.

The spectators believe that the card thus shown them is that on which the choice

fell. As a matter of fact, they are deceived by your sleight-of-hand. For, as you draw off the cards and separate them from the lower part of the deck, you draw off also by means of the thumb of your right hand, which presses against it, the bottom card. As you lift the cards up, the thumb holds this card from the bottom tightly against the indicated card, and it thus becomes the one displayed to the spectators instead of the card really selected. Since you have been at pains to notice the bottom card before beginning the trick, you now have no difficulty in naming it.

In doing this trick, it is advisable always after observing the bottom card to give the pack a false shuffle, and then proceed to the trick without any apparent attention to the arrangement of the cards.

THE FACED CARD

THIS is a simple, but rather effective, method of ending a trick, when it is desired to display the particular card chosen by one of the company. It is to be used at pleasure for this purpose, irrespective of the method in which the trick otherwise is performed. For example, let us suppose that you have noted the ace of hearts on the bottom of the pack. You use a false shuffle, and then make the pass, so that the ace of hearts is in the middle of the pack after the manner described in connection with forcing a card. You next force some one to draw this particular card, and allow him, after looking at it, to replace it wherever he chooses in the pack, and then to shuffle the cards himself.

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Taking back the deck, you run over it until you locate the ace of hearts, after which you cut the cards so that the ace is on the top of the pack. This operation should be followed by a false shuffle that leaves the ace still the top card. With the pack held in both hands, you raise it a distance of about two feet above the table, and at the same time you slide the top card secretly about a half-inch to the left, so that this edge of it projects beyond the remainder of the deck. You now take away the left hand, and then, using care to hold the cards quite level, suddenly let them fall to the table. If properly executed, the pack as a whole falls and lies face downward on the table, but the top card is affected by the rush of air against its projecting side during the fall, and the force of this is sufficient to turn the card over. Thus, at the end of the trick, the ace of hearts drawn by the spectator suddenly appears lying face upward on the pack in distinction from all the other cards.

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Any known card may be revealed to the company in this manner. A simple combination would be to use "The Indicated Card" trick just described, with the variation of not naming the card after showing it to the company. Then permit the cards to be shuffled, and afterward run through them yourself to locate the card, which you already know. Bring it to the top of the deck, and by way of concluding the trick display it face upward on the pack by dropping to the table according to the directions.

PALMING A CARD

MANY tricks of a most effective sort may be performed in connection with the palming of a card, and the student should give particular attention to cultivating his ability in this regard.

In the operation, a card is taken from the top of the deck, and is held concealed in the right hand for any desired length of time. The manner of palming is as follows:

The pack is held in the left hand, with the fingers low and the thumb on top. The right hand is laid over the cards for a moment. In this moment the left thumb pushes the top card to the right so that about a third of its width projects beyond the other cards; the fingers of the left

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hand are extended upward, so that their tips press against the under side of the protruding top card, and thrust it firmly against the palm of the right hand. As the right hand closes a little, the card bends and is held snugly by the pressure against its edges. Afterward, the right hand may be used freely in gestures or otherwise, as for example, in holding the pack by the thumb and middle finger against the ends, but of course care must be exercised not to give the spectators any glimpse of the palm and its contents. Whenever it is so desired, the palmed card may be restored to its place on top of the deck, and left there when the hand is again removed. Since the card might be a little bent and thus attract attention, it is advisable after restoring it to hold the deck firmly between thumb and fingers of the left hand, and while doing so to ruffle the pack by pulling the first finger of the right hand from bottom to top over the front end of the cards, and letting them

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snap back. This action will correct the bend in the card that has been palmed.

The palming of a card is of aid in numerous ways. Thus, after a card has been drawn and replaced in the pack, and brought to the top by making the pass, it may be palmed and the pack offered for shuffling. While the shuffle is in progress, you will be able to catch a glimpse of the card within your palm. It is restored to its position by taking back the deck with the right hand. This card may be afterward disclosed in any one of the different forms preferred.

The palming of the card may be made especially impressive by secretly disposing of it in some unexpected place while the pack is being shuffled. For example, it is easy usually to drop the card into a spectator's pocket without his knowledge. Then, after a little interval, and when at a distance from this individual, you announce that the selected card will be found in Mr. So-and-so's pocket.

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Another variation in the use of the palmed card is by restoring it to its place on top of the pack after thorough shuffling by one or more of the company, and then placing the deck in the pocket of a spectator. You announce that you will discover the chosen card by the mere sense of touch. You thrust a hand into the pocket, and readily draw forth the selected card, since it is the top one.

The student will find pleasure in working out for himself various ways of utilizing his skill in this direction.

CHANGING A CARD

CHANGING a card is a detail in sleight-of-hand practice by which striking effects may be gained. In this illusion, one card is openly substituted for another under the gaze of the company without their having the least suspicion of the fact. There are many different ways of changing the card, but two are so superior to the others that these only will be described. The first, which is simpler, but not absolutely imperceptible to a close observer, is as follows:

The card that is to be changed is held between the first and second fingers of the right hand, midway of its right long edge. While the pack is held in the left hand, the right hand holding the card is brought

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to it. The fingers of the left hand below the pack are straightened, so that the card between the fingers of the right hand may be slipped underneath the deck, and it is drawn level with the others by the closing of the left fingers. In the same instant, the left thumb on top of the deck slides the top card a little to the right, so that it projects out beyond the cards below. As the right hand inserts the edge of its card under the deck, the projecting card on top is caught between the thumb and finger of the right hand. Now, as the right hand is moved away, it carries with it that top card between thumb and first finger in place of the card formerly held between the second and third fingers, which is now at the bottom of the pack.

The second method of changing the card is as follows:

The card that is to be changed is held between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand. The pack is held as before in the left hand, with the thumb on top

and the fingers bent around the right edge of the cards. The right hand is brought close to the pack. Just as the card to be changed slides on top of the pack, the left thumb pushes the top card to the right, so that its edge projects a full half-inch beyond the remainder of the pack. Then the thumb is raised and falls on the card coming from the right hand, and draws it to the left, so that it is level with the others, and thus becomes the top card. But while the thumb is thus engaged, the fingers of the left hand reach upward until their tips touch the under surface of the projecting card, which they push out still further, so that as the right thumb and finger let go their hold on the first card, which the thumb draws away, they close again on the card slipped between them by the fingers of the left hand. The result is that when the right hand moves away, it holds a different card from that with which it approached, and this card is held in exactly the same manner. The whole

Sleight-of-Hand with Cards

operation requires no more than the tiniest fraction of a second, and, if properly done, the substitution is absolutely invisible to even the most watchful spectator.

This trick may be used in many different ways to the bewilderment of beholders. Thus, for example, before the change, the card may be shown to the company, then the substitution made, and the second card placed face downward by itself, the original card taken from the top of the pack and laid in another place, after which it will be found that the location of the cards has been reversed. Or, the original card may be palmed and dropped into some one's pocket, while the company keeps its attention on the substituted card, believing it to be the chosen one.

SPRINGING THE CARDS

ONE of the feats performed by most conjurers is that of springing the card. This is hardly a true part of sleight-of-hand in the ordinary sense, but rather a bit of juggling. In the performance, when skilfully done, the cards appear fairly to fly from one hand to the other, back and forth, in a truly marvelous manner. For the sake of completeness, Hoffmann's description is given of the manner in which this display is accomplished. The student will find the practice of it sufficiently difficult to hold his interest, but perseverance will master the knack of it.

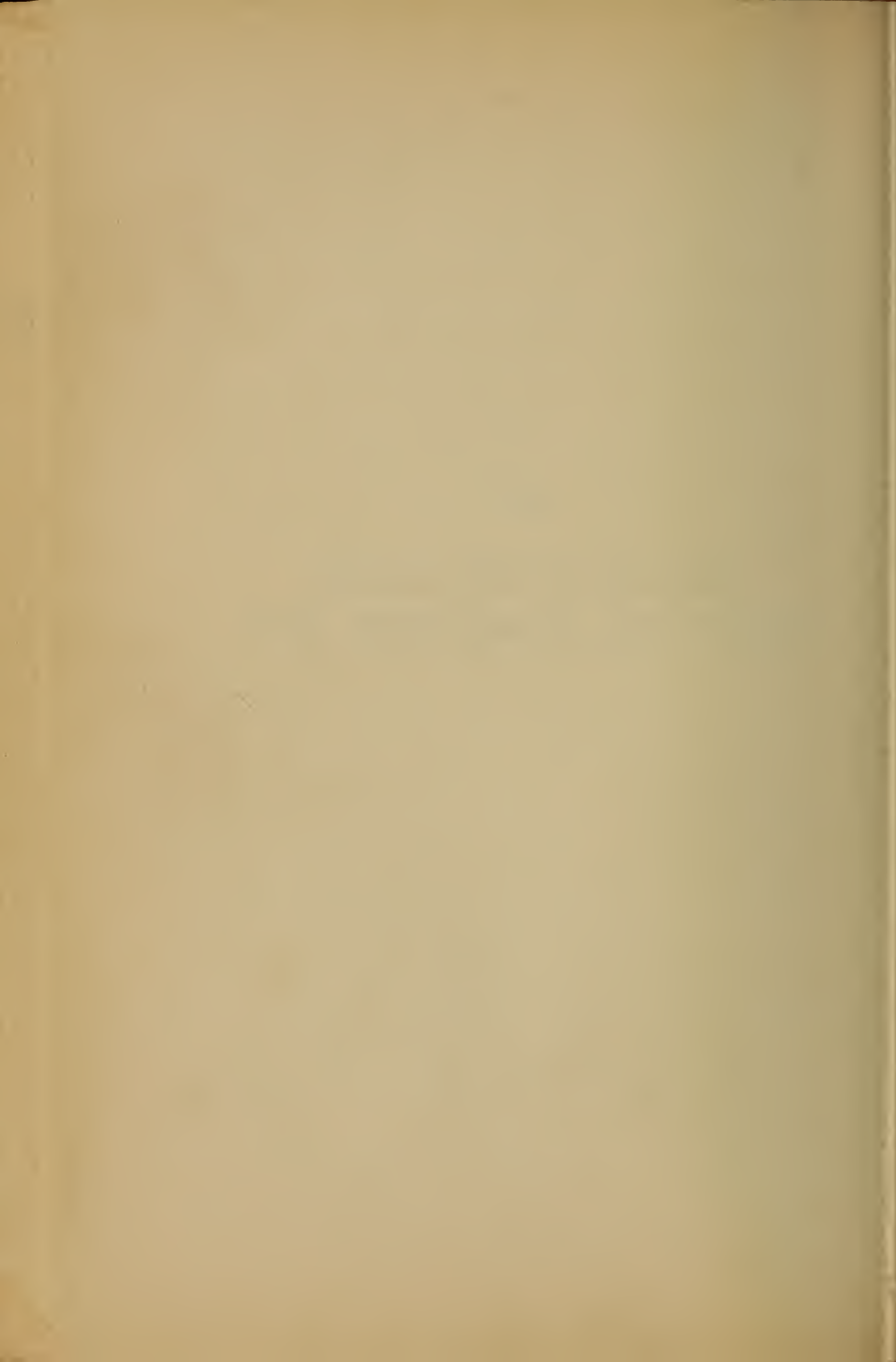
“The cards are held in the right hand between the tips of the second and third fingers at the top, and the thumb at the bottom. If the thumb and fingers are now

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brought slowly nearer together, so as to bend the cards slightly, they will one by one, in quick succession, beginning with the bottom card, spring away from the pack; and if the pressure be continued, the whole of the cards will spring away one after the other in this manner. If the left hand be held at ten or twelve inches distance from the right, with the fingers slightly bent, the released cards will be shot into the left hand, which, as the last cards reach it, should be rapidly brought palm to palm with the right, and square up the pack to repeat the process. By giving the body a quick half-turn to the right as the cards are sprung from one hand to the other, you may make the hands, and with them the moving cards, describe an arc of about two feet, and so deceive the eye of the spectator into the belief that the hands are that distance apart, though in reality, as they both move together in the same direction, they retain throughout their original distance of ten or twelve inches."

III

TRICKS WITH COINS,
WATCHES, DOMINOES, ETC.



TRICKS WITH COINS

FOR most, if not all, tricks with coins a certain degree of proficiency in sleight-of-hand is essential. Here, in the great majority of illusions, the art of palming is of prime importance. The student should immediately begin a thorough and persistent practice if he would attain skill in this form of entertainment. A great many card-tricks may be performed without any dependence on palming. But the case is quite otherwise in connection with the use of coins, or, for that matter, in connection with whatever objects may be utilized as accessories by the conjurer.

So, first and foremost, the student must seek to master the knack of palming a coin. When he has attained facility in

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this operation with coins, he will be well equipped to pursue his practice so as to gain ease in thus handling other objects of different shapes and sizes.

At the outset, the student is warned that he is to seek a skill that shall baffle the scrutiny of the most intelligent observer. He will do well to practice the various movements before a mirror, in order that he himself may play the part of a spectator. He may thus judge accurately whether or not he reveals in any least degree what he means to keep hidden.

A second point of importance to which the student should give particular attention has to do with the direction of his gaze while performing a trick. If he intends to deceive the company into believing that he has taken a coin into his right hand, when in fact that hand is empty, he should keep his eyes fixed on the empty hand, for thereby he aids the illusion. Moreover, by a cunning control of his glances, he should on all occasions

Tricks with Coins

divert the attention of the company in any desired direction.

The palming of a coin is done in a variety of ways almost innumerable. Some of the best among these will now be described in detail. The student should practice each and all of them thoroughly. It will be found that each particular one is actually helped by practice of the others. But it is not meant that the student should make use of the several different manners of palming. After he has studied them for a time, he will find that one or two of them appeal particularly to him and that with them he attains a higher degree of skill. He should then give them place as his favorites, and humor his preference by striving to acquire perfection in the use of them. Such freedom of choice in a final selection is essential in order to take full advantage of one's own personal peculiarities.

The student should bear in mind that he must develop a skill sufficient to hold

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concealed in the palm of his hand any small object, such as a coin, or even larger things, such as a watch, or an egg, or the like. Of course, the size of the hand varies in different individuals, and the ability to palm the larger articles varies accordingly. If the student has a very small hand, he should accept the fact philosophically, and by no means attempt to palm any except objects of small size. For the purposes of preliminary practice in acquiring the rudiments of the art, a quarter of a dollar offers the most convenient size. This should be used for exercise in palming at the outset. Afterward, the practice should be continued with other coins until proficiency is attained with the various sizes from a dime to a dollar. Furthermore, the palming must not be limited to one hand. After some degree of skill with the right hand has been acquired, there should be an endeavor to attain equal facility with the left hand.

Tricks with Coins

For the first exercise, proceed as follows:

Lay a quarter on the palm of either hand held open and upward, as on the left in the illustration.

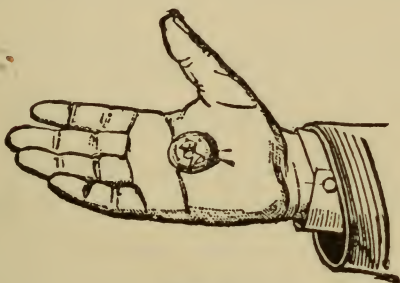


FIG. 2.

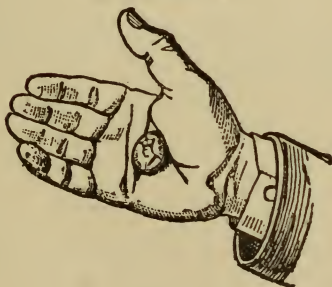


FIG. 3.

If, now, you close the palm a very little, the contraction will cause the flesh to press against the edges of the coin and to hold

it firmly in its position, so that you may turn the hand over, or move it about freely without causing the piece of money to fall. The contracted palm is shown in the lower illustration on preceding page. If this result is not secured, it is because the coin is not properly placed on the palm. The exact location may be easily determined while holding the palm upward, by moving the coin slightly with the fingers of the left hand, and after each change trying the effect of contracting the muscles. A little actual experiment in this direction will accomplish for you more than many pages of description.

THE PASS

WHEN once certainty of thus holding the coin has been acquired, you should practice easy and natural movements of the arm and of the hand itself. You must bear in mind throughout the necessity for caution in keeping the palm of the hand turned downward and always away from the spectators. In this particular, as in other details, practice before the mirror must not be neglected. Pains should be taken to use the fingers freely, while still maintaining the coin in its position by contraction of the palm. It is not advisable at this time to experiment with any object other than the quarter. But, as soon as secure holding of this piece in the palm of either hand has been estab-

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lished, the student should proceed to try the various forms of the pass, as it is termed by professional magicians, which is a seeming transfer of an article from one hand to the other while in fact it remains in the hand that first held it.

For the first attempt of the pass, hold the quarter between the thumb and second finger of the hand, with the first and third fingers touching it lightly. Raise the thumb clear, and in the same instant close the fingers on the palm of the hand. They carry with them the coin, and when the action is properly executed, press it against the palm at the exact point necessary so that a slight contraction of the palm will hold it firmly in place. The movement is shown in the illustration. Afterward, the fingers of the hand are to be extended in a natural manner, leaving the coin in the palm.

After this operation has been practiced until it is easily performed with either hand at rest, it should be again practiced

Tricks with Coins

with the hand moving toward the other. That other hand should lie open with the palm upward, but the fingers should close upon an imaginary coin as the first hand

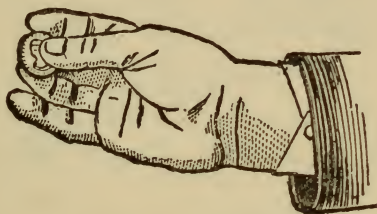


FIG. 4.

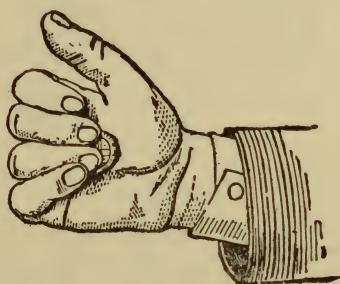


FIG. 5.

reaches it, and should afterward continue shut, apparently retaining the piece of money, while the hand actually containing the quarter moves away and drops loosely open, as if it held nothing at all.

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

The student should practice before a mirror, so that he may observe every detail

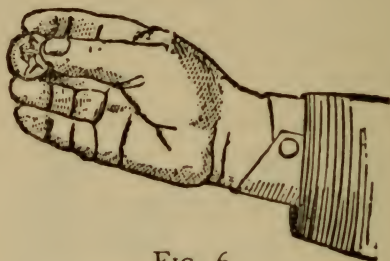


FIG. 6.



FIG. 7.



FIG. 8.

of the various movements in really passing a coin from one hand to the other. When

he has made sure as to the exact natural manner, he should again practice the pass by palming, and strive to make it conform in every particular apparently with the actual transfer from one hand to the other.

A second method of making the pass uses the thumb, which is bent over the coin thrust upward against it by the fingers. The action is clearly shown in the series of cuts below:

A reverse method of making the pass is by holding the coin on the palm of the extended hand, from which the fingers of the other hand seemingly pick it up, and then close as if holding it. The coin, however, is retained in its original position by contracting the palm, and the hand is turned over and dropped with the fingers still open.

Another simple form of the pass is effected by holding the hand palm upward with the coin held between the tips of the thumb and second finger. The other hand approaches close until the thumb is under

the coin and the fingers bend over it. At this moment the coin is dropped into the palm, and held there, but the fingers of the other hand close as if upon the piece of money, and so move away. The illustration shows the execution of this pass.

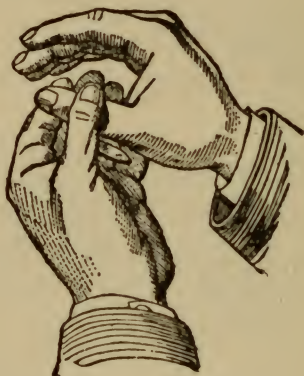


FIG. 9.

The student must take care in connection with the pass never to reveal the fact to the spectators that the coin is not really in the hand where it appears to be. If, after making the pass, he should open the closed hand, and show that the coin has vanished, he would practically inform the

Tricks with Coins

company that he had palmed the money. Instead, he must always appear to find the coin in some other place before revealing the fact that the closed hand is empty. This detail is of great importance for successful performance, and it is never neglected by any professional conjurer.

THE CHANGE

THE student should also practice the change, as it is termed. This is the substitution of one object for another without permitting the company to become aware of the fact. Thus, it enables the conjurer when doing a trick with a coin marked by the spectators to substitute a duplicate coin as may be required. Such a change is effected by holding the substitute piece palmed in one hand, while the marked coin is held in the fingers of the other hand. The two hands are then brought together, and the marked coin apparently falls into the palm of the other hand. In reality, however, it is palmed by the hand that already held it, and the palmed substitute in the other hand is shown in place of it. The change may be

Tricks with Coins

made also in various other ways suggested by the various forms of the pass itself.

When the student has attained dexterity with a quarter, he should continue his practice with both smaller and larger coins. He will find that skill of this sort with a dime and penny is very useful, as in the following effective trick.

THE JOINING OF THE COINS

YOU borrow from the spectators a dime and a cent, which are marked, and two handkerchiefs. You hold a cent of your own palmed in the right hand. You next drape one of the handkerchiefs over this hand. Under the concealment of the handkerchief, you grasp the substitute cent between finger and thumb. With the fingers of the left hand, you pick up the marked cent and lay it in the center of the handkerchief as it lies spread out over the right palm. In doing so, as if with a movement to cover the marked cent, you secretly push a fold of the handkerchief under the substitute cent, which is held between thumb and finger of the right hand. By lifting the right hand, the handkerchief is now inverted over the

Tricks with Coins

left hand. In this action the marked cent is allowed to slip back into the palm of the left hand, and at the same time the fold of the handkerchief is twisted about the substitute penny. The spectators regard the coin thus wrapped as the marked one. As a matter of fact, the substitute penny is actually only covered by the fold of an outer edge of the handkerchief. The handkerchief is now given to one of the company who is instructed to hold the coin tightly.

You now secretly shift the marked cent in the left hand to the palm of the right hand. With the fingers of the right hand, you next pick up the marked dime from the table. The second handkerchief is laid over the open palm of the left hand. The fingers of the right hand now place the dime in the center of the handkerchief, and in the same instant the marked cent is let fall from the palm of the right hand beside the dime on the handkerchief. Both coins are hidden for the moment by the

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

right hand. The left hand closes on the coins and handkerchief and it turns over. With the right hand, press the two coins tightly together and twist them securely in the handkerchief, and then give them to a spectator to hold securely. On account of the smallness of the pieces, he will be unable to detect through the folds of the handkerchief the fact that there are two coins instead of one. You declare boldly that you will cause the two marked pieces to come together under one of the handkerchiefs. This has, in fact, already been accomplished, unknown to the company. You now extend the right hand to the handkerchief containing the substitute cent. By rubbing the handkerchief slightly, the fold is pushed back, so that the substitute cent is pulled out from its wrapping, apparently as if plucked through the fabric itself. You now openly place the substitute cent in the left hand, and while showing it declare that you will pass it through the folds of the second hand-

Tricks with Coins

kerchief to join the dime. You forthwith make the pass with the cent to the right hand, to which it seems to be transferred, although it actually remains palmed in the left hand to be dropped into your pocket at a convenient opportunity. The closed right hand is thrust forward and the fingers are spread wide apart as if in throwing. The hand is thus shown to be empty. The spectators may now unfold the second handkerchief, in which the two marked coins will be found together.

THE HANDKERCHIEF WRAPPER

THIS matter of so folding the handkerchief that it appears to hold a coin securely is of importance in the performance of many tricks. Besides the manner described for the trick above, it would be well for the student to perfect himself in the method employed by Houdini. This is perhaps the best fashion of so wrapping a coin in a handkerchief that it appears to be held fast while in fact it is merely covered by an outer fold. The description may appear somewhat puzzling to one glancing over it hastily, but it is very carefully written, and it will present the required information clearly to anyone studying it.

“ Let the coin be held vertically by the fingers and thumb of the left hand, then

Tricks with Coins

drop the handkerchief over. You now exclaim that someone may believe the coin to have been changed, and you add therefore that you will prove the contrary. You now take the coin through the handkerchief cover between the first and second fingers of the right hand, which is held with the palm upward. The fingers of the left hand let go of the coin, but remain under the handkerchief. You now turn over the right hand toward yourself, and then again take hold of the coin with the left hand, but now you seize it through a doubled fold of the handkerchief. You next let go with the right hand, and raise the edge of the handkerchief so that the coin is displayed. When the edge of the handkerchief is again dropped, it seems to the spectators that the coin is beneath it in the middle. Actually, it is on the outside of the handkerchief, lying within the fold on the performer's side. The distinctive features of the operation are shown in the two illustrations below."



FIG. 10.

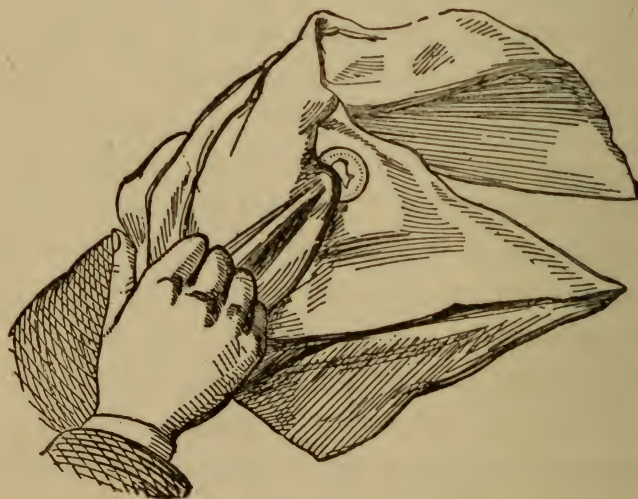


FIG. 11.

THE VANISHING QUARTERS

IN preparation for this trick, you borrow four quarters, which are marked, and a handkerchief.

The handkerchief is spread over your left hand, and with your right hand you count the quarters in a stack on the center of the handkerchief. As you swing the right hand away, you swiftly set the left thumb on top of the four quarters. They are thus covered by a fold of the handkerchief—but only by a fold. You now grasp them through this fold between the fingers and thumb of the right hand, and promptly take away the left hand. To the spectators, it appears that the coins are safely wrapped in the handkerchief which covers them. You next ask one of the company to take hold of the handkerchief somewhat below your own hand and to

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

grasp it tightly. As he does so, you should direct him sharply in order to hold his attention on the movement of his own hands. You take this opportunity to palm the four quarters, which are easily pushed out of the fold into your hand. The handkerchief will retain its shape sufficiently to deceive the observers for the time being as to the disappearance of the money from it, especially if you command the one holding the handkerchief to remain absolutely motionless. While his attention is thus concentrated, you may easily quietly place the palmed quarters in his pocket, or in the pocket of some other person or otherwise dispose of them. You then command the quarters to vanish from the handkerchief to be found in that particular place, with their marks intact.

If the student should find this trick too difficult with four quarters on account of the palming, he may perform it with a less number, even with a single coin of any preferred denomination.

THE INCREASING DIMES

THE following feat is one that is always effective when properly performed, although it requires almost no skill in conjuring; it depends rather on a device of preparation. You require three dimes having the same date. By means of a particle of wax applied to one surface of each, you fasten these on the under side of the table, close to the edge, and somewhat less than a foot apart. This preparation, of course, must be secretly made. You now state that you will show a simple method of making money. You exhibit the third dime, and call attention to the date. If the table has a cover, it should be turned back. You now place the dime close to the edge of the table and by press-

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

ing on it with the thumb push it forward and backward. This position of the hand naturally brings the fingers underneath the edge of the table. After a few seconds of briskly rubbing the dime to and fro, during which you declare that the work is coming along well, that it is almost done, etc., you draw the hand smartly away from the table, thus scraping the waxed dime into the palm along with the one from the top of the table pushed there by the thumb. You triumphantly exhibit the two, then drop the waxed dime into your pocket and repeat the trick.

MONEY MULTIPLIED

IN preparation for this trick you palm in the right hand three quarters. You then borrow from the company twelve quarters, letting someone collect them for you. He counts these out on the table. You now ask him to hold three of the quarters in his right hand. You call on another person and deposit in his hand the other nine quarters from the table. But dropping these into his palm, you let fall also along with them the three coins you have held palmed, so that he actually closes his hand when you bid him on twelve quarters instead of nine. You next take into your left hand the three quarters held by the other person, and make a pass apparently transferring them to the right

hand, but actually retaining them in the left palm, from which they are dropped into your pocket as convenient. The spectators suppose that the three quarters are within the closed right hand. They are accordingly astonished when your hand is shown to be empty and the full twelve coins are discovered held by him who was thought to have only nine.

It is obvious, that the number of coins used may be varied according to the performer's preference.

THE DIME IN THE ORANGE

BY way of preparation for this trick, you must hold palmed in each hand a dime with a smear of wax on one side. You should also have a tiny ball of wax stuck on the lowest button of the waist-coat. A few oranges, and a table knife are necessary.

A dime is borrowed and marked, and a handkerchief. The handkerchief is spread out on a table, its sides parallel with the sides of the table. You now substitute a prepared dime, waxed side up, for the borrowed dime, and lay it in the center of the handkerchief. Standing behind the table, you fold over the dime one of the corners of the handkerchief on your side

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

so that it overlaps the dime by an inch. In doing this, you press on it, so that the dime shall stick fast. Afterward, you fold the other corners over the first.

You next announce that you will cause the dime to pass from the handkerchief into one of the oranges. You invite inspection of both the oranges and the knife.

While the company is thus occupied, you secretly fasten the tiny wax ball from the button of your waistcoat to the marked dime, which still remains palmed in the right hand. When you take back the knife, hold it by the handle in the left hand, and press the blade on the right palm so that the dime will be stuck about the middle. Then lay the knife on the table, the dime beneath.

You now let someone touch the handkerchief to make sure that the dime is still there. You take the handkerchief by the edges on your side of the table and flirt it open. You draw it through the left hand, and in doing so detach and palm

Tricks with Coins

the dime, afterward pocketing it. The dime has vanished.

You now pick up the knife, keeping the dime out of sight, and cut through the skin of an orange with the point. Finally you cut through the orange, thus detaching the dime, which seems to have come from within the orange. You wipe off the juice with a handkerchief, and in doing so remove any trace of the wax. The mark remains to show that this is the original dime.

The manner of folding the handkerchief and of afterward picking it up are shown in the illustration.

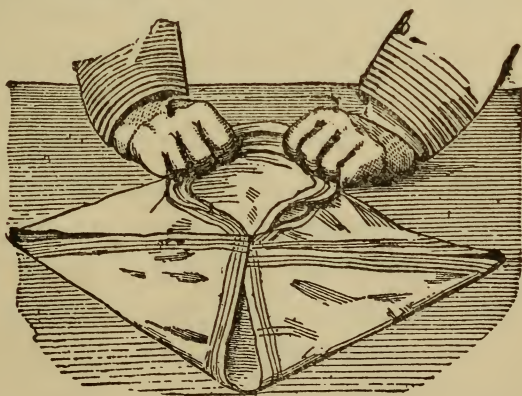


FIG. 12.

THE SHOWER OF MONEY

THIS is a very old trick, but it is always effective if well done. It must not be attempted, however, until the art of palming has been thoroughly mastered.

Ten pieces of money are held palmed in the left hand, two in the right hand. A hat is held inverted in the left hand with the palm and fingers inside. You announce that you can find money anywhere. You let one of the coins palmed in the right hand slide down to the finger tips, while at the same moment you seem to pluck it from some one's hair. You then throw this coin into the hat. You next let the other coin in the right hand slide to the tips of the fingers while appearing to catch it in

Tricks with Coins

the air, or to draw it from any place you choose. You make the gesture of throwing it into the hat, but actually palm it. Instead, you let one of the coins palmed in the left hand fall into the hat.

You continue similarly until all ten coins have been dropped from the left hand into the hat, and conclude by throwing in the coin from the right hand.

HEAD OR TAIL

BY way of concluding the tricks with coins, two are added that require no skill whatever in sleight-of-hand. In the first, you declare your ability to tell in advance whether a spinning coin will fall head or tail upward. Anyone may spin the quarter, and in every case you foretell the result.

To do this you must use a coin prepared by making a slight nick in one side of the edge. When the coin as it nears its fall spins on the uncut edge, there is no change, but when on the cut edge, the sound is quite different, and the coin falls more abruptly. A little experimenting will enable you to distinguish between the two with absolute certainty. But the difference is too slight to be perceived by anyone not on the lookout for it.

ODD OR EVEN

THIS is a very old trick and one of utmost simplicity. It depends entirely on an obvious fact in arithmetic. Yet, somehow, the most intelligent observers usually seem unable to grasp the principle involved, and are therefore vastly puzzled.

You take a handful of coins, and ask one of the company to provide himself also with some, which he is to count privately, in order to know whether their number is odd or even. You direct one of the company to hold a hat, and request the person with the coins to place as many of them as he chooses in the hat, keeping the exact number secret. You now announce that you will yourself drop coins into the hat with the result of reversing the first number, whether it was odd or

even. You therefore drop in some coins, and then ask as to the original number, whether odd or even. Immediately after the answer has been received, all the coins are emptied out on the table, and openly counted. In every case, no matter how many times the trick may be repeated, they will be found the reverse of the original deposit, that is to say, if the first coins formed an even number, the total will be an odd number; if the first coins formed an odd number, the total will be an even number.

The explanation lies in the simple fact that any odd number added to any other odd number makes an even number; and any odd number added to an even number makes an odd number. In order, then, to reverse the number of coins first deposited as to the quality of odd or even, it is only necessary that each time you should add an odd number of coins. The result of such an addition must invariably be to change an even number to an odd, or to change an odd number to an even.

THE HANDKERCHIEF

THE handkerchief is often useful as an aid in performing tricks, by serving as a diversion to take the attention of the company away from something else. Thus, it is easy to interest the spectators in a handkerchief that cannot be tied in a knot. It is seemingly knotted in the usual fashion, with the knot drawn tight, but a slight pull unties it instantly. This peculiar effect is secured by secretly slipping the thumb of the left hand within the loop of the strand that continues into that hand. A study of the illustration shows the method clearly, with the thumb inserted at the point indicated by the letter *a*.

Another diversion may be created by testing a borrowed handkerchief in the

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

flame of a candle, to learn whether or not it will burn—to the great dismay of the owner. This is what may be termed an honest trick. The handkerchief, being held by two corners, is drawn upward at

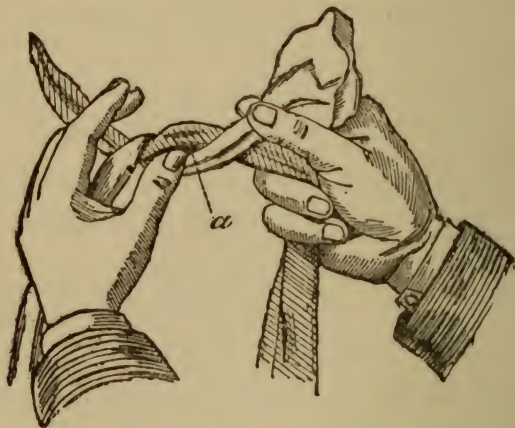


FIG. 13.

a slant across the flame of the candle. It is only necessary to keep the motion constant. An instant of pause will scorch the handkerchief. But it is astonishing how slowly the fabric may be drawn across the flame without the least injury. An additional precaution must be observed in

The Handkerchief

borrowing the handkerchief, by making sure that it carries no trace of perfume. The inflammable spirits used in making extracts might instantly set the cloth ablaze.

Another knot-tying trick, of a more elaborate character than the first, is performed as follows:

A silk handkerchief is twisted, and then while you hold it by the middle part with both hands, one of the spectators at your request ties the ends together. You then declare that the knots are not sufficiently tight, and you yourself pull them to render them seemingly more secure. By leaving sufficient length to the free ends after tying the first knot, a second and third knot may be added, which you treat similarly. You next drape the middle part of the handkerchief over the knots, and give it to be held by a spectator. You breathe on it, and bid him shake it out, when it will be found that the knots have vanished.

The secret lies in your manner of pulling

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

at the knot. Actually, you are careful to lay hold on only one end of the handkerchief, placing one hand above the knot and the other below. You thus pull that part of the handkerchief into a straight line, around which the other end is twisted. The knot becomes in effect a slip-knot. The pulls that follow on the other knots must also be on this same end of the handkerchief. Since the untwisting process would leave the straight end projecting further beyond the knots, you should correct this by withdrawing it a little after each pull. While laying the middle of the handkerchief over the knots, the straight end is pulled clear.

A number of handkerchiefs may be used similarly by tying them together.

The student must guard against being caught by the one form of knot that cannot be tampered with thus easily. This is the familiar one where the two ends are held parallel and are bent together into a knot. One such knot may be utilized in

The Handkerchief

performing the trick by asking one of the spectators to untie it by way of illustrating the time necessary for such a task when performed by any one but the magician himself.

TRICKS WITH WATCHES

HERE is another trick that is purely a matter of arithmetic, but the manner of it is not easily guessed by the average person.

Any individual in the company is asked to think of any hour of the twelve, according to his choice. You announce that without asking any question you will be able to divine the particular hour. You now tap with a pencil, or any other convenient object, on the watch dial, along the circles of hours. But before beginning the taps you direct the chooser of the hour to count the number of taps, and giving to the first tap the number following that of the hour selected, and giving to the second tap the next number, and so on.

Tricks with Watches

If ten were the hour thought of, for example, he should count the first tap as eleven, the next as twelve, etc. On reaching the number twenty by thus mentally counting the taps, he is to cry "Halt!" At this point, your pencil will be resting on the hour he chose.

The secret lies in the eighth tap. The first seven may fall anywhere, for they are of no importance. The eighth tap, however, must be on the figure twelve, and from this point you must tap the hours in order backward—eleven, ten, nine, etc. By this simple process, it will come to pass invariably that your pencil taps the chosen hour when you are told to halt.

Another trick with a watch is apparently a remarkable feat of jugglery, but it is actually an optical delusion. The deception, when skilfully carried out with a highly prized borrowed watch, may be made very amusing by reason of the owner's alarm for the safety of his possession.

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

You regard the watch very closely, and with an expression of increasing astonishment. As you press it with your fingers, you remark that it is most extraordinary, but it seems to be really very soft. You now hold the watch with its face toward

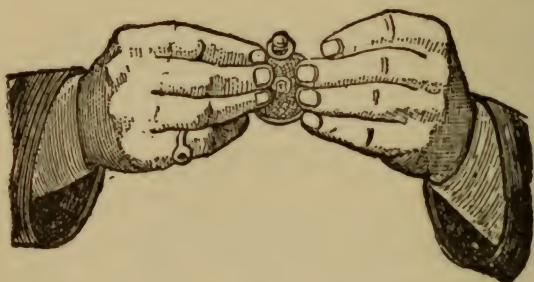


FIG. 14.

you in both hands. The thumb of each hand rests on the face and two fingers of each hand on the back. You now bend the hands outward, and at the same moment you shift the tips of the fingers so that they are closer together, and then quickly move them again to their first position. This same movement of the fingers and the hands is continued for any

Tricks with Watches

desired period. The effect of it is a visual deception that has its origin in the play of light and shadow over the case from the motion of the fingers. Indeed, it may appear to the spectators that the case is actually bent almost double.

The manner of holding the hands and fingers is shown in the illustration.

TRICKS WITH DOMINOES

AN excellent trick, which depends on arrangement and not on sleight-of-hand, is done with dominoes.

You lay twenty dominoes in a row face downward on the table. You then announce that any number of the dominoes may be removed from the right end to the left end during your absence from the room, and that on your return you will announce the number thus moved by your clairvoyant power. You add a request that not more than twelve dominoes be thus shifted, since your faculty is not yet wholly developed.

On your return, after the change has been made, you state that you will reveal the number shifted by turning up a

Tricks with Dominoes

domino with that total of points, and this you do.

The manner of doing this trick is in the original arrangement of the dominoes. You take care that the points of the first domino on the left shall total twelve; the points of the second, eleven; the points of the third, ten, etc., in order, to the thirteenth, which must be the double-blank. The remaining seven of the row may be of any denomination.

In concluding the trick, you count the dominoes from the right end toward the left up to the eighth. The points of this will always total the number of dominoes moved. You must turn up the domino in order to know this number, but you do not allow the spectators to realize the fact.

After thus telling the number changed, by counting from the one turned up, you may easily further mystify the company by giving the value of other dominoes before turning them up also. Here, however, a caution is necessary: You only know each

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

domino by its total of points, which is not the way they are named. You must, therefore, select for this part of the trick those dominoes in which the total is formed by a certain combination. Such dominoes are a "one," which is necessarily "blank one"; a "double blank," and a "double six." These may be named effectively.

An even more puzzling and yet simpler trick is the following:

You direct the company to arrange all the dominoes in a row, matched according to the ordinary rules, and to do this while you are absent from the room. The dominoes are to be placed face downward. On your return after the arrangement has been made, you announce the end numbers of the row. When the two dominoes are turned over, it will be seen that you are right, invariably.

You accomplish this by secretly taking away with you one domino. A glance at this is all the further preparation you require before reëntering the room, since

Tricks with Dominoes

the two ends of this single domino give exactly the two ends of the row.

But you must take care not to carry off a double. A brief study should make clear the reason for this, as well as the whole principle of the trick.

TRICKS WITH DICE

THE easiest bit of jugglery with the dice is performed by holding two between the thumb and forefinger. The exposed faces of these, whether on top or below, may be shifted by a very slight twisting movement between thumb and finger. With a little practice, the changes may be made to appear very puzzling to spectators not in the secret. But this use of the dice should serve only for a very brief diversion.

An excellent arithmetical trick with dice is worked out as follows:

Giving one of the spectators the two dice, you bid him throw them, without permitting you to observe the result, then to choose one of the exposed numbers, to

Tricks with Dice

multiply it by two, to add five to the product, to multiply this sum by five and, finally, to add the number shown by the other die. He is now to inform you of the sum reached by this mathematical progress.

You, in your turn, now subtract twenty-five from the amount given by him. The subtraction will give a remainder of two figures. Each one of these two figures equals the number of one of the dice.

The student may entertain himself profitably with the dice for once by puzzling out the exact reason for this result.

THE CUT STRING

A CORD about a yard in length is offered for examination. You then take it so that the ends are upward between the thumb and first and second fingers of the left hand and the thumb and first finger of the right hand. The remainder of the cord hangs downward. You next make the right hand approach the left, and bring that part of the string in the right hand toward yourself, drawing it between the first and second fingers of the left hand, so that it passes the other end of the cord at a right angle. You thus draw the string until half its length is beyond the left hand. While doing so, you thrust the third finger of the left hand between the two portions of the string.

The Cut String

The result is made clear by examination of the illustration.

Without letting go the end hitherto held, the thumb and first finger of the right

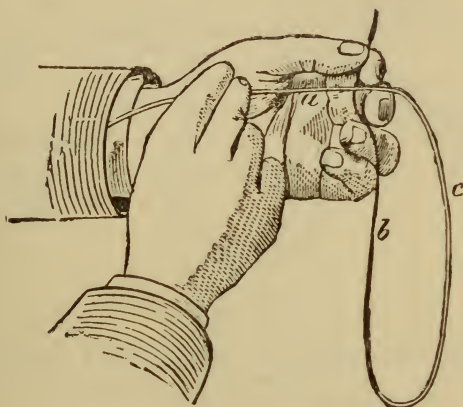


FIG. 15.

hand now grasp the cord at the point indicated by *b* in the illustration above. At this moment also, the third finger of the left hand draws back the part marked *a* in the illustration, into the palm of the hand. This operation results in arranging the cord as shown in the next illustration.

The same position is shown again in the following cut, in which the arrangement

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

of the cord behind the thumbs is displayed.

A little study will make clear the fact that the portion of cord now extending

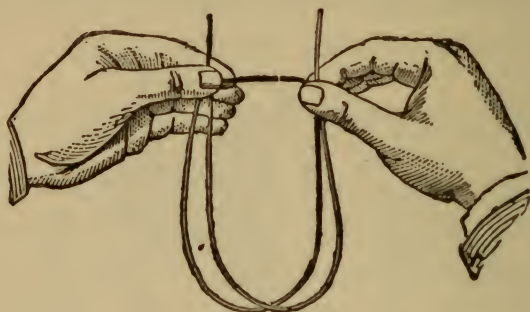


FIG. 16.

horizontally between the hands is actually merely the immediate continuation of the

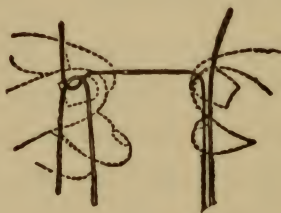


FIG. 17.

end which the left hand holds, although it appears to the spectators to be the middle part of the cord.

The Cut String

You now permit one of the company to cut this seeming middle portion. Next, you take the cord wholly in the right hand, but you are at pains to hide the place where the pieces cross between the thumb and finger. The present position is shown in the illustration below, where the thumb is traced in outline in order to display the arrangement of the cord beyond it.



FIG. 18.

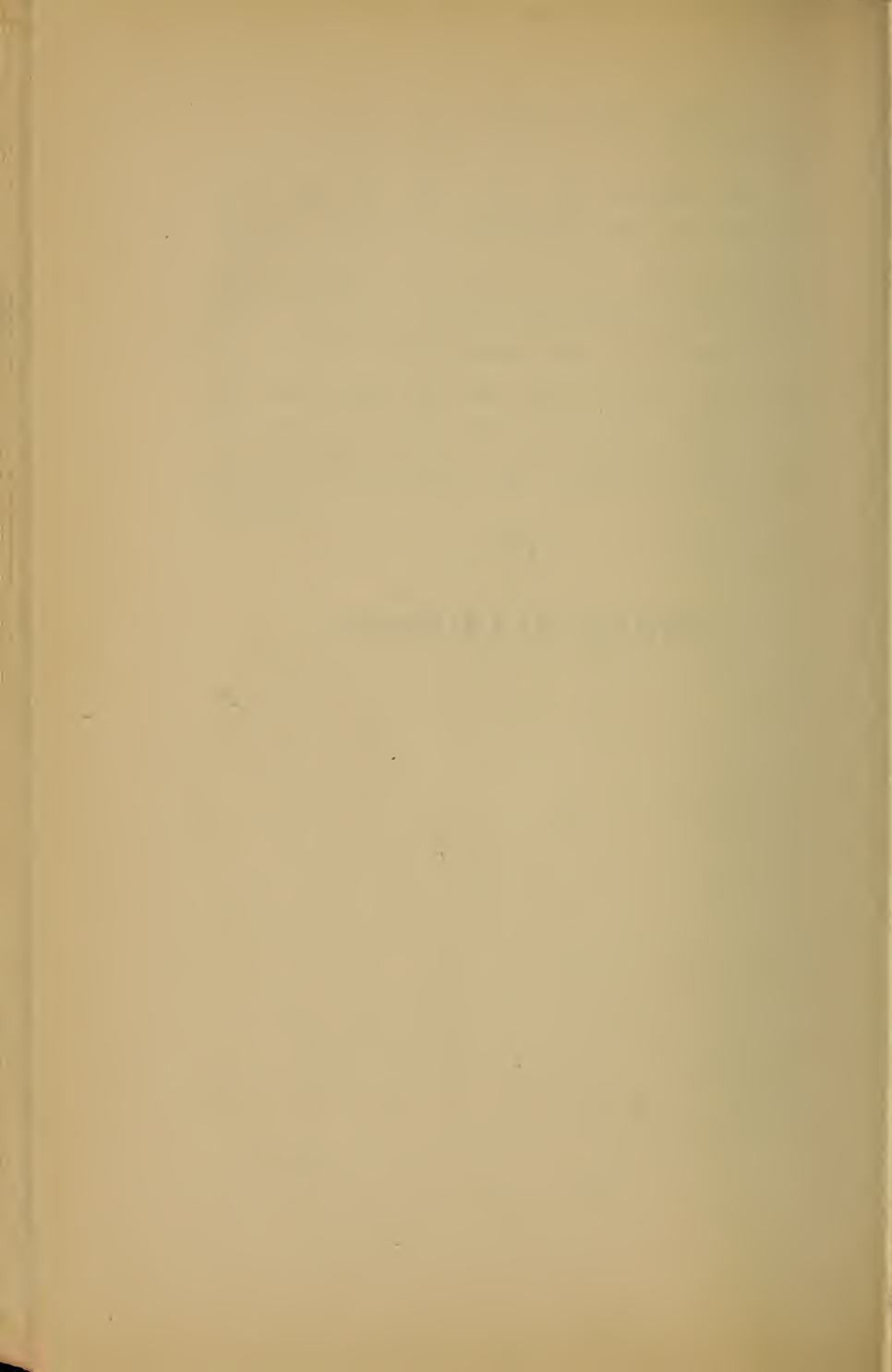
You now give one of the two ends (whichever you prefer) to one of the spectators to hold.

You place your open left hand close to that end, and, with the other hand, you wind the cord rapidly around the left hand. In doing this you press the short piece of

cord out of the way by means of the thumb; tucking it between the second and third fingers as soon as it comes clear. Then, finally, having completed the winding of the cord about the left hand and the secretion of the short piece between the fingers, you unwind the cord with great deliberation, and show it whole as at first.

IV

STAGE ILLUSIONS



STAGE ILLUSIONS

IN the instructions already given, great care has been exercised to include essential principles that shall enable the student to attain proficiency in conjuring entertainment. The list of specific tricks has been chosen in such a manner as to make it comprise all that he needs to practice. Moreover, he will find that the variety of tricks may be indefinitely extended by combinations that will readily become obvious to him. Thus, in the material presented he will find ample opportunity for the exercise of his skill.

In addition, the student should be at pains to cultivate an ability to amuse his audience, as well as to deceive them. He should, indeed, make the amusing of the

party a very powerful factor for the deception. He should seek to acquire a glib patter artfully calculated to provoke the laughter of his hearers. Every successful stage performer is an adept not only in sleight-of-hand, but also in creating merriment among the spectators of his feats. The amateur, similarly, must contrive to increase interest in his performance by constant recourse to amusing sallies. Such mirth-exciting remarks are valuable for two distinct reasons: they increase the pleasure of the spectators, and they distract attention from what must be concealed. The shrewdest observer relaxes his vigilance to indulge in a hearty laugh. The performer is able often by a quip to divert attention from the difficult bit of juggling.

While the instructions hitherto given are sufficient for the most ambitious amateur entertainer, it is probable that the student may be curious concerning more pretentious effects attained by professional con-

Stage Illusions

jurers. Or it may be that he himself may develop sufficient dexterity in the art of prestidigitation to desire a broader field of operation.

As a matter of fact, the professional performer depends, first, upon an extraordinary skill in sleight-of-hand, and, secondly, a plentiful supply of apparatus. We shall now review the most important of such appliances, those that are the main reliance of the professional performer.

It is not necessary to describe in detail all the various contrivances that are manufactured to serve as aids to the magician on the stage. Such appliances are commercially exploited by many different firms, and the student may readily purchase anything in the way of apparatus that he desires. Moreover, these mechanical devices are sold with complete instructions for the guidance of anyone unfamiliar with the method of using them.

There are almost innumerable contrivances to be employed in card tricks.

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

One of the most effective is the magic sword. A spectator draws a card, which is forced on him, replaces it and shuffles

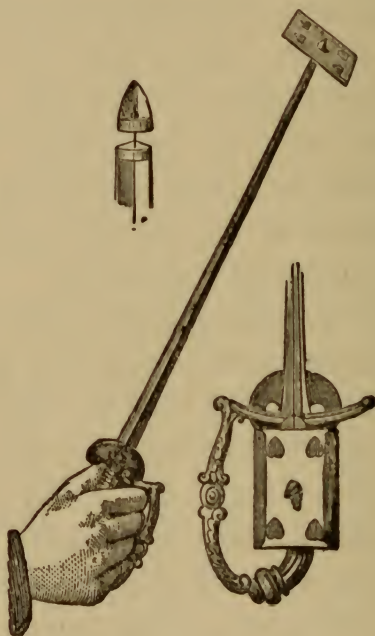


FIG. 15.

the pack. He is then directed to throw the whole pack at the performer, who stands ready with his sword. This weapon has a short bit of the tip detachable and

Stage Illusions

seemingly vanish and return at the will of the performer. One such is shown in the illustration. This is very simple, since it depends solely on the loose slab marked *a*, indistinguishable from the bottom of the

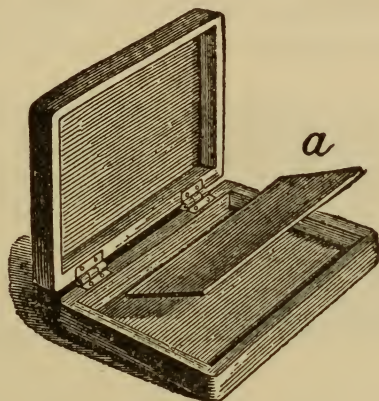


FIG. 21.

box. The box may be used with either side up. When a card is placed within, the turning over of the box hides the card under the loose slab, and it has apparently vanished. It reappears by reversing the position of the box.

Cards that change are made in a number of different ways. The illustration shows

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

the employment of a movable slip, *a*, which is operated by sliding on a pin that traverses a narrow slot.

The face of the king has the suit signs cut away, to be replaced by those at the back, changing from one to the other by use of the slide.



FIG. 22.

Special cards also are printed with various combinations of pips and suits, so that when partially exposed they have one value, and when the other end is shown another value.

Likewise, the ingenuity of the magicians has displayed itself in a long list of receptacles for coins that deceive the observer. One such has a piece of zinc under

Stage Illusions

a false bottom, so that after a coin placed in the box has been let fall into the hand, where it is palmed, the lid may be shut and the box, on being shaken, gives evidence that the coin is still within, because the piece of zinc is heard to rattle.

Another box to cause the vanishing of a

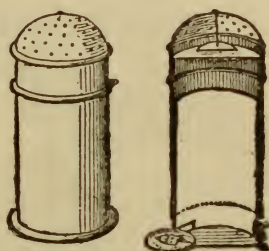


FIG. 23.

coin is of tin and has an inner tube with a slit at the end soldered to the bottom. This inner tube may be pulled down a little to allow the coin to fall out, after which it is pushed back into place. Such boxes usually have also a loose piece of zinc secreted in the top, for rattling. But a slight adjustment of a wire attachment prevents the zinc from rattling when the box is shown empty.

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

A rather elaborate form of coin box is the magic casket shown in the illustration. The mechanical construction of this is such that each time the lid is closed one of the coins disappears into a hidden compartment at the bottom. The effective-

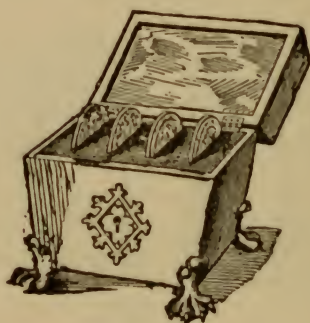


FIG. 24.

ness of the casket is enhanced by the fact that it may be held in the hand of a spectator, who is allowed to operate the lid and thus cause the disappearance of the various coins. Of course, in performing with the cabinet, marked coins should be palmed, and substitutes placed in the box.

Salvers also are specially designed in

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connection with coin tricks. The one shown in the illustration has a space between front and back in which a number of coins may lie. The false bottom rests on a spring, and may be pressed downward with the finger tips sufficiently to permit a coin to slip under the rim into the hidden compartment, thus vanishing completely.

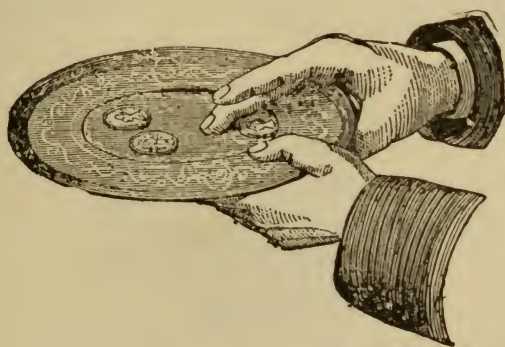


FIG. 25.

Many effective tricks with watches depend entirely on apparatus. One of the simplest is a box in which a watch may be placed, and the box afterward locked and given to the owner of the watch to

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

hold. Such a box has a movable side, which turns on a pivot. Pressure on the bottom of the box lifts the catch, and simultaneous pressure against the movable section causes an opening sufficient to

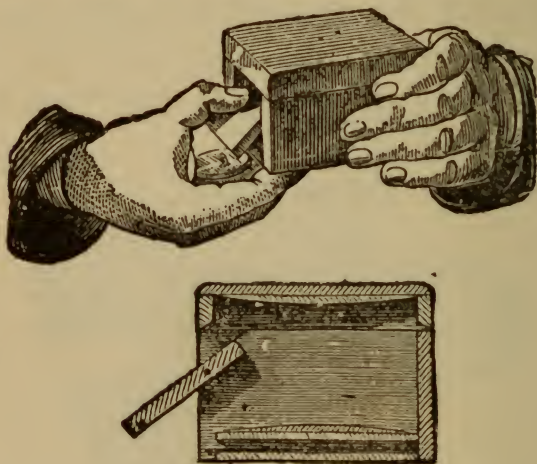


FIG. 26.

permit the sliding out of the watch. The illustration makes the method of construction clear.

An amusing illusion in connection with watches is that of making any timepiece a repeater. This is accomplished by the employment of a small brass contrivance

Stage Illusions

equipped with a tiny bell which is rung by a very slight pressure. The apparatus is carried in the pocket of a tightly fitting waistcoat. A slight expansion of the chest causes the bell to ring. Any watch may be held up before the spectators and made apparently to strike the hour by means of this device. The mechanism is shown in the illustration. The brass cylinder gives off its sound freely by reason of the perforations.

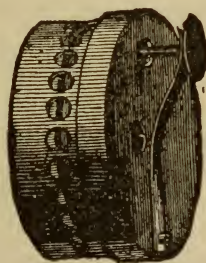


FIG. 27.

It should be added that those tricks in which a watch is seemingly smashed and afterward restored, depend entirely on the use of boxes from which the watch may be secretly removed while a substitute

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

jumble of watch-mechanism takes its place, afterward to disappear in its turn, when the watch itself is restored whole.

Many tricks with rings may be performed with the same apparatus that is used for coins. In addition, many excellent effects may be secured by using a substitute ring that in itself has the nature of apparatus, though of the simplest. For this purpose, an ordinary wedding ring is best. The similarity in appearance of wedding rings is such that the substitute will pass readily for one borrowed. The substitute should be fastened to the end of an elastic cord, which has its other end attached inside the coat sleeve. Thus, this substitute may be held in the fingers in place of the borrowed ring, which may be deposited secretly wherever desired. The substitute ring will vanish up the sleeve at any moment by simply releasing it from the fingers. For example, while holding the substitute in one hand, prominently displayed, it is easy to slide a palmed bor-

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rowed ring over the end of a small rod, and then, holding the hand still closed on the middle of the rod, apparently to pass the ring from the fingers of the other hand upon the rod while it is held at the two ends by spectators. The substitute ring, without the elastic, may be wrapped in a handkerchief, which is laid over the rod while it is held. The substitute ring, which was only in a fold of the handkerchief according to the method previously given, is palmed, and when the handkerchief is lifted the borrowed ring is found on the stick.

A useful piece of apparatus that may be used in a great variety of tricks is a reversible tin canister. This appears to have only one opening, but has an inner tube of two compartments. This tube may be pushed to and fro, giving the appearance of the top part of a canister to that end toward which it is pushed. This device may be used conveniently in substituting one article for another. Thus, a borrowed

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

handkerchief may be placed in the canister; the canister is then secretly reversed so that the bottom now appears as the top. A substitute handkerchief has already been placed in this compartment. This may be torn up, or burned. Again reversing the canister, the borrowed handkerchief is found uninjured. The in-

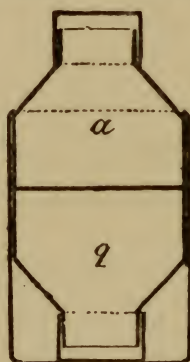


FIG. 28.

genuity of the performer can adapt this piece of apparatus to countless illusions. The manner of its construction is shown in the illustration.

The two compartments are indicated by *a* and *q*.

Stage Illusions

Usually, the professional magician is able to dispose of a handkerchief secretly without the use of apparatus. But sometimes it is convenient to use a device that fits into the palm as a receptacle. This is of tin, the size and shape of a boot heel, open toward the fingers, so that the handkerchief can be stuffed into it. A spring

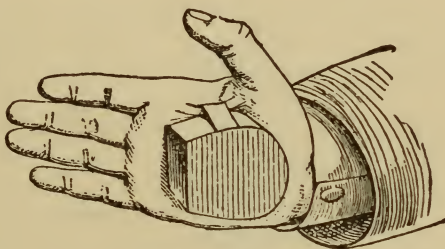


FIG. 29.

holds this contrivance by clipping on the fleshy part of the hand. The illustration shows the device in position.

A trick box is a necessary convenience for illusions with a ball. With this aid, almost no sleight-of-hand is necessary for many tricks in which a ball seems mysteriously to vanish and to return at the

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

command of the performer. Such a box may be from three to six inches in height, and is made up of three portions, the receptacle proper, the imitation of the ball, and the lid. The central portion may be left upon the lower when the lid is removed, showing the receptacle empty. For this central portion is hollow and fits into

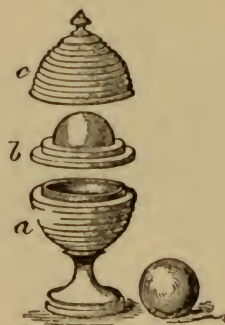


FIG. 30.

the lid as if a part of it. Or this central portion may be left over the receptacle when the lid is raised, and it thus represents the ball itself in the receptacle. The ball itself is palmed as necessary. The chief reliance is on the apparatus. The

lower, central and upper parts are indicated in the illustration by the letters *a*, *b*, *c*.

A second form of ball-box has only two parts, the central portion being omitted. Such boxes are used in pairs. The top is sufficiently large to conceal the ball, which fits so snugly that it will remain fast in the top when jerked upward, but it may be dislodged by a little shake, falling back into the lower part. In doing the trick, a ball is concealed in the top of one of the boxes. This box is shown seemingly empty. A ball is placed in the other box, and the lid is put on. By a jerk of the hand, the ball is fixed in the top. A shake dislodges the other ball. On taking off the two lids, it appears that the ball has passed from one box to the other. This box is shown in the illustration. An outline of the ball hidden within the lid is shown in the section marked *b*.

An ingenious Japanese trick is that of the obedient ball. A large wooden ball

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has a hole through it so that it slides freely on a cord. But the operator is able to cause it to stop instantly at his word of command anywhere along the length of the

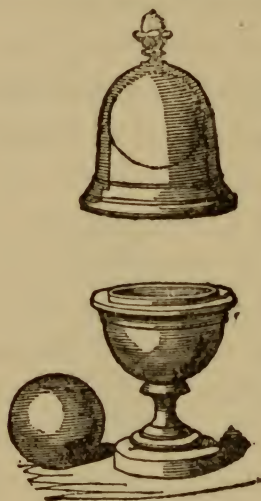


FIG. 31.

cord. The method depends on having the hole through the ball run in a curve. When the cord is slack, the ball slides freely. When the cord is tightened, it binds on the hidden curve within the wood, and the movement of the ball is instantly arrested.

Stage Illusions

A variation of this trick is to have a large straight hole through the ball, but with such a taper that it will hold a hollow plug. This plug has its hole curved. The plug is secretly threaded on the cord, and the ball receives it. The advantage of this arrangement is that it permits free examination of the ball by the company. The disadvantage is that it requires dexterity to adjust the plug and ball in position. The original form for the trick is shown in the larger figure in the illustration, with the curved hole indicated by the letters, *a*, *b*, *c*. The plug is shown alongside, marked *a*.

A special table is exceedingly useful to the magician, provided with a secret shelf on the side away from the spectators. An assistant can keep this in order, quietly removing objects or placing them as required. The accompanying illustration shows such a construction in connection with the old trick of the cannon ball in the hat. This illusion requires a large

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

wooden ball painted black, with a finger hole. The ball is slipped into the hat after it has been shown empty, to be dis-

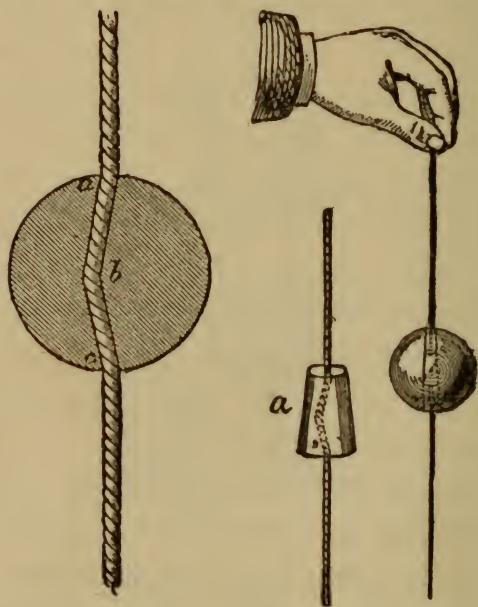


FIG. 32.

covered as the hat is about to be returned. The position of the hand in holding the hat to display its interior is shown in the illustration.

Stage Illusions

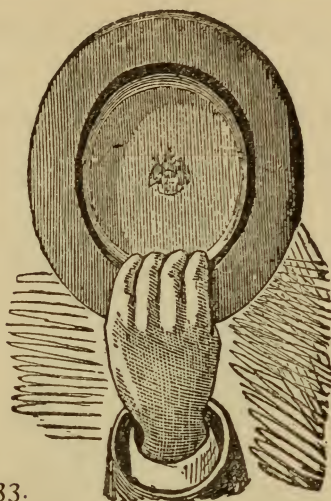


FIG. 33.

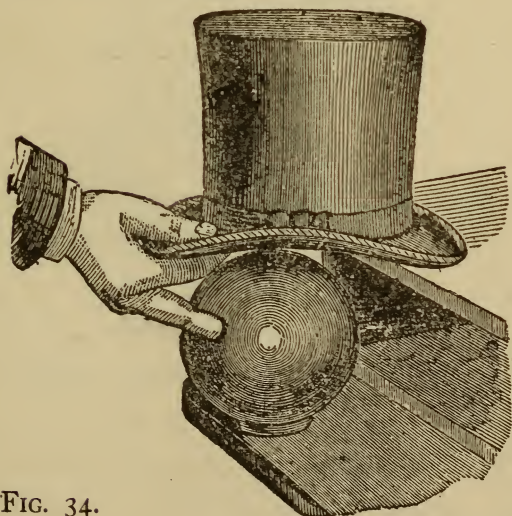


FIG. 34.

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

The manner of secretly slipping the ball into the hat from the shelf is next shown.

All of those tricks by which bulky objects mysteriously appear from nowhere depend on apparatus. One of the most startling is the production of a full-sized

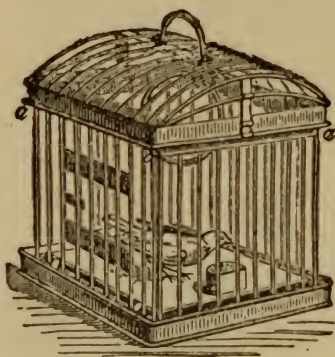


FIG. 35.

bird cage from an empty hat. Such devices vary in details according to the ingenuity of different producers. A folding cage, which when closed contains a canary, is shown in the three illustrations herewith.

The final effect is seen in the first picture. It appears folded in the third cut.

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Simply lifting it by the handle in the top causes it to take its expanded position. The process is shown in the middle picture.

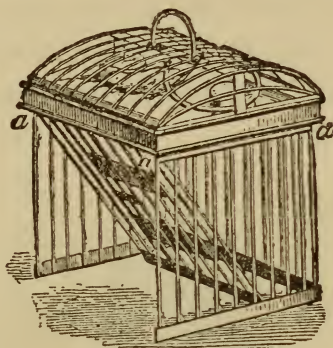


FIG. 36.

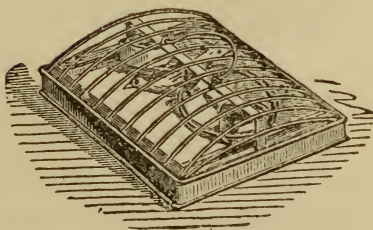


FIG. 37.

An ingenious French device is a cover of thin brass, something less than a foot high, which contains a scoop fitting snugly against the side of the interior. The scoop

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is controlled by pressing a button on the outside of the cover. The button is marked *a* in the illustration. Such a cover may be placed over any object, for example an orange, and by pressing the button the scoop will pick up the object and hold it

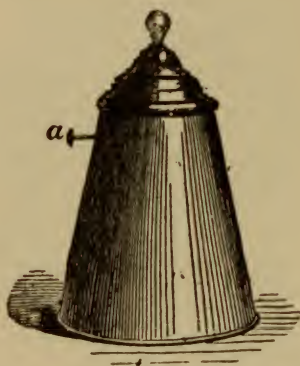


FIG. 38.

securely out of sight. Such a cover should be used in substitution for a similar one without a scoop, which may be passed around for examination.

The production of bowls of water with fish swimming in them, apparently out of empty space, is another feat done by means

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of apparatus, although this is of a very simple sort. A shallow saucer-shaped bowl, about half a foot in diameter and not more than two inches in depth, is used. After it has been filled, it is fitted with an india-rubber cover, and is concealed in a pocket. Three or even more such bowls may be hidden on the person. Covering the arm with a shawl masks the performer's movement sufficiently for drawing out a bowl and removing the cover.

The bottle from which variously colored liquids are poured, though seemingly of glass, is really of tin painted. It contains a number of compartments, each leading to a tube in the neck. The flow is controlled by tiny holes through the bottle into the different compartments. The fingers close over these holes as on the notes of a flute. By raising the finger from a particular hole the air pressure causes a flow of the liquid from the connecting compartment. The bottle is shown on the next page.

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

A variation of the trick bottle contains both wine and small reels of ribbon. Either liquids or different-colored ribbons may be produced from the bottle at will.

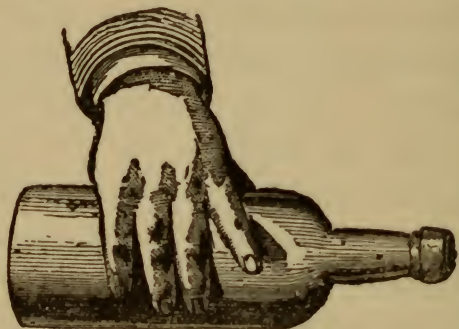


FIG. 39.

The construction is shown in the illustration.

Often, the professional performer makes use of special devices in connection with his table. A large variety of traps is fitted to such tables. An example is the wrist trap, which forms part of the table's surface. The illustration shows at the left a view of the under side, and the operation is made clear in the right half of the picture, where the trap, *a*, is seen dropped,

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by reason of a slight pressure of the wrist on the plate marked *c*.

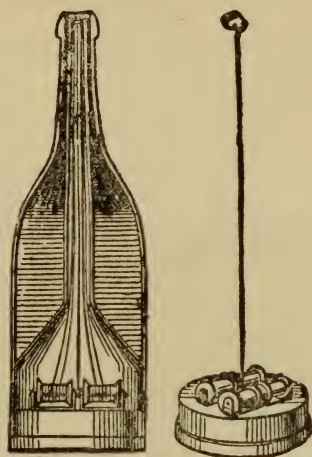


FIG. 40.

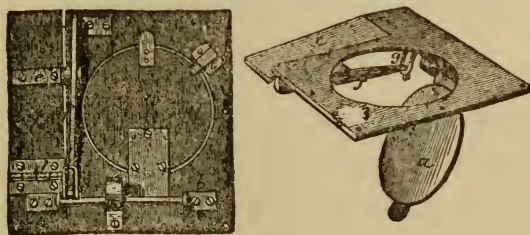


FIG. 41.

Such a trap may be of any desired size.
One large enough to permit the easy

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disposal of a rabbit, or the like, is shown in a view of its under surface by the next illustration. This trap has double doors, which are forced open downward by pressure, and close automatically by their own springs.

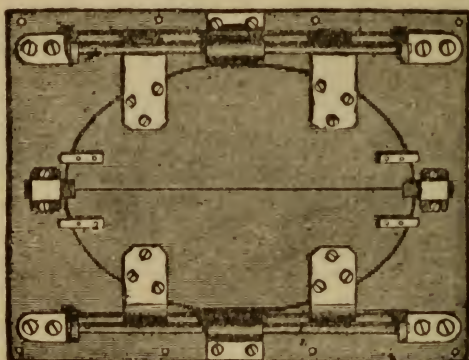


FIG. 42.

An ingenious variation is one which has two brass cylinders attached to the under surface of the table, in such a manner that either may be brought under a trap in the surface. They are fitted with a mechanism so that they may either receive an object from the surface of the table or place it

Stage Illusions

there, at the will of the performer. The method is shown in the first illustration by the cylinders *c* and *d*, which are movable on the tracks *h h* and *g g*. Either *c* or *d*

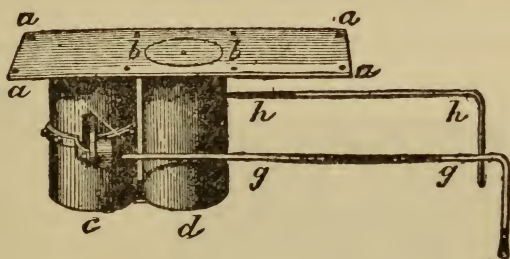


FIG. 43.

may be brought under the trap *b b*. By means of this arrangement an article placed on the table mysteriously vanishes and another comes in its place.

Details of the construction are shown elaborately in the second illustration.

A stage trick that has always been popular is that where a woman is placed in a large basket and then apparently stabbed by a sword in the hand of the magician, thrust repeatedly into the basket and drawn forth dripping with blood.

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

Then the basket is opened and shown to be empty, and the woman appears elsewhere perfectly safe.

In doing this trick, a basket is used with a false bottom, which remains flat when the basket is turned on its edge to be

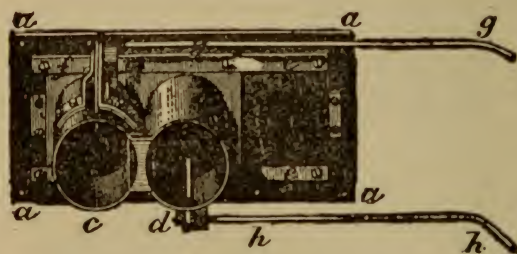


FIG. 44.

shown empty by the performer as in the illustration. The woman lies on this bottom, and is covered from view by a substitute bottom, which was at first against the side of the basket, but falls into the required position when the basket is tilted over. The construction is shown in the accompanying illustration.

Two women are used, of similar appearance. The one to be placed in the basket

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is blindfolded on the stage, while the other remains in the wings. After being blindfolded, this woman runs off the stage in apparent fear of the ordeal. The magician follows, but brings back the other woman blindfolded. With the face thus concealed, the audience does not notice the substitution, and it will recognize

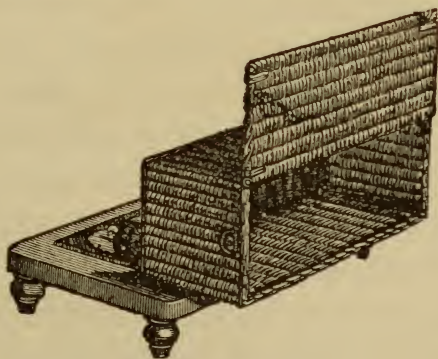


FIG. 45.

the first woman when she reappears uninjured after the opening of the basket.

The woman in the basket avoids injury from the sword by lying flat on the bottom, while the performer thrusts his blade in an upward direction so as to clear her body.

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

The blood on the sword may be from a sponge saturated with red liquid, applied by the woman in the basket, or it may come from the sword itself, made with a concealed receptacle for such a liquid connected with the blade, the flow controlled by the finger pressure of the performer.

The trick is done also with only a single woman or boy, in which case the victim escapes through a trap at the back of the stage. The arrangement is concealed from the audience by the use of mirrors, so that the space beneath the basket is apparently fully shown, but in reality is half hidden. This manner is really more effective, because the woman is out of the basket before the magician's attack with the sword. He is therefore free to thrust with great violence, while the woman screams in seeming anguish.

Wonderful magical effects have been secured by the use of mirrors cunningly arranged to deceive the eye. Thus, a three-

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legged table free from any cloth is set in a curtained recess some ten feet square, with the open side toward the spectators. A human head rests on this table. The head is alive and talks. Yet, there is no body seemingly, for the space under the table shows clear.

The deception depends on an arrangement of mirrors. The floor also is covered with cloth like that on the walls of the recess. Mirrors running to the floor are set in the space between the middle leg and that on either side. The principle of optics is that the angle of reflection is equal to the angle of incidence. In the left part of the illustration this is shown by the dotted lines touching the mirror *b c*. An object *d* is seen reflected in the mirror by a person *a*. In the right part of the illustration, the two mirrors between the legs are shown by *a b* and *c b*. The opening between the legs *a c* is toward the audience. The spectators see in these two mirrors reflections of the side walls

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of the recess, but they believe that they see the back walls of the recess behind the legs of the table. By this means, a secret compartment really exists back of the table, hidden from view by the mirrors, and this space actually contains the body to which the head seen on the table belongs.

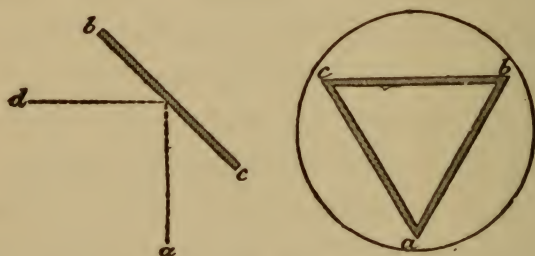


FIG. 46.

A striking achievement of the magician is the apparent overcoming of the law of gravity, so that a woman rests in the air in a horizontal position, supported only by one elbow on the top of a rod. This is accomplished by the use of a metal framework worn beneath the dress. The structure is such that the woman is able to move about, but when placed in the

Stage Illusions

required posture is held rigidly by an automatic locking of certain joints in the framework. Similarly, the elbow piece of

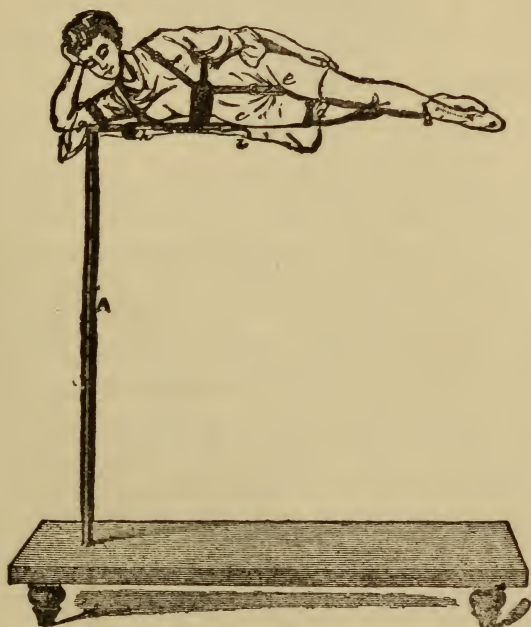


FIG. 47.

the framework is caught and held immovable by the top socket of the supporting rod. By elaborations of the contrivance the woman is able to change from

Tricks and Magic Made Easy

one position to another in defiance of the law of gravity, seemingly directed solely by the will of the performer. The nature of such a framework is sufficiently indicated in the accompanying illustration.

It should be noted that both this illusion of aerial suspension and the basket trick described above were ancient inventions of the Hindu fakirs, by whom the secrets of these most effective tricks were jealously guarded through many centuries, so that they were looked on with awe by the superstitious natives of India as the creations of genuine magic. It was only in modern times that professional magicians of Europe discovered the long-hidden methods employed in these illusions, and adapted them to performance on the stage.



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