The Secrets of Conjuring and Magic

or

HOW TO BECOME A WIZARD

by

ROBERT-HOUDIN

TRANSLATED AND EDITED, WITH NOTES,

by

PROFESSOR HOFFMANN,

AUTHOR OF "MODERN MAGIC"

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# Robert-Houdin's
## The Secrets of Conjuring and Magic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cover</th>
<th>The Wand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Editor's Preface</td>
<td>The Table</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author's Preface and Dedication</td>
<td>Pockets and <em>pochettes</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Home of Robert-Houdin</td>
<td>The Coat Sleeves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Gestures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conjuring and its Professors</td>
<td>The Eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Art of Conjuring</td>
<td>The &quot;Boniment&quot; or &quot;Patter&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Principles</td>
<td>Tricks with Coins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hand</td>
<td>Chapter II. Card Tricks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escamotage, Prestidigation</td>
<td>Tricks with Cards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter I. Coin Tricks
- The Palm Proper
- The Tourniquet
- The Pincette
- The Coulée
- The Italian or "thumb" Palm
- Disappearance by Means of the Sleeve
- Disappearance by Means of the Cravat
- Changes: Modes of Substitution of one Coin for another
- Change by Means of the Palm proper
- Change by Means of the Coulée
- Change by Means of a Tray

### Chapter II. Card Tricks
- Tricks with Cards

### Chapter III. Sundy Expedients used in Conjuring and Tricks of Various Descriptions
- The Chinese Rings
- The Crystal Balls
- The Cannon-Ball Trick
- The Plumes and Shower of Sweets

### Chapter IV. The Cups and Balls
### Chapter V. The Birth of Flowers
- The Miraculous Fishery
- The Marvellous Equilibrium

## Conclusion
EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE following pages are a translation of *Les Secrets de la Prestidigitation et de la Magie*, which was published by Robert-Houdin in 1868, and which has nearly ever since been out of print, the possession of a copy being regarded among professors of magic as a boon of the highest possible value. Though originally intended only as an installment of a larger treatise, the present is unquestionably the most scientific work ever written on the art of conjuring, and the favourable reception accorded to my own book, *Modern Magic*, leads me to imagine that a translation of this, the production of probably the greatest conjuror the world has ever known, will be received with still greater favour.

In the work of translation I have aimed at substantial rather than absolute fidelity. My design has been to produce a manual of practical utility, and rather to indicate clearly what the author meant, than to reproduce with literal exactness what he has said. To that end, I have not hesitated, where it has appeared desirable, to supply a word or expand a phrase, and have further added occasional explanatory footnotes. To avoid the confusion which should arise from the use of two sets of notes, I have incorporated the author's own notes, which are few and far between, with the text itself.

*Louis Hoffmann.*

*September, 1877.*
AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE shortest preface, it is said, is the best, probably because the shorter it is, the easier it is to skip it.

It is seldom, indeed, but that we leave unread the few pages of more or less personal observations with which some authors introduce their opening chapter.

For my own part, I confess with shame that I don't think I have ever read a preface, save those I have written for my own works.

Desiring to do the proper thing, I had made up my mind to leave this first page virgin of print, in token of my hearty approval of the popular saying above mentioned; but upon second thoughts, and in order not to depart too completely from the prevailing fashion as to a preface, I have endeavoured to find a way to conciliate the favour of my readers by something similar in intention if not in form, and I have finally determined on a dedication.

This book being solely designed to teach conjuring, I dedicate it, with much goodwill, to those of my readers whom it may concern:

TO MY FUTURE BRETHREN IN THE MAGIC ART

May the instructions contained in this book be as profitable to them as the composition of these instructions has been pleasant to me.

ROBERT-HOUDIN
I AM at once landlord and tenant, at St. Gervais, near Blois, of a residence in which I have organised certain arrangements, I might almost say tricks, which, though scarcely so astonishing as those of my public performances, have nevertheless given me, in the country round, the repute (which in bygone days would have placed me in some danger) of possessing supernatural powers.

These mysterious arrangements are, in truth, simply ingenious applications of science to domestic purposes.

It has suggested itself to me that it might perhaps be agreeable to the public to be made acquainted with these little secrets, which have excited a good deal of interest, and I think I cannot publish them in a more appropriate way than by placing them at the head of a work whose specialty will be secrets revealed and mysteries explained.

If the reader will kindly follow me, I will conduct him to St. Gervais, introduce him into my house, and act as his guide. Indeed, to spare him all trouble and fatigue, I will, in my character of ex-magician, enable him to make his journey and pay his visit without moving from his own armchair.

THE PRIORY

At about a mile and a quarter from Blois, on the left bank of the Loire, is a little village whose name recalls to epicures recollections of gastronomic delights, for in that village is produced the famous "cream of St. Gervais."

Let it not be imagined, however, that it was a weakness for this snow-white delicacy which inducted me to select this spot as my home. It is solely to the "sacred love of fatherland" that I am indebted for having as my vis-à-vis the good town of Blois, which does me the honour to have been my birthplace.

There is a broad road, straight as a capital I between St. Gervais and my native town. At one end of this "I" there turns to the right a parish road passing by our village, and leading to The Priory.

The Priory is my modest residence, which my friend Dantan the younger has promoted to the higher title of "Sell 'em Abbey."*

*L'Abbaye de l'Attrape" (la Trappe). The pun of the original is necessarily lost in translation. -ED.

When the traveller reaches the Priory, he has before him:
An iron gate by way of carriage entrance.

A door, on the left, for the admission of visitors.

A box, on the right, with an opening closed by a flap, wherein to deposit letters and newspapers.

The dwelling-house stands about a quarter of a mile from this spot; a broad but winding drive leads to it, across a little park, shaded by trees of venerable antiquity.

This short topographical description will enable the reader to appreciate the necessity of the electrical contrivances which I have arranged at the gate for the automatic discharge of the duties of porter.

The visitors' entrance is painted white. On this spotless door appears, on a level with the eye, a brass plate, gilt, bearing the name of ROBERT-HOUDIN. This indicator is of substantial utility, there being no neighbour near at hand to give the visitor any information.

Beneath this plate is a small knocker, also gilt, whose form sufficiently indicates its purpose; but that there may be no doubt whatever on the subject, a little head of grotesque device, and two hands of the same character, which project from the door as from a pillory, draw attention to the word Knock, which is placed just beneath them.

The visitor uses the knocker, gently or forcibly at his discretion, but, however feeble be the rap, in the house, a quarter of a mile away, an energetic ringing becomes audible throughout the establishment, so arranged, however, as not to be offensive to the most delicate ear.

If the ringing ceased with the movement which caused it, as with ordinary bells, there would be nothing to secure the opening of the door, and the visitor might possibly be left cooling his heels in front of the Priory. But such is not the case. The bell continues to ring, and cannot be made to cease its warning sound until the lock has performed its duty in regular course.

To unlock the gate, all that is needful is to press a stud placed in the hall, and which operates somewhat after the manner of the porter's pull-cord.*

*"Le cordon du concierge."-French houses are frequently of great height, and inhabited by numerous families, the common entrance being placed under the care of a porter or concierge, who resides in a "lodge" on the ground-floor. A cord attached to the lock enables the porter to open the door without leaving his or her domestic duties for that purpose.-ED.

By the ceasing of the ringing, the servant knows that the stud has done its duty, and that the door is unfastened. But this is not enough. The visitor must also be informed that he can walk in.

Observe how this object is gained. At the same moment that the bolt of the lock is withdrawn, the name ROBERT-HOUDIN suddenly disappears, and is replaced by an
enamelled plate, on which are painted, in bold characters, the words *WALK IN*.

Upon this unmistakable invitation, the visitor turns an ivory handle, and walks in, pushing open the door, which, however, he has not the trouble to close after him, this duty being performed by a spring. The door once shut, cannot be again opened without going through a regular process. All is restored to its original condition, and the name-plate has again taken the place of the invitation to enter.

The fastening arrangements have, besides, this additional element of security for the dwellers in the house; if a servant, either by mistake, in fun, or through carelessness, presses the stud in the hall, the door is not unlocked, it being an indispensable preliminary that the knocker should first be lifted and the warning of the bell heard in due course.

The visitor, entering, little thinks that he has thereby conveyed certain definite information to his future entertainers. The gate, in opening and closing, has set in motion, at different angles of such opening and closing, a bell which rings in a particular manner. The peculiar and quickly ceasing sound of this bell will indicate, with a little observation, whether the visitors are one or several in number, whether the visitor is a friend of the family, or comes for the first time, or whether, lastly, the applicant for admission is some unauthorised person who, not knowing the back-door, has found his way in through this entrance.

Here I must pause to explain, for these effects, which seem to go beyond the scope of the ordinary laws of mechanics, would probably be received with disbelief by some of my readers, were I not to prove the correctness of my statements.

My arrangements for procuring information at a distance are of the greatest simplicity, and rest merely on certain indications of sound which I have never found to fail.

I have already mentioned that the door, when opened, produces at two different angles of its opening, two distinct "rings," which rings are repeated at the same angles by the act of closing. These four little tinkles, though produced by different movements, arrive at the Priory divided by intervals of silence of equal duration.

With even so simple an arrangement it is possible, as will be seen, to receive, unknown to the visitors, intimations of very various character.

A single visitor presents himself; he rings, the door is unfastened, he walks in, pushing the door, which forthwith closes after him. This is what I call the usual opening; the four sounds have followed each other at equal intervals. Tinkle-tinkle-tinkle-tinkle. We know at the Priory that only one person has come in.

Let us suppose, in the next place, that several visitors come to see us. The door has unfastened itself in manner already explained. The first visitor opens the door and walks in, and according to the ordinary rules of politeness, he holds the door open until all the rest have passed; being then let go, the door closes. Naturally, the interval between the two first and the two last sounds of the bell has been proportionate to the number of persons who have entered; the strokes are heard
thus--tinkle-tinkle--------tinkle-tinkle! and to a practised ear the estimation of the number offers no difficulty whatever.

The regular "friend of the family" is easily recognised. He knocks, and knowing exactly what will take place, he does not stop to examine the little eccentricities of the gate; the door is no sooner unfastened than the four equidistant sounds of the bell are heard, and announce that he has entered.

With a new visitor there is a difference. He knocks--when the words WALK IN appear, he stops short in surprise, and it is only after the lapse of a few moments that he makes up his mind to open the door. In so doing, he takes notice of everything; his advance is slow, and the four sounds of the bell are slow in proportion. Tinkle------tinkle------tinkle------tinkle. We make ready at the Priory to receive an unaccustomed guest.

The begging tramp, who comes to this door because he does not know the kitchen entrance, timidly raises the knocker, and instead of seeing any one come, in the regular way, to open the door, he finds a manner of opening which he little expects. He fears to get into a scrape, he hesitates about coming in, and if he does so, it is only after some moments of waiting and uncertainty. It may be well imagined that he does not abruptly open the door. Hearing the bell t-i-n-k-l-e------t-i-n-k-l-e------t-i-n-k-l-e------t-i-n-k-l-e------the people in the house can almost fancy they see the poor devil creep in. We go to meet him knowing exactly the kind of person to expect. Indeed, we have never found ourselves mistaken.

Let us next suppose that "carriage" friends come to pay us a visit. The carriage gates are ordinarily closed but the coachmen of the neighbourhood all know, either by experience or by hearsay, how they are opened. The driver gets down from his seat; he first gets the side-door opened, and he walks in. This, by the way, is a gentleman whose "ring" is characteristic--Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, tinkle! We quite understand at the Priory that the coachman who enters with such despatch desires to gain credit with his master or his fare for his activity and intelligence.

Our friend finds hung inside the key of the large gate, to which a written notice draws his attention; it only remains for him to open the folding gates, whose double movement is seen and heard, even inside the house. With this object, there is placed in the hall a tablet on which are painted the words THE CARRIAGE GATES ARE ------. At the end of this incomplete inscription follow alternatively the words OPEN and SHUT, according as the gates are in the one or the other of these conditions; their alternative transposition forming a practical illustration of the truth of the saying, "A door must either be open or shut."*

*"Il faut qu'une porte soit ouverte ou fermée."--French Proverb.

By the aid of such tablet I can make certain every evening, without personal inspection, that the gates are properly closed.

Let us now pass on to the arrangements of the letter-box. Again, nothing can be more simple. I have already stated that the letter-box is closed by a small flap. This flap is so
arranged that, whenever it is opened, it sets in motion at the Priory an electric bell. Now the postman has orders to put in first, and all together, all newspapers and circulars, so as not to create unfounded expectations, after which he puts in the letters, one by one. We are therefore notified in the house of the delivery of each article, so that if we are not inclined for early rising, we may, even in bed, reckon up the different items of the morning post-bag.

To save the trouble of carrying our letters to the village post-office, we write all our correspondence of an evening; then, by turning an apparatus called a commutator, the working of the signals is reversed; and the next morning the postman, on putting his parcel in the box, instead of causing a ringing in the house, is warned by the sound of a bell close beside him to come up to the house and fetch some letters, and he announces himself accordingly.

These contrivances, useful as they are, have one drawback which I ought to mention, and apropos of which I have an amusing little story which, while we are on the subject, I will relate for the reader's benefit.

The inhabitants of St. Gervais have a virtue to which I am very happy to testify; they are by no means inquisitive. Not one of them has ever taken it into his head to touch the knocker at my gate without just cause. But strangers from the town (Blois) are not always so discreet, and occasionally take the liberty of trying experiments with my electrical arrangements, in order to see their mode of operation. Though by no means frequent, these acts of inquisitiveness are none the less unpleasant. This is the drawback to which I have referred, and the following is the incident to which it gave rise.

One day, John, our gardener, is at work near the entrance-gate; he hears a noise in that direction, and observes an idler from our good town of Blois, who, after having used the knocker, is amusing himself by opening and shutting the door, regardless of the commotion he is creating within the house. Upon the gardener remonstrating with him, the intruder simply says, by way of apology--

"Ah! yes, I know. It rings over there. Excuse me, I merely wished to see how it worked."

"Oh, if that is the case," says the gardener, in a tone of assumed good-nature, "of course that alters the matter. I appreciate your desire for information, and I apologise for having interfered with your investigations."

Thereupon, without appearing to observe the other's confusion, John goes back to his work, keeping up the assumption of complete indifference. But our John has a touch of revengefulness about him, and is a sly dog in the bargain. He is by no means appeased, and though he dissembles his annoyance, it is merely in order to give his mind full play in arranging a plan of reprisals which he has conceived, and which he intends, without delay, to put into execution.

Towards midnight he betakes himself to the house of the gentleman in question, lays hold of the bell, and rings with all his force.
A window is partly opened on the first-floor, and through the opening a head appears, adorned with a nightcap, and scarlet with indignation.

John has provided himself with a lantern, and turns its light full on to his victim.

"Good evening, sir," he says, with ironical politeness, "how do you do?"

"What the devil are you ringing for at this hour of the night?" the head replies, in wrathful accents.

"You'll excuse me, I'm sure," says John, mimicking the answer which the other had given to himself, "I know, it rings up there. I merely wanted to see whether your bell was in as good working order as the knocker at the Priory. I wish you good night, sir."

John departed only just in time, for his victim was preparing to launch on his head—a midnight vengeance.

In order to prevent this petty annoyance, I put up at the door a notice requesting that no one would make use of the knocker without necessity. A vain request! The desire to satisfy curiosity (of one person or several, as the case might be) was always a sufficient necessity.

Finding that I could not escape this persistent inquisitiveness, I made up my mind at last not to trouble myself about it, but to regard it on the other hand as a compliment paid to the success of my electrical arrangements. I found reason, later on, to congratulate myself on my conciliatory determination; for, whether from the fact that local curiosity had expended itself, or from some other cause, the intrusions ceased of their own accord, and now it is very rare that the knocker is lifted for any other purpose than that of gaining admittance to the house.

My electric porter, therefore, now leaves me nothing to desire. His duties are discharged with the utmost precision, his fidelity is beyond proof, and he tells no secrets. As to his salary, I doubt whether it would be possible to pay less for so perfect a servant.

I will now proceed to give particulars of an arrangement by which I secure to my horse punctuality as to meals, and full allowance of fodder.

I should mention that my horse is in truth a mare, a quiet and good-tempered filly, though not very young, and who answers—or would if she could speak—to the name of Fanny.

Fanny is of a very affectionate disposition. We regard her as all but a "friend of the family," and we accordingly allow her every indulgence compatible with her equine character. This little exordium will explain my solicitude with respect to the dear creature's meals.

Fanny has a person specially entrusted with the care of her provender, a very honest lad, who, by the very fact of his honesty, is not in the least put out by my electrical arrangements. But before this present groom, I had another. He was an active and
intelligent fellow, with a great fancy for the art formerly practiced by his master. He knew only one trick, but that one he executed with unusual dexterity. The trick was—to change my hay into five-franc pieces.

Fanny took but little pleasure in this kind of performance, and for want of the power to speak her complaints, showed her objection by growing daily thinner and thinner.

There being no doubt whatever as to the execution of the trick, I gave the performer his dismissal, and made up my mind that I would myself supply Fanny with her due allowance of creature comforts. I say "myself," but this is hardly correct, for I must admit that if the poor beast had had to depend solely on my personal punctuality in order to get her meals at the regular hours, she would have run some risk of occasionally having short commons. But I possess, in electricity and mechanical science, able auxiliaries, on whose assistance I can always depend.

The stable stands about fifty yards from the house. In spite of this distance, it is from my own study that the food-supply is worked. A clock performs this duty, with the aid of an electrical conducting-wire. The mechanism comes into operation three times a day, at regular hours. The distributing apparatus is of the greatest possible simplicity; it is a square funnel-shaped box, discharging the provender in pre-arranged quantities.

"But," the reader will perhaps say, "isn't it possible to take away the oats from the horse after they have fallen?"

This supposition is provided for. The horse has nothing to fear in this particular, for the electric "trigger" which sets free the oats cannot operate unless the stable-door is locked.

"But cannot the thief lock himself in along with the horse?"

This also is impossible, seeing that the door only locks from the outside.

"Then the man will wait until the oats have fallen, and then let himself in and steal them."

Quite so, but in that case we are informed of his proceedings by a bell so arranged as to ring inside the house, whenever the stable-door is opened before the horse has finished eating the oats.

The clock, of which I have already spoken, is entrusted with the further duty of transmitting the time to two large clock-faces placed one on the front of the house, the other on the gardener's lodge.

"But why the extravagance of two dials," it may be asked, "when surely one would be enough, outside?"

I feel that I owe the reader, on this point, a few words of justification. When I placed my first clockface on the front of the Priory it was intended to serve the double purpose of indicating the hour to the inhabitants of the valley generally, and of giving the members of my household a uniform and regular standard of time. But when the work
was complete I found that my dial was more useful to outsiders than to myself. I was obliged to go out of doors every time I wanted to see the time.

I puzzled my head in vain for a long while to overcome this drawback. The only solution I could see to the problem was to build another house opposite the one I had already, in order to look at my clock. However, at last I hit on a simpler mode of getting over the difficulty; the gable-end of the gardener's cottage was in full view of all our windows: I erected a second clock-face on the cottage, and set its hands in motion by the same electric current which worked the first.

The correct time is also transmitted by the same means to clocks in different rooms in the house.

For all these clocks we required a general striking apparatus—a striking apparatus whose sound could be heard not only by the inhabitants of the Priory, but by the whole of the village. For this purpose I adopted the arrangement next described.

On the top of the house is a sort of miniature bell tower, containing a bell of considerable size, which is used as a dinner-bell. I placed beneath this bell a clockwork arrangement of sufficient power to lift the hammer at the proper moment. But as it would have been necessary to wind up this clockwork each day, I availed myself for this purpose of a power which in the ordinary course was wasted—i.e., turned to no use, and which I compelled to perform this duty automatically. To that end, I established between the swing-door of the kitchen on the ground-floor and the winding-up apparatus of the clock in the cock-loft, a communication so arranged that the servants, every time they pass backwards and forwards on their domestic duties, are unconsciously winding up the striking movement of the clock. The winding is thus performed by a sort of perpetual motion and gives us no trouble whatever.

An electric current, distributed by my "regulator," withdraws the catch of the striking movement, and causes it to strike the hour indicated by the dial.

This mode of regulating the clock enables me to employ, when necessary, a little artifice which I find very useful, and which I will confide to you, reader, on condition however that you keep it a profound secret, for if once known my expedient would lose all its effect. When for any reason I desire to advance or retard the hour of a meal, by secretly pressing a certain electric button placed in my study, I can put forward or back at pleasure all the clocks, as well as the striking apparatus. The cook often fancies that the time has passed somehow very quickly, and I myself have gained a quarter of an hour, more or less, which I could not have done but for this expedient.

This same regulator again, every morning, by the aid of electrical communications, wakes three different persons at three different hours, beginning with the gardener. So far the arrangement has nothing particularly surprising about it, and I should not allude to it, had I not also to describe a little contrivance of mine, of a very simple character, for compelling my servants to get up as soon as they are called. My plan is as follows:—The alarm sounds, to begin with, loudly enough to awaken the soundest of sleepers, and having once started, continues ringing until the sleeper goes and presses a
stud at the further end of the room. There is no pressing the stud without getting out of bed, and that once achieved, the trick is done.

I worry our poor gardener sadly with my electricity. Would you believe that he cannot warm my hot-house above ten degrees of heat, or allow the temperature to go down below three degrees of cold, without my knowing it. The next morning I say to him, "John, you had the green-house too hot yesterday evening, you are roasting my geraniums;" or again--"John, if you don't take care, my orange-trees will be killed by the frost. You let the temperature of the conservatory go down last night to three degrees below zero."

John scratches his head, and says nothing, but I am sure that he is half inclined to believe that I am a genuine wizard.

I have a similar thermo-electrical arrangement placed in my wood-house, so as to be warned instantly of the smallest outbreak of fire.

The Priory is by no means a second "Bank of France," but, modest though my possessions be, I desire to keep them; and with that view, I think it as well to take precautions against robbers. The doors and windows of my house are all placed in electrical communication with the striking-apparatus, and so arranged that when any one of them is opened, the large bell rings during the whole time it remains open. It has probably already struck the reader that this system would be rather inconvenient if the bell rang every time any one looked out of window or wished to go out for a walk. But such is not the case; the communication is suspended during the day, and is only renewed at midnight (the hour of crime), the horse-feeding clock being intrusted with this duty also.

When we are all away from the house the electrical communication is made permanent, and in case of any one effecting an entrance, the great bell of the clock (the restraining "stop" of the striking-apparatus being withdrawn by electricity) sounds unceasingly, making a very good imitation of the ringing of the tocsin. The gardener, as well as the neighbours, being thus put on the alert, the thief would be readily caught.

We sometimes amuse ourselves with pistol practice, for which we have a well-appointed gallery. But instead of success being indicated in the usual manner, the marksman who hits the bull's-eye sees a leafy crown suddenly appear above his head.

There is a trial of speed between the ball and the electric fluid in the double journey, for though the marksman stands some five-and-twenty paces from the target, his coronation is instantaneous.

Permit me further, reader, to tell you of a contrivance with which electricity has nothing to do, but which I fancy may nevertheless be of some interest to you. In one part of my park there is a sunken way, which it is sometimes necessary to cross. To do this we have no bridge of any kind, but on the brink of the ravine there is a little seat; the wayfarer seats himself upon this, and no sooner has he done so, than he finds himself suddenly transported to the other side. The traveller steps down, and the seat returns of its own accord to seek another passenger. This locomotive arrangement is
double-acting, there being a similar flying seat on the opposite side to bring the traveller back again.

Here I must conclude my descriptions. Were I to carry them further I should fear to be charged with the proverbial weakness of the rustic proprietor, who, when he does catch a visitor, will not bate him one bud of the trees, or one egg of the hen-roost. Besides, I feel bound to reserve some few little surprises for any guest who may come and lift the mysterious knocker, beneath which, as will be remembered, is engraved the name of

**ROBERT-HOUDIN**
INTRODUCTION

AFTER having passed the greater part of my life in endeavouring to bring to perfection the art of conjuring, I had fondly imagined that some day one of my sons would continue my work, and would replace me in my performances.

I had hoped to transmit to this privileged successor, together with the apparatus which I had used at my performances, the potent secrets which have gained for me that position which, in artistic matters, is termed public favour. Knowing, however, that this fleeting gift is only transferable in so far as it is deserved by the new possessor, it was my special ambition to make my pupil, in course of time, a skilful prestidigitateur. To this end I had collected, in the form of an instruction-book in magic, and under the title of "The Secrets of Conjuring," the various artifices, equivoques, sleights, and subtleties which have been made subservient to the performance of pretended magic.

To my great regret, however, my two sons, upon whom I had reckoned to fill my place, showed, from an early age, inclinations of a different character to those I had hoped. The elder, yielding doubtless to an hereditary predisposition, developed an intense love for mechanics, and after having gone through an extensive course of study on that subject, devoted himself especially to clockmaking, a profession which indeed had been followed in our family with considerable success, from father to son, for some generations. The energetic and decided character and military tastes of the younger, caused him to adopt the profession of arms. He preferred the military academy of St. Cyr to the study of my art, and under the influence of his special predilection, lost no time in attaching himself definitely to the army.

My plans and projects were no longer feasible, and there was only left to me, as the sole remnant of my illusions, my Handbook of Magic. This is the book which I now offer to the lovers of conjuring, with the assurance that if, some day, I have the pleasure of hearing that a brother artist has derived therefrom some aid to his success, I shall esteem myself fully compensated for the disappointments I have experienced.

I must ask my future brethren, in studying the principles explained in this work, to regard them rather as friendly counsels, than the formal lessons of a teacher. In this modest little volume it would be out of place to assume a dogmatic professorial tone, though I may occasionally hint, in the words of the old saying--

Experto crede Roberto.

"You may trust the experience of Robert"*

Robert-Houdin
Dans ce modeste in-octavo
Je ne me pose point en maître
Mais avec le dicton, peut-être
Je dirai souvent in petto:

* Experto crede Roberto
CONJURING AND ITS PROFESSORS

THE art of pretended magic, variously known as White Magic, Conjuring, Natural Magic, and Prestidigitation, dates from the remotest antiquity.

The Egyptians, the Chaldees, the Ethiopians, and the Persians have each boasted many experts in this mysterious art. Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of Pharaoh, who ventured to compete with the miracles of Moses; Hermes Trismegistus, the originator of Hermetic science; Zamalxis, the Scythian magician, who after his death was worshipped as a god; Zoroaster, the reformer of the Magi; and in later times the philosopher Agrippa, the enchanter Merlin, and the necromancer Paracelsus, are the most celebrated magicians (I had all but said "conjurors") whose names have been handed down to us by tradition.

The achievements of these wonder-workers, judging by the reputation they achieved for the performers, were doubtless very marvellous for the era at which they took place. But it is not unreasonable to believe that their pretended miracles would at the present day, and in the eyes of spectators enlightened by successive ages of civilisation, produce but very small effect.

To test our assertion, let us suppose that it were possible to call up the most skilful magicians of antiquity, and invite them to an ordinary lecture of a man of science of the present day. What would be the astonishment of the venerable enchanters, when they saw unfolded before them the thousand marvels which have, since their day, been revealed to us by pyrotechny, steam-power, aerostation, electricity, photography, &c., arts founded on principles of which they had never even dreamed. We cannot doubt that, in their eyes, our professor would pass, then and there, from the rank of magician to that of demigod, or even higher still.

We may therefore fairly conclude that if antiquity was, as is sometimes asserted, the cradle of magic, it is because the art of magic was then in its infancy.

The Greeks and Romans possessed very skilful and dexterous performers in this branch of art. Less pretentious than their predecessors, these magicians practiced their art as a trade, and made it pay exceedingly well, a result which, in all ages, has been regarded by the operator as the best of his tricks.

Besides these miracle-mongers, there were also cup-and-ball conjurors, who were called acetabularii, from the Latin word acetabulum, which signifies a cup. The muscade (or ball) properly so called, had not yet been invented, small pebbles being used instead.

This art was preserved in Italy, notwithstanding the revolutions and the general
barbarism of the Middle Ages. It is probable that from time to time Italian conjurors travelled from country to country, exhibiting their tricks. At any rate, it is only towards the middle of the last century that we have any evidence of their appearance in Paris. Jonas, Androletti, and Antonio Carlotti are the first conjurors of whom Parisian records make mention by name. These artists called themselves *faiseurs* and described their tricks as *Jeux*.

About the year 1783, an Italian, called Pinetti gave some performances in Paris which produced a great sensation. The tricks which he performed depended on inventions of much ingenuity, and for a long time served as a foundation for the programmes of all other conjurors.

The secrets of Pinetti’s tricks were divulged by an amateur conjuror, named Decremps, who wrote an excellent work on the subject under the title of *La Magie blanche dévoilée* (White Magic Explained).

Pinetti revenged himself for the publication of this work in the following manner:-At one of his performances he complained that an ignorant fellow, a mere impostor, had, in order solely to injure him (Pinetti), pretended to disclose secrets which were in reality far beyond his comprehension. No sooner was the observation made, than a man in shabby garments and of disreputable appearance got up in the middle of the audience, and in very coarse language addressed Pinetti, and offered to prove that the explanations he had given were correct. The company, annoyed at the interruption of a performance which had given them much amusement, hissed the poor devil, and would probably have given him rather rough treatment, had not Pinetti interceded on his behalf, and put him gently out, thrusting a few crowns into his hand. This man was a confederate. The next day Decremps endeavoured to undeceive the public, but the mischief was done.

At a later date, other artists--namely, Adrien, Bosco, Brazy, Châlons, Comte, Comus, Conus, Courtois, Jules de Rovère, De Linsky, Olivier, Prejean, Torrini, and Val, contributed successive modifications to the old routine of tricks; and thanks also to the ingenuity of a working tinsmith, named Roujol, the programme of their astonishing feats of dexterity was further enriched by sundry mechanical tricks of the "false bottom" order. I make this remark without the least intention of disparagement, for most of the artists I have mentioned achieved legitimate success.

Tricks in which the "false bottom" principle played the principal part were then much in vogue. There were the *Pyramids*, for the transposition of water and wine; (*Modern Magic*, p. 377.--ED.) the *Tomb of the resuscitated Canary-bird*, (This is an old form of the caddy with three compartments described at p. 350 of *Modern Magic*.--ED.) the *Vase for vanishing a handkerchief*, (Modern Magic, p. 351.--ED.) the *Apparatus for the Birth of Flowers*, (Ibid, p. 411.--ED) the *Box for vanishing a large Die*, (This is another form of the caddy above mentioned.--ED.) the *Box for changing Coffee to Rice*, (Modern Magic, p. 333.--ED) the *Vases for changing Coffee-berries to hot Coffee*, (Ibid, p. 388.--ED) and thirty or forty others of a similar character.

The conjurors of the day found these appliances extremely useful, working them in
combination with feats of sleight-of-hand, and generally succeeded in giving very
interesting performances.

Comte, whose skill and good-fellowship won for him the title of the King's own
Conjuror (Physicien du Roi), for many years reigned without a rival in Paris, at his
theatre in the Passage Choiseul, where he gave nightly a performance of conjuring and
ventriloquism. His programme consisted of the tricks I have just mentioned, and of
very amusing polyphonic sketches, which he called "imitations of distant voices."

About the year 1840, a German conjuror, named Döbler, arranged an entirely original
performance, and after having for some time excited the wonderment of his
fellow-countrymen, made his appearance in London, where his performances produced
an extraordinary sensation. Whether, however, from lack of ambition, or whether the
fortune which his talents had rapidly accumulated was sufficient for his desires, Döbler
quitted the stage, and retired upon the income of his investments.

Philippe, a French conjuror, happened to be in England at the date of the success of his
German brother. Having already a very effective programme, he added thereto the
tricks of Döbler, and introduced them to the Parisian public. For two years his success
was immense, but finding, at last the popular interest exhausted, he left Paris and
betook himself to the provinces.

Philippe's principal tricks were the Hundred Candles lighted by a Pistol-shot, (This is
an electrical trick, and formed the first item of Döbler's programme.--ED.) the Gipsies'
Kitchen, (A Well-known stage trick, sometimes known as the Witches' Cauldron,
wherein dead birds and sundry pails of water being placed, and a fire being lighted
underneath, on removing the cover the water is found to have disappeared, and teh
birds to be restored to life. ED.) the Hat of Fortunatus, (Another name for the
Inexhaustible Hat.--Modern Magic, p. 304 et seq.--ED.) the Enchanted Rings, (Ibid. p.
401.--ED.) the Sugar-Loaves, ( A trick peculiar to Philippe, in which borrowed
handkerchiefs, &c., were found in the interior of two sugar-loaves.--ED.) the Basins of
Neptune and the Goldfish, (Modern Magic, p. 371.)&c.

In the month of July, 1845, an entertainment was opened in the Palais-Royal under the
title of Soirées Fantastiques. At these entertainments, the originator (Robert-Houdin
himself.--ED.) exhibited certain illusions which, not only by reason of the manner of
their working, but of the principles whereon they were based, inaugurated a new era of
conjuring. These were the Second Sight, (Modern Magic, p. 493.--ED.) the Aërial
Suspension, (Ibid, p. 495._ED.) the Inexhaustible Bottle, (Ibid, p. 373.--ED.) the
Mysterious Portfolio, (Ibid, p. 468.--ED.) the Crystal Cash-box, (Ibid. p. 487.--ED.)
the Shower of Gold, (The effect of this trick is as follows:--After a certain amount of
introductiroy matter, a glass vase, with a lid of the same material, is placed upon a
small table, and a handkerchief thrown over the whole. The performer gathers from
space a number of gold coins, and passes them invisibly into the covered glass vase,
which is found quite full of them.--ED.) the Wonderful Orange Tree, (The effect of this
trick is described by Robert-Houdin himself (in the "Confidences d'un
Prestidigitateur") as follows:-- " I borrowed a lady's handkerchief. I rolled it into a
ball and placed it beside an egg, a lemon, and an orange, upon the table. I then passed these four articles one into another, and when at last the orange alone remained, I used the fruit in question in the manufacture of a magical solution. The process was as follows:--I pressed the orange between my hands, making it smaller and smaller, showing it every now and then in its various shapes, and finally reducing it to a powder, which I passed into a phial in which there was some spirit of wine. My assistant then brought me an orange tree, bare of flowers or fruit. I poured into a cup a little of the solution I had just prepared, and set fire to it. I placed it near the tree, and no sooner had the vapour reached the foliage, than it was seen suddenly covered with flowers. At a wave of my wand the flowers were transformed into fruit, which I distributed to the spectators.

"A single orange still remained on the tree. I ordered it to fall apart in four portions, and within it appeared the handkerchief I had borrowed. A couple of butterflies with moving wings took it each by a corner, and, flying upwards with it, spread it open in the air."--ED.) &c.

Here, however, I must pause, and must not be tempted to expatiate at too great length upon my own inventions. I may refer those of my readers who may care to know the details of the reforms which I have introduced in the art of conjuring to that chapter of the book entitled *The Confessions of a Conjuror,* which treats of that delicate subject.

*Les Confidences d'un Prestidigitateur,* the title under which Robert-Houdin wrote his autobiography. The original edition was in two volumes, but a second was published in one volume, in 1868, under the title of Confidences et Révelations.--ED.

I may, however, be permitted to say that the theatre of the Soirées Fantastiques, of which I was the founder, has existed at the present date (1868) for more than twenty years, and that during this long period, both myself and Hamilton, my brother-in-law, have earned the wherewithal for an honourable retirement. I may add that Cleverman, our talented successor, appears likely to prolong still further, and for many years to come, this fortunate run of success.

Conjuring is not likely to become a lost art in France for lack of professors. It is not for me to attempt to arrange them in order of merit. I will simply enumerate them, leaving the reader to assign to each his due. I name them in alphabetical order, only regretting that I am precluded from speaking of some of them personally in the high terms which I feel that they deserve.

The conjurors performing at this present time (1868) in Paris are Brunnet, Cleverman, De Caston, Robin, and Tuffereau.

In the provinces there are Adrien the younger, Alberti, Mdlle. Anguinais, Bosco the younger, Conus the younger, Girroodd, Lassaigne, Manicardi, and sundry others whose names I cannot for the moment recall.

In other countries, the representatives of the magic art are Anderson, Bamberg, Philip Debar, Herrmann, Jacob, Lynn, Macalister, Rodolph, Colonel Stodare, and Vell.
Although among these artists, French and otherwise, some are of very much greater
talent than others, most of them have some special trick or tricks, which they execute
with extraordinary perfection. It has often struck me what an interesting exhibition it
would make, to get together for a single performance a dozen conjurors, each giving
for a quarter of an hour a sample of his special talent. Such a performance would, I am
certain, be worthy of a prince.
To succeed as a conjuror, three things are essential--first, dexterity; second, dexterity; and third, dexterity.

The art of conjuring bases its deceptions upon manual dexterity, mental subtleties, and the surprising results which are produced by the sciences.

The physical sciences generally, chemistry, mathematics, and particularly mechanics, electricity, and magnetism, supply potent weapons for the use of the magician.

In order to be a first-class conjuror it is necessary, if not to have studied all these sciences thoroughly, at least to have acquired a general knowledge of them, and to be able to apply some few of their principles as the occasion may arise. The most indispensable requirement, however, for the successful practice of the magic art is great neatness of manipulation combined with special mental acuteness.

It is easy enough, no doubt, to play the conjuror without possessing either dexterity or mental ability. It is only necessary to lay in a stock of apparatus of that kind which of itself works the trick. This is what may be called the "false bottom" school of conjuring. Cleverness at this sort of work is of the same order as that of the musician who produces a tune by turning the handle of a barrel-organ. Such performers will never merit the title of skilled artists, and can never hope to obtain any real success.

The art of conjuring is divided into several branches, namely--

1. Feats of Dexterity, requiring much study and persistent practice. The hands and the tongue are the only means used for the production of these illusions.

2. Experiments of Natural Magic.--Expedients derived from the sciences, and which are worked in combination with feats of dexterity, the combined result constituting "conjuring tricks."

3. Mental Conjuring.--By this name I designate the kind of tricks performed by M. Alfred de Caston: a control acquired over the will of the spectator; secret thoughts read by an ingenious system of diagnosis, and sometimes compelled to take a particular direction by certain subtle artifices.

4. Pretended Mesmerism.--Imitation of mesmeric phenomena, second sight, clairvoyance, divination, trance, and catalepsy. In the year 1847, a very skilful conjuror, M. Lassaigne, gave performances of this kind, executed with unusual finish, at the Salle Bonne-Nouvelle, Paris.

5. The Medium Business.--Spiritualism, or pretended evocation of spirits, table-turning, -rapping, -talking, -and -writing, mysterious cabinets, &c. Performances of this character were exhibited in 1866, at the Salle Hertz, by the...
Brothers Davenport, also by the Brothers Stacy at the Théâtre Robert-Houdin.

6. There are in addition very many tricks which cannot be classified as belonging to any special branch of the art. These, which may be described as tricks of "parlour magic," rest either on some double meaning, some mere ruse, or on arithmetical combinations which involve a certain "key," or mode of working, but which do not require any dexterity or special cleverness. These tricks are generally made use of by persons who desire a ready means of exciting surprise and astonishment.

I propose to append, at the close of this work, a few of these tricks, which will constitute a special chapter, under the title "How to become a wizard in a few minutes."*

* The author seems to have lost sight of this promise, at any rate, it was never performed.--ED.
GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. Conjuring makes too heavy a demand upon the faculties of the spectators to admit of being unduly prolonged. It is a well-known fact that attention too long sustained often degenerates into weariness. Comte, an authority of the highest weight upon the subject of public exhibitions, was of this opinion, as is sufficiently proved by the invariable title of his own entertainment-- "Two hours of magic;" two hours being the precise duration of his performance.

2. The most elementary rule of a conjuring entertainment is to arrange the programme after the manner of the feats exhibited in bygone days on the stage of Nicolet--de plus fort en plus fort--i.e., always to make each trick more surprising than the last.

3. Nothing is so catching as good spirits; the conjuror therefore should do his utmost to meet the public with a hearty, genial manner, taking care, however, to keep rigidly within the bounds of propriety and good taste.

4. Some artists commit, when performing, a fault which cannot be too carefully avoided; they lay aside their animated and genial expression the moment the trick is over, as if they were mere smiling machines, set in motion and stopped at the touch of a spring.

5. However skilful the performer may be, and however complete his preparations for a given trick, it is still possible that some unforeseen accident may cause a failure. The only way to get out of such a difficulty is to finish the trick in some other manner. But to be able to do this, the performer must have strictly complied with this important rule: never announce beforehand the nature of the effect which you intend to produce.

6. However awkward the position in which you may be placed by a breakdown, never for one moment dream of admitting yourself beaten; on the contrary, make up for the failure by coolness, animation, and "dash." Invent expedients, display redoubled dexterity, and the spectators, misled by your self-possession, will probably imagine that the trick was intended to end as it has done.

7. Do not, under any circumstances whatever, ask the indulgence of the public. The spectators may fairly say that they have paid their money to find you skilful, up to your work, in good health and spirits; that they expect, in these particulars, their fair weight and measure, and that you have no right to put them off with complaints.

8. Although all one says during the course of a performance is--not to mince the matter--a tissue of falsehoods, the performer must sufficiently enter into the part he plays, to himself believe in the reality of his fictitious statements. This belief on his own part will infallibly carry a like conviction to the minds of the spectators.
9. Nothing should be neglected which may assist in misleading the minds of the spectators: ergo, when you perform any trick, endeavour to induce the audience to attribute the effect produced to any cause rather than the real one; thus, a feat of dexterity should be presented as resting on some mechanical or scientific principle; and again, a trick really depending on a scientific principle should be offered as a result of sleight-of-hand.

10. Many conjurors make a practice, in the course of their performances, of indicating such and such expedients of the art, and of boasting that they themselves do not employ the method in question. "You observe," they will remark, "that I don't make the pass--that I don't change the card," &c.; and yet, a moment later, they use in some other trick the expedient they have just revealed. It follows, as a natural result, that the spectator, being thus made acquainted with artifices of which he would otherwise have known nothing, is put on his guard and is no longer open to deception.

11. It is not unusual to see conjurors affect; pretended clumsiness which they call a "feint." These hoaxes played on the public arc in very bad taste. What should we think of an actor who pretended to forget his part, or of a singer who for a moment affected to sing out of tune in order to gain greater applause afterwards? I do not here refer to the "feints" employed in conjuring to imitate some act which is designed to mislead the mind or the attention of the spectator. The feint, in this latter case, being executed with extreme dexterity, has no existence for the spectator, but passes in his mind for a genuine act. An artifice of this kind is one of the most effective aids in the performance of a conjuring trick. We shall recur at proper time and place to this subject.

12. Some conjurors use an excessive amount of gesture in order to cover their manipulations. This is wrong. Genuine conjuring demands perfect simplicity of execution. The more simple and natural the movements of the performer, the less likely is the spectator to detect the trick. It is true that in this case a very much higher degree of dexterity is required than in the former.

13. I cannot suppose that any conjuror would for one moment dream of employing confederates among the audience. This sort of joint hoax has now gone quite out of fashion. A trick performed on this principle is out of the pale of conjuring altogether; it is at best what schoolboys would describe as a "good sell."

14. As a matter of course, a conjuror should speak with perfect grammatical correctness. He should, moreover, avoid coarse "chaff," personal observations and practical jokes, and should in like manner eschew pedantic and affected language, Latin quotations, and especially puns. The only wit for which the public gives a conjuror any credit, is the wit of his dexterity. In the words of one of our chroniclers, referring to an artist who was extremely chary of his speech, but very skilful as a performer:-

"How many people would be glad
To have the wit his fingers had!"

*"Combien de gens voudraient parfois
Avoir tout l'esprit de ses doigts."

15. It will be hardly necessary, I imagine, to dilate upon the absurdity of wearing the long robe of a magician. Let us leave tinsel and high-crowned hats to mountebanks; the ordinary dress of a gentleman is the only costume appropriate to a high class conjuror. The most probable result of assuming the conventional garb of a wizard will be to make the wearer an object of derision.
THE HAND

It is to the hand, that instrument of instruments, that man owes all his dexterity.

The hand, among the Egyptians, was the symbol of strength. The Romans regarded it as an emblem of honour and justice. With the Greeks the open hand was the symbol of eloquence; the closed hand, that of argument. Among ourselves, the hand, according to the varying character which may be imparted to its grasp, expresses in turn good faith, friendship, love, or gratitude. But no nation, so far as I am aware, has up to this time attributed to the hand its most natural symbolical meaning—namely, that of dexterity and manual skill.

It has been reserved for the art of conjuring to supply the omission, and to show that never was a symbolical meaning more fitly assigned.

The sketch of a hand, which I insert as my first illustrative diagram, will serve the double purpose of reminding the reader of the name of each finger, and of indicating certain portions of the hand which mutually assist each other in the execution of divers sleights.

The principal parts of the hand are the carpus and the metacarpus.

The carpus is the wrist, the metacarpus is the bundle of five bones on which are jointed the five fingers.*

* The author is here slightly at fault. "The thumb has no metacarpal bone, but is directly articulated with the carpus or wrist." Sir. C. Bell. Robert-Houdin's mistake arises from his treating the thumb as having two phalanges only.--ED.

The outside of the metacarpus is known as the "back" of the hand, the inside, as the "palm."

Within the palm are two raised portions A and B, formed by the muscles, and known as the thenar and hypothenar. These two raised portions are of the greatest possible use in conjuring, as will be seen in the course of this work.

The five fingers have each their distinctive names. They are, enumerating them in succession, the thumb, the index or first finger, the middle finger, the ring-finger, and the little finger. The four last derive their names either from their special duties, or the position they occupy on the hand.
The thumb is the first, the thickest, and the strongest of the fingers. It has but two joints, while the other fingers have three, but it is nevertheless not only the strongest, but the most perfect and the most useful of the five.

In truth, the thumb is the only finger the loss of which renders the hand completely useless.

It has but one fault, that of being rather short for its thickness, and of consequently seeming, to some extent, out of proportion. We are told, however, that it did not leave the hands of the Creator in this condition. One of our poets explains the origin of the defect as follows:

"In any awkward situation
We bite our thumbs to show vexation.
'Tis said the habit took its rise
When Adam lost us Paradise,
For when he munched the fatal "pomme"
He bit off too a piece of thumb,
And that's the reason, so they say,
Our thumbs are shortened to this day."

Quand on fait mal ce qu'on doit faire
On s'en mord les pouces, dit-on;
C'est du peche du premier pere
Que derive ce vieux dicton:
Adam, quand il mordit la pomme,
Se mordit les pouces aussi,
Et de pere en fils voile comme
Nous avons ce doigt raccourci."

In conjuring, all the fingers may be ranked as equal, in point of dexterity if not of shape or strength; each has its duty to discharge, and possesses the same degree of usefulness.

Different parts of the hand have, in like manner, their special functions. Thus, with the raised portions designated by the letters A and B in Fig. 1 as the thenar and hypothenar, it is possible to acquire a secret grip, known as "palming," and it will scarcely be believed that by means of these two muscular portions, so simple in appearance, we may, with a certain amount of practice, acquire a new touch of extreme delicacy.

It may possibly suggest itself to some of my readers that the hand above depicted lacks elegance and grace of form; that the fingers, for example, might be long and more slender, after the manner of the hands represented by our celebrated painters. This criticism, for which I am fully prepared, demands a few words of explanation.

In the details which I had undertaken as to the movements employed in conjuring, I found great difficulty in explaining to a draughtsman certain details of position which I regarded as highly important for the proper comprehension of my explanations. Cleverly as the hands were drawn, they frequently did not convey my intention. So at
last I gave up the attempt, and decided to draw my diagrams myself, and, for lack of better, took my own hands for models.

But as these same hands of mine have so obligingly and uncomplainingly performed their tedious task, it would not be fair to thus make use of them as models without saying at least a word or two in favour of their conformation. And I am the more inclined to do so, inasmuch as they have served me long and faithfully, and that on this score I fairly owe them some little gratitude.

My hands are short, I don't deny it, reader, but allow me to tell you that that very shortness is a virtue, if not a beauty.

It has been remarked by a celebrated observer that "the dexterity of the fingers is in inverse proportion to their length."

Notice, my dear reader, henceforth all the fingers of your acquaintance; see how they accord with the saying I have just quoted, and you will admit that it is strictly correct.

Having laid down this proposition, let me entreat those persons who have been gifted by Nature with long and delicate fingers not to be offended at my preference for short ones, particularly when they remember that everybody is not bound to possess manual dexterity, and if a long hand loses in that particular, it has greatly the advantage in point of elegance and aristocratic appearance.
Before we proceed to make practical use of the two words which head this chapter, it will be as well to get a clear understanding of their true meaning, and to do this, we must inquire into their derivation.

*Escamotage* (conjuring) comes from the Arab word *escamote*, signifying the little cork ball subsequently known as a *muscade* (nutmeg), from a fancied resemblance to that fruit. Originally, the term Escamotage was applied solely to cup-and-ball conjuring, but it was subsequently used as a comprehensive term to describe the performance of conjuring tricks generally.

The word *prestidigitation* dates from a later period. In 1815, Jules de Rovère, who had previously denominated himself a *physicien*, as was then the practice of all conjurors of the first rank, invented for his own use the term *prestidigitateur*, formed from two Latin words, *presti digitii*, meaning nimble fingers.* The word has been adopted as a part of our language, and now it would be deemed a slight upon a performer of any mark not to give him this high-sounding title.

*The word is really of nixed origin, digitus (a finger), being Latin, presto (quick), Italian.-ED.*

Neither one of these denominations, however, authorised though they are by long use, is in my opinion fully adequate to describe the art of fictitious magic.

*Escamotage* will always recall to the mind the "cup-and-ball" tricks whence it derives its origin, and referring specially, as it does, to one particular feat of dexterity, suggests but an imperfect idea of the wide range of the wonder-exciting performances of a magician.

*Prestidigation* seems to imply, from its etymology, that it is necessary to have nimble fingers in order to produce the illusions of magic, which is by no means strictly true.

A conjuror is not a juggler; he is an actor playing the part of a magician; an artist whose fingers have more need to move with deftness than speed. I may even add that where sleight-of-hand is involved, the quieter the movement of the performer, the more readily will the spectators be deceived.

The conjuror claims to possess supernatural powers; he holds in his hand a wand the might of which nothing can resist. Why then should he need, in order to work his wonders, to exaggerate the quickness of his movements? Such a mode of proceeding is illogical and inconsistent. In view of gestures of unusual rapidity, the spectators will generally be bewildered, puzzled, but not convinced, while, on the other hand, an easy, quiet manner will always induce confidence, and so promote illusion.
The word *prestidigitation*, therefore, only imperfectly describes the art which it denotes.

Instead of creating new names, would it not have been better for the adepts of White Magic to have retained the term, at once appropriate and exhaustive, which we find in Plautus, and in many dictionaries, both ancient and modern--*prestigiateur* (Lat: prestigiator), worker of wonders (prestiges). Nevertheless, in order not to run counter to our readers’ preconceived notions, we shall make use indifferently of the two terms generally adopted to designate the art of deception, Escamotage and Prestidigitation.*

*The present chapter being a disquisition on the precise signification of a couple of French terms, will have but little interest for the ordinary English reader. It would, however, have been an unjustifiable mutilation of the text to have omitted it.--ED.*

The vast majority of conjuring tricks are variations of the same broad idea--viz., to cause the disappearance of a given object, and to make it reappear in a different place to that in which it has ostensibly been placed. The details may vary, but the principle is the same. There are certain articles of frequent use in conjuring, which have necessitated the composition of appropriate methods and processes for their production, disappearance, or transformation. Such are, for example, coins, cards, large and small balls, corks, pocket-handkerchiefs, &c.

The description of these methods will precede that of the tricks in which the articles I have referred to are employed.

We will commence with the methods specially appropriate to coins.

[Previous] [Next] [Main Contents]
CHAPTER I

RULES AND DIRECTIONS FOR THE EXECUTION OF VARIOUS SLEIGHTS WITH COINS

SECTION II

The methods most frequently used in coin conjuring, are:-

1. The Palm proper
2. The Tourniquet
3. The Pincette
4. The Coulée*

*No. 2 is sometimes known as the "French drop." Nos. 3 and 4 are but little used by English performers, and have no recognised English names.--ED.

5. The Italian, or "Thumb" Palm

"Secondary" Coin Passes:
  Disappearance by Means of the Sleeve
  Disappearance by Means of the Cravat

We shall proceed to explain these artifices seriatim. We should, however, first inform the reader, by way of encouragement to study, that the methods described in this book are not mere theoretical processes, but that we have ourselves used them for many years.

N.B.--In order to understand the more readily the practical working of the methods which I am about to describe, the student should invariably take in his own hand the object under discussion, and put in actual practice the successive stages of the manipulation.
I. THE PALM PROPER

To Cause the Disappearance of a Five-Franc piece

Among the different methods employed to cause the disappearance of a piece of money, we must place "palming" in the first rank, as one of the neatest and most useful expedients of its kind.

In effect, it consists in holding and concealing neatly in the palm of the right hand, one or more coins, which you at the same time pretend to place in the left hand.

The mode of execution is as follows-

1. Take a silver five-franc piece between the second and third fingers and thumb of the right hand, and exhibit it to the spectators in manner depicted in Fig. 2

2. Next move the right hand towards the left, as though to place the coin therein.

3. During the passage the fingers naturally turn over, and the coin becomes hidden from the spectators by the back of the hand. Take advantage of this fact to execute the movement next following:-

4. Let the thumb release the coin, and the two other fingers take it and press it secretly into the hollow of the hand between the fleshy cushion formed by the root of the thumb and that just below the little finger, being the portions which we have designated by the names of the thenar and hypothenar. (A and B, Fig. 1.)

At the conclusion of this operation, the right hand should have arrived just above the left, which should be half open, as though to receive the coin.

5. Rest the tips of the fingers of the right hand for a moment in the left, and then close this latter, in order to induce the belief that you retain the coin therein.

6. The right hand then moves away from the left, and in order that the illusion may be complete, the right hand should remain as open as
possible, notwithstanding that it holds in its palm the vanished coin (Fig. 3).*

*The extreme flatness of the hand in the figure, which is probably intended by the author to show how slight a grip is sufficient to hold the coin, might possibly lead the reader to suppose that this extremely open position of the hand is the best. Such is by no means the case. The hand should be just so far open as in the natural position of an empty hand, which is almost invariably more or less curved.-ED.

OBSERVATIONS.--I. At the outset of the above operation, the distance which separates the two hands is so short that it would be difficult to find sufficient time to effect the "palm" by the time the right hand had reached the left. It is necessary therefore to increase the distance between the hands, and this may be effected as follows:-In moving the right hand toward the left, raise it about seven inches; this double movement will cause the right hand to describe an arc, which will naturally be longer than a simple straight line would have been, and by reason of this combined movement the execution of the "palm" will be greatly facilitated.

II. Every beginner will, almost as a matter of course, adopt in performing the operation just described movements of excessive flourish and rapidity. In this sleight, as in every other, our aim should be to acquire natural movements and to execute them in a quiet, easy manner. In a word (and it cannot be too often repeated), the make-believe action should be a precise copy of the reality. The best mode of judging of one's success in this particular is to practice before a looking-glass.

III. Before executing the "palm," first really place the coin in the left hand, as though merely to draw attention and to show what you are about to do, then repeat the movement, but this time palm the coin. If these two different actions are precisely alike in external effect the illusion will be greatly enhanced.

IV. The easiest coins to palm are silver five-franc pieces; the less worn the edges of the coin the easier is the operation.

At the early stages of practice the student may substitute for the five-franc piece a circular piece of tin of similar diameter. A disc of this kind will be found exceedingly easy to palm, by reason of its lightness and of the grip afforded by its sharp edges.*

*The half-crown is the coin most affected by English conjurors; but an adept should be able to palm a coin of any dimensions, down to a sixpence, without difficulty The possession of a soft and fleshy palm greatly favours the operation.--ED.)

Conjurors who are not as expert as they should be in palming sometimes use a five-franc piece specially prepared to facilitate that operation. They cut on the edges of the coin, with the aid of some sharp instrument, a few notches or projecting points which make it cling the more readily to the palm; or they smear one of the faces of the coin with soft wax. It will readily be imagined that by such an arrangement the coin
will stick fast enough in the hand. Any one, however, who employs such methods as these must by no means flatter himself that he is a skilled conjuror.

Palming will in all probability seem difficult the first time the attempt is made, but the student must not be discouraged; after a moderate course of practice he will be astonished to find in the palm of his hand a sense, a power of hold, which he had never even dreamt of, and ultimately he will get so used to holding articles in this manner that he will do so as easily as with the fingers.

These details on the subject of palming may perhaps appear a little prolix, but it seems to me one can hardly say too much in order to render easier an operation which all must admit to be difficult. On the other hand, I am obliged to lay special stress upon this sleight, because it is, to some extent, the very key-stone of conjuring. In fact, it is by the aid of palming that we "vanish" many other articles, such as corks, large balls, lumps of sugar, dominoes, &c. The power of palming pieces of money renders easy the palming of other objects. By way of example of perseverance in practicing the "palm," I may refer the reader to page 56 of the first volume of my autobiography, *Les Confidences d'un Prestidigitateur.*

*In the one-volume edition of 1868, the passage here referred to occurs at page 39.-ED.*

To Palm several Coins at once.--It is possible to palm four coins, or even more, at the same time, but the greater the number, the more constrained will be the position of the hand. Under such circumstances, the performer will find it necessary to hold the wand in the same hand, which will furnish a pretext for its contracted position.

There is an artifice, however, by means of which one may hold a very considerable number of coins in the palm. To do this, you must take coins of different sizes, say a silver five-franc piece, a copper two-sou piece, a two-franc piece, a franc, and half franc. These five coins are placed, one upon another in order of size, the five-franc piece, which is outermost, keeping them all securely palmed.*

*A corresponding series of English coins would be a crown, half-crown, florin, shilling, and sixpence.--ED.*

I myself practiced palming long and perseveringly, and acquired thereat a very considerable degree of skill. I used to be able to palm two five-franc pieces at once, the hand nevertheless remaining as freely open as though it held nothing whatever. I may add that with the hand thus occupied I could play at cards, and even "make the pass;" while the delicacy of my grip was such that I could release the coins one at a time.

I give this illustration of my skill in palming not so much to gratify my personal vanity, as to lead the way for, and encourage perseverance in beginners in the art. I may probably have occasion, in the course of this work, to cite other portions of my own experience, for the same purpose.
II. THE TOURNIQUET

Second Method of Causing the Disappearance of a Five-Franc piece

This sleight is specially distinguishable for its elegance, naturalness, and simplicity; its certainty in execution makes it, in some cases, preferable to any other. The completeness of the illusion leaves nothing to be desired.

To put it in practice you must proceed as follows:-

1. Hold the coin breadthwise between the thumb and first and second fingers of the left hand. The inside of this hand is turned towards yourself, while the right hand places itself in position to seize the coin, as in Fig. 4.

2. Turn the fingers of the right hand round the coin, as though to take it away, passing the four fingers of this hand between the thumb and first finger of the left hand; and at the instant when, in course of this movement, the coin is hidden by the four fingers, let it fall into the hollow of the left hand.*

   *The above description, and the position of the hands in Fig. 4, seem to indicate that the author's method of performing this pass was by drawing back the fingers of the right hand between the thumb and fingers of the left. The practice of most English conjurors at the present day is slightly different. The coin is held horizontally, not vertically, and the thumb of the right hand is passed forward between the fingers and thumb of the left, beneath the coin, the fingers of the right hand passing outside those of the left, the right wrist at the same time making a half-turn downward. See Modern Magic, P. 150.--ED.

3. Continue the movement of the right hand as though you had therewith grasped the coin, and immediately separate the hands.

   (The fall of the coin and its apparent seizure by the right hand should be precisely simultaneous.)

4. Raise the right hand, closed and puffed out as though containing something, though in reality empty. Let the eyes follow it, while left hand drops gently down with the coin, which you get rid of either into the gibecière, or into one of
your pochettes.

It is just as easy to perform this pass with several coins as with one only, the only
difference being that, instead of holding them breadthwise, you hold them one upon
another with the fingers upon the face of the coins.*

*According to the English method--see preceding note--the coins, whether one only or
several, are held in the same manner.--ED.

The noise made by the coins falling into the hollow of the left hand completes the
illusion,* and induces the belief that they have been really carried away by the right
hand.

*This is strictly true, and affords a curious instance of the fallibility of the senses; for if
the coins were really carried away by the fingers of the right hand, there would be no
sound whatever.--ED.

It is very essential to hold the left hand in such a position that you may be able to let
fall the coins into its hollow without making the least movement to hold them there.
The whole illusion of the tourniquet is dependent upon this condition.*

*To perform the tourniquet to perfection, the coins, if more than one, should fall not
absolutely into the palm, but in a sloping position against the lower joints of the
second and third fingers, their lower edges resting just where the fingers meet the
hand. If they fall in this position, the least contraction of the second and third fingers
will hold them securely, and without causing the smallest sound.--ED.

The tourniquet is equally available for causing the disappearance of any article small
enough to be contained and hidden in the hollow of the hand, such as a ball, a walnut, a
small egg, a lump of sugar, &c. The mode of proceeding is precisely the same as for
coins
III.

THE PINCETTE

Third Method of Causing the Disappearance of a Coin

The pincette is a variation of the tourniquet; it is used to cause the disappearance of small-sized articles, such as small coins, rings, &c.

We will suppose that we are making use of a twenty-franc piece.*

*About equal in size to a sovereign.--ED.

1. We take the coin edgeways between the tips of the fingers of the left hand.
2. We bring the right hand towards the left, as though to seize the coin between the finger and thumb, and at the instant when the coin is masked by the second and third, we let it fall into the hollow of the left hand, as shown in Fig. 5. The fall of the piece is hidden by the fingers of the left hand.
IV.

THE COULÉE

Fourth Method of Causing the Disappearance of a Five-Franc piece.*

*This sleight demands for its successful use a coin of specially large diameter. The French five-franc piece answers this requirement, but unless the performer has an unusually small hand, it will be found almost impracticable to use it with English coins.--ED.

I know nothing more simple, more easy, or more natural than this sleigh. The most watchful eye can see therein nothing but the transfer of a coin from the right hand to the left, and yet this supposed transfer is illusory.

The mode of operation is as follows:-

1. Take a five-franc piece between the thumb and first finger of the right hand.

2. At the moment when you move the right hand towards the left, as though to place the coin therein, slide this latter over the tips of the middle and third fingers, and hold it in this position by clipping it a little between the first and fourth fingers, as shown in Fig. 6.

3. The right hand is turned slightly over in its passage, and when it is just above the left hand, a pretence is made of placing the coin therein, though in reality it is retained in the right hand, between the two fingers above mentioned, as shown in the figure.

4. The two hands move apart, the left being closed, and the right remaining open and turned downwards, completely excluding, apparently, the supposition that a coin is held between the fingertips.

You may make use of the coulée to cause the disappearance of several coins at once. To do so, proceed as follows:-

5. Hold the coins, one upon another, at the ends of the fingers of the right hand, between the thumb and second and third fingers.

6. Turn over the right hand, at the same time moving the coins towards the left hand.
7. Strike the coins smartly against the hollow of the left hand, as though placing them in it, but in reality keep them between your fingers.

8. Close the left hand, and gently draw away the right, when, under the impression produced by the "chink" of the coins, the spectator will infallibly be persuaded that they have remained in the left hand.

**NOTE.--** In order that the coins may chink the more freely, they should be held rather loosely. This will not prevent their being jerked back by force of the shock of contact into the right hand, and being concealed therein.
V.

THE ITALIAN OR "THUMB PALM."

*Fifth Method of Causing the Disappearance of a Five-Franc piece.*

1. Take the coin between the thumb and first finger.

2. Slide the coin between the root of the thumb and the side of the hand, towards the inside, and there hold it, taking care that it does not project on the opposite side. (See Fig. 7.) This should be done while the right hand is travelling towards the left, as though to place the coin therein.

   This slide, simple and natural though it is, is rather difficult to explain.

   Each must puzzle out for himself the precise working of the movement, which being once found, its perfect execution will be merely a question of practice.

   To bring the piece back again to the ends of the fingers is simplicity itself. You half-close the hand and turn it over, at the same time lowering the arm when the coin will find its way spontaneously to the finger-tips, which take hold of it, and exhibit it anew.*

   *The disadvantage of the "Italian palm," as above described, is that the thumb is perforce kept pressed close to the side of the hand, giving this latter an awkward and constrained appearance. The thumb palm used by the elder Frikell (see Modern Magic, p. 149) is free from this disadvantage, the coin being held against the second joint of the thumb by a slight contraction of the thumb itself, the rest of the hand taking no part in the operation.--ED.

   This sleight produces a perfect illusion; it is extremely useful in many tricks, and particularly in that of the Shower of Money, to be hereafter described.

   In this, as well as the preceding sleights, instead of keeping the coin in the right or left hand (as the case may be), which would often be very embarrassing, you may get rid of it by dropping it into the *pochette*, of which we have already spoken.

   There are sundry other coin passes which may be called "secondary," inasmuch as they are only appropriate to particular tricks, and are not employed in conjuring generally. I will describe two of the most noteworthy.
The Italian or Thumb Palm
DISAPPEARANCE BY MEANS OF THE SLEEVE

1. Take between the thumb and middle finger of the right hand a coin, say a franc.

In the act of moving the right hand towards the left, as though to place the coin therein, slip the middle finger aside, at the same time pressing smartly on the coin, in such manner as to produce within the hand the peculiar "snap" of the fingers which schoolboys make use of in their class-rooms when they desire the permission of the master for any purpose.*

*A recognised mode of calling attention, by the pupils, in French schools.--ED.

This movement imparts to the coin a sharp impetus, and shoots it up the inside of the sleeve, which should be moderately open.

This sleight is dependent on the cut of the coat. If fashion were to demand the wearing of very tight sleeves, the magician would find himself at fault. I should mention, however, that I have seen this sleight performed by M. Paul Chenu, a friend of mine with a special fancy for the magic art, who used to execute it with such rare skill that, however tight might be the sleeve, he would have succeeded, I verily believe, in shooting the coin up it. I mention this fact as an exception.
DISAPPEARANCE BY MEANS OF THE CRAVAT

Taking a five-franc piece, and holding it tolerably near its edge with the tips of the fingers of the right hand, raise this hand as though preparing to strike the coin against the left hand, which you hold extended in front of you. The right hand, thus raised, will naturally be close to your collar.

Then making a first stroke with the coin on the left hand, you say "One!" Again you raise the hand to strike a second blow, but, at the moment of letting it fall, you slip the coin between the neck and the collar, and continuing the stroke as though the piece was still at the fingers' ends, you say "Two!"

Lastly, you quickly strike a third blow upon the left hand, which you open again instantly to show that the piece has disappeared, at the same time saying, "Three!"

OBSERVATIONS.--I. In these latter movements it is impossible by reason of the swiftness of the motion to see that the coin is no longer at the fingers' ends.

II. It is as well to stand sideways to the spectators, so that they cannot possibly see the introduction of the coin within the collar.

You may gather from the above example, that whenever you count three for the purpose of any sleight, the actual disappearance should never be performed at the number "three," because the spectator, anticipating that the article will vanish at that particular moment, has his attention directed accordingly, and might possibly detect the artifice employed.
SECTION II.

CHANGES

Modes of Substituting one Coin for another

In nearly all money tricks it is customary for the performer to borrow the necessary coins from the spectators, and to have them marked by the lenders, so as to prove to all present (at least apparently) the genuineness of the effect produced.

Under such circumstances, the trick becomes more difficult, and would, indeed, generally be impossible, were it not that a subterfuge is used in order to meet the case. Another coin is secretly substituted for the one marked, and this enables the performer to leave, to all appearance, this latter in full view of the spectators, while in reality he places it, or causes it to be placed, where it is afterwards mysteriously to appear.

This substitution is known as a "change."*

*Sometimes called by English conjurors a "ring," from the slang phrase "ringing the changes."--ED.

The "change," as applied to coins, may be effected in various ways: the three best are:-

1. The change by means of the palm proper.
2. The change by means of the coulée.
3. The change by means of a tray.
I.
The Change by Means of the Palm Proper

The change by means of the "palm" is performed as follows:--

1. Palm secretly in the right hand a five-franc piece (see Fig. 3), which will not prevent the fingers from being perfectly free.

2. Take the marked coin between the tips of the fingers of the same hand.

3. Two coins being thus held in the hand, one visibly, the other concealed, move the right hand towards the left as though to place therein the coin which you show.

4. At the moment when the right hand is just above the left, let fall into this latter the palmed coin, and smartly palm in its place that which you held at the ends of the fingers.*

*This is a very difficult pass. For easier modes of producing the same effect, See Modern Magic, p. 157--ED.

If this double movement is neatly executed, it will appear to the spectators that the piece which was held by the points of the fingers has really been placed in the left hand.
II.
The Change by Means of The Coulée

1. Take in the right hand, secured by the third and fourth fingers, which to that intent you bend slightly, the coin which you desire secretly to substitute for the marked coin.

2. After having taken in the right hand, between the thumb and first finger, the coin to be changed, act as directed in paragraph 4 of the Coulée in order to pass this latter between the first and fourth fingers, where you hold it securely, while you let fall into the left hand the coin which you held concealed. By this means, at the moment when the one coin passes within the hand and is there secured, the other leaves it and falls into the left hand; the effect being to the spectators as if the marked coin had been actually placed in the left hand.
III.

The Change by Means of a Tray

It is desirable, sometimes, in conjuring, to vary one's methods, so as to throw the spectators off the scent. The "change with a tray" may be made useful for this purpose, inasmuch as it is completely unlike the two preceding methods.

1. Take a little tray or dish, either of metal, cut glass, or porcelain, and of about seven inches diameter.

2. Place secretly beneath this tray the coin which is to be substituted for the borrowed one, and hold it there, concealed by the four fingers of the right hand.

3. When you receive (which you do on the tray) the coin marked by the spectators, slip your thumb upon it, so as to hold it fast to that spot.

4. Turn over the tray, and go through the motion of "pouring" this marked coin into the left hand, but hold it back with the thumb, while you let fall in its place the coin concealed beneath the tray.

This movement, neatly executed, produces an extraordinary illusion.

There are sundry other methods which I value much less highly. You may have, for example, a tray with a double bottom, within which is hidden the coin to be substituted for the original. When you place the marked coin on the tray it drops into a kind of well in the middle of the apparatus, and by pushing a slide the change is effected.

You may also find at the conjuring repositories, boxes and vases of all sorts and sizes for the performance of the same duty. Dexterity counts for nothing at all in this kind of conjuring.

Before the reader attempts to make practical application of the methods above described, it will, I think, be as well that I should give him certain other particulars which will be of great assistance to him in the due performance of the tricks I am about to describe.

I shall therefore next say a few words as to the wand, the table, the pockets, the sleeves, the gestures, the eye, and the patter of a conjuror.
SECTION III.

THE WAND

The magician's wand is generally a small ebony rod, with a rounded ivory tip at each end; its total length is about thirteen to fourteen inches.

A conjuror rarely comes forward on the stage otherwise than wand in hand. This elegant little staff is the emblem of his magic power. A touch of the wand on any object, or even a wave in that direction, forms the ostensible cause of its transformation or disappearance.

Again, the wand serves also to conceal the presence of any article in the hand that holds it, and in this way aids materially the palming of coins, large balls, &c.

Last, but not least, the wand is to the conjuror what a fan is to a lady: it gives ease to his movements, and saves him from the well-known stage bugbear, the consciousness of possessing arms, and not knowing what to do with them.
SECTION IV.

THE TABLE

In order to avoid complicating my explanations at the outset, I propose to disregard for the present the tables employed for stage performances; these details I shall postpone until they become indispensable, and shall content myself by describing the arrangements necessary for tricks executed in a drawing-room.

The table used for conjuring purposes should, wherever practicable, be furnished with a *gibecière.*

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*The term *gibecière*—meaning literally a "game-bag"—originally designated the bag or pocketed apron which the conjurors of the olden time wore in front of them to hold the cups, balls, and other implements of their profession. This bag was superseded by the servante, or hidden shelf, above described.—ED.

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The *gibecière*, or *servante*, as it is now more generally called, is a hidden shelf placed behind the table on the side remote from the spectators, on a level with the bottom of the drawer in an ordinary table, whose place it occupies. Its use is to receive articles which are made to disappear, and to conceal, till needed, articles to be mysteriously produced. This shelf should have a rim round it, to keep articles placed on it from falling off, and should be covered with thick cloth to prevent any rattling.

Some performers stuff this cloth with sawdust to prevent any rebound of articles let fall upon it.

When one is called upon to give a performance without previous warning, it becomes necessary to extemporise a *servante* by some ready and simple means. Suppose, for instance, that a card-table is made use of. We take out the drawer, and insert in place of it a shelf, which we fasten to the wooden bearings on which the drawer rested, taking care to make it project some three or four inches; and on this shelf lay a table-cloth, folded in eight.

It sometimes happens that the performer cannot leave the room without exciting suspicion, and that it is therefore impracticable to arrange a *servante* of this kind. In such case, the following is a very simple method of manufacturing a *servante*, even under the very eyes of the spectators, without detection on their part:-You procure a large table-cloth, which you spread over the table, upon the pretext that the articles used will be better seen on a white cloth. In arranging this cloth, you take care to leave hanging, on your own side, a considerable portion, which you afterwards gather up, and fasten at each end with a pin, thus forming a wide-mouthed bag, extending across the whole width of the table.
The height of a conjuror's table should be about level with the hip, so that the arm, falling carelessly to the side, may be able to pick up any object on the servante, without the need of either extension or contraction.
SECTION V.

POCKETS AND POCHETTES

The purposes of the *servante* are frequently supplemented in the following manner:- The performer has specially made, inside the tail of his coat, two large pockets known as *profondes*, after the manner shown in the accompanying diagram (Fig. 8).

The only use of these large pockets is to let fall therein articles which it is desired to get rid of; but nothing can be taken out of them, seeing that, as their name indicates, they are too deep (profondes) for the hand to reach the bottom.*

*By a slight modification of the above arrangement, the depth of the pocket being diminished, and the whole placed lower in the coat-tail, the profonde may be, and frequently is, made available not only for getting rid of articles, but, where necessary, for procuring them—e.g., for "loading" a hat, &c. ED.

With the pockets known as *pochettes*, represented in the figure next following, we have the double advantage of being able both to take and get rid of necessary articles.

The *pochettes* are of the greatest possible use in conjuring. To be thoroughly effective, however, they should be made and placed in strict accordance with the rules I am about to lay down.

The *pochettes*, as will be seen on an inspection of Fig. 9, are semicircular in shape, and about three inches wide by two deep, and are placed in a slightly sloping position, in order that anything may be the more readily got in or out. As a matter of course they are made of the same material as the trouser, the better to escape notice.

The satisfactory working of the *pochettes* depends also on the precise position they occupy. If they were placed either too high or too low, their employment
would very probably be noticed, for in either case the performer would be compelled either to bend his arm or to lean over a little on one side in order to get a longer reach.

To secure getting the *pochettes* in the right position, they should be tried on, and for that purpose they may be stitched on temporarily, or as a tailor would say, "basted" on, before being finally fixed in the position they are intended to occupy.

To start with, they should be hidden by the tails of the coat, and yet so little covered as to be found by the hand without difficulty. Their position (as to height) may be determined by the following test:-The performer should be able to take from them a coin or little ball (a muscade, for instance) without being obliged either to stretch or to bend his arm.

[Previous | Next | Main Contents]
SECTION VI.

THE COAT-SLEEVES

In the performance of a feat of sleight-of-hand, the coat-sleeves diminish to some extent the effect of the illusion; their opening is very near the article made to disappear, and the public invariably imagine that, under such circumstances, the sleeves serve as a convenient hiding place. It was probably for this reason that Olivier, and at a later period, Bosco, performed with the arms bare to the elbow. If this undress enhanced the magical effect of the feats performed by those artists, at any rate it considerably detracted from the elegance of their personal appearance.

The popular belief is, however, unfounded, for save in the case of one or two solitary tricks, the sleeves have nothing whatever to do with the disappearance of any article.

With a little reflection, it will readily be perceived that a disappearance effected by this means would present many inconveniences. Suppose, for example, that a conjuror were to slip a glass ball or a dozen five-franc pieces up his coat-sleeve, what trouble he would have to keep them there! He would be obliged constantly to keep his arm in an upward position, and would have to be perpetually on his guard against any movement which might betray him.

But whether the spectators entertain the idea in question or not, as it is as well to avoid in conjuring everything that can possibly excite even unfounded suspicion, I should recommend the performer, when the occasion demands it (but not otherwise), to free the arm by drawing back the coat-sleeve a little, so as to show the shirt-sleeve clinging close to the arm, after the manner, in fact, in which they are shown in the illustrations to this work.

The trick concluded, it will only be necessary to drop the arm, and the sleeve will fall back again to its ordinary condition.
SECTION VII.

GESTURES

*Formal Movements, Feints, and "Temps."

The various gestures and formal movements which constitute the dramatic portion of the magic art, mere affectation though they may seem, exercise a powerful influence over the minds of the spectators. This assumption of an appropriate character, appealing at once to the eyes and to the imagination, makes them the more readily susceptible to the illusions produced by the dexterous hand and subtle tongue of the operator.

A conjuror naturally presents his marvels to the public as produced by magic; and therefore, in order to be consistent, he must, in performing his wonders, endeavour to act the part of a person possessing supernatural powers, and by no means exhibit his tricks in a casual, hap-hazard manner. The evocation of imaginary spirits, cabalistic words, the use of the wand; all these, when kept within the bounds of good taste, are very effective.

But, besides the gestures and formal movements to which we have just referred, there is another description of gesture, called a "feint," the perfect execution of which is by no means easy. The essence of a "feint" is to give the utmost possible appearance of reality to an action which, in truth, we only make believe to perform. Thus, for instance, suppose it is necessary to "feign" to place a coin in the left hand, the performer should, by force of address, exhibit in so doing such an appearance of reality that the spectator cannot distinguish the smallest difference between the counterfeit and the real action.

Feints are perpetually employed in conjuring: we feign to put an article in a given place, we feign to take it away, to tear it to pieces, to cut it in half, to burn it, to restore it again. What do we not feign, indeed, seeing that we sometimes go so far as to feign to feign? These various descriptions of feint will be described as they occur in practice, in the course of the tricks to be hereafter described.

Some actions and movements of the performer are designed solely to facilitate what in conjuring is called a temps.*

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*Literally a "time" or "season." The phrase has no precise synonym among English performers, though the thing itself is recognised by all. "Favourable moment" is perhaps the nearest equivalent.--ED.

A temps is the opportune moment for effecting a given disappearance, or the like,
unknown to the spectators. In this case, the act or movement which constitutes the *temps* is specially designed to divert the attention of the spectators to some point more or less remote from that at which the trick is actually worked. For example, a conjuror will ostentatiously place some article on one corner of the table at which he is performing, while the left hand, finding its way behind the table, gets possession of some hidden object to be subsequently produced. Or, again, he will throw a ball in the air and catch it in the right hand, in order to gain an opportunity, during the same instant, of taking with the left hand another ball out of the *pochette*. Yet, again, a mere tap with the wand on any spot, at the same time looking at it attentively, will infallibly draw the eyes of a whole company in the same direction.

These modes of influencing the direction of the eyes of an audience seem very simple, and as though they could cause no deception, and yet they are never found to fail.

Each trick has its own appropriate gestures, and its own special *temps*, combined with the *boniment*, or "patter," which supplies the pretext for them. We shall have occasion in the course of this work to describe sundry *temps* of extreme ingenuity, and the effect of which is such that even the most determined will cannot resist them.

[Previous](#) | [Next](#) | [Main Contents](#)
SECTION VIII.

THE EYE

In conjuring parlance, "to have a good eye" (*avoir de l'œil*) is the phrase used to denote a particular stage qualification whereby the sympathy of the spectators is attracted to the artist, and which moreover has the faculty of greatly heightening the effect of the tricks performed.

You have doubtless, reader, sometimes found yourself in the company of persons whose glance you felt as if you could not meet with comfort, and whose eyes seemed in like manner to avoid meeting yours. Such a state of things is embarrassing to both parties, and the pleasure of the conversation is pretty sure to suffer in consequence. The reason of this is that the eyes of your interlocutor are timid, wandering, uncertain; that he cannot support your straightforward look; it arises, in a word, from the fact that he has not "a good eye."

This kind of ocular nervousness, this feeling of uneasiness and embarrassment, is extremely catching, and where a public performer is afflicted with the malady it is not unusual to find it spread through the whole of the company. In such a case the spectators are unsympathetic, and often even unfriendly.

"To have a good eye" is to possess the quality which is the antithesis of the defect I have just mentioned,

Note the advance to the footlights of yonder artist, whose keen, intelligent, self-reliant glance goes straight to meet the eyes of the company. A relation of an almost mesmeric character is instantly established between all parties. The spectators are at their ease with the performer, they at once catch his eye, they listen to him with indulgence, and from this double relation there speedily arises a feeling of sympathy. Under such conditions success becomes an easy matter.

This quality of the "eye," as the reader will readily acknowledge, is equally noticeable in the world at large; there are people whose very look seems to facilitate conversation, to give freedom to the tongue, nay, even to stimulate to wit.

The eye, as I have already remarked, aids also in enhancing the effect of conjuring tricks. A clever conjuror relies on the direction of his own glance to carry conviction to the spectators. If he announces, for instance, that he is about to pass a coin or other article to a given spot—although he, better than any one, knows the falsity of his own assertions—his eyes, notwithstanding, follow the article in its pretended journey, precisely as they would do if the fact alleged were genuine; thus conveying the idea
that he is himself the dupe of his own assertions. This apparent conviction on his part communicates itself to the spectators, and the illusion spreads accordingly.
SECTION IX.

THE "BONIMENT" OR "PATTER."

A great statesman has remarked that speech was given to man in order to disguise his thoughts.

This principle, though of rather doubtful morality for everyday use, may be applied with great propriety to conjuring. The modern magician is a profound deceiver both in words and actions; he says what he does not do, he does not do what he says, and what he actually does he takes particular care not to say anything about.

In conjuring, the spoken portion is known as the *boniment*, or "patter." The former term (which is confined to French conjurors) is derived from a special language which the performers of the olden time made use of in order to be able to converse among themselves concerning their art without fear of betraying their secrets to outsiders; this technical language, their "jargue" as they termed it, also served as a test whereby to distinguish the genuine professors of the art.

This *boniment* or patter is the story told by the performer, the discourse, the speech, the settled form of words, in fact the mise en scène with which we dress up a conjuring trick in order to give it an appearance of reality.

When a conjuror invents a new trick, he generally composes at the same time a special patter to accompany it; but this particular patter is rarely adopted by imitators of the trick--each composes a new *boniment* after his own fashion, in the style which he habitually uses, and appropriate to the class of spectators to whom he addresses himself.

There are, however, certain fixed rules to be observed in the composition of a *boniment*. The story which it tells should bear as far as possible the semblance of truth, failing which the trick which accompanies it will produce but little illusion. A *boniment* should be carefully and discreetly worded; defective grammar, vulgar expressions, personalities, practical jokes, bad puns, and eccentricities of language being alike carefully avoided in a high-class entertainment.

In the recital of his *boniment* the performer should adopt a quiet delivery, and speak slowly and distinctly, taking particular care to avoid the monotonous effect of a speech learnt by rote.

I will give, by way of example, a single application of the *boniment*, which will illustrate the great addition which this fictitious narrative may give to a trick, clothing it in truth with a completely new illusory effect.
I was in the habit of using in my performances a small chest, which, placed at a particular spot in the midst of the spectators, became subject at my pleasure to electro-magnetic attraction. The arrangements which caused this effect being studiously concealed, I announced to the spectators that the chest would at my command become light or heavy. And I proved my assertion, for, at my will, a child raised it without difficulty, or the strongest man failed to stir it from its place—the means used being simply the transmission or interruption, unknown to the spectators, of an electric current.

When I was sent to Algeria in order to give performances before the Arabs, this chest, which I took with me, was not likely to produce much effect on their uncultivated intellects. The Arab would only have fancied that some internal mechanism beyond his comprehension prevented the chest from being moved.* 

*Robert-Houdin was sent in the year 1856 on a special mission to Algeria, to endeavour to neutralise by his performances the hold which the Marabouts, by their pretended miracles, had gained over the superstitious natures of the ignorant Arabs. See the Confidences d'un Prestidigitateur, Chap. XIX.—ED.

The idea struck me to change the boniment, and by the aid of a new fiction I succeeded in giving the trick the appearance of a genuine miracle.

I came forward, chest in hand, to the centre of the "run-down"* which led from the stage to the middle of the pit; and having reached that point, I addressed the Arabs, with the utmost seriousness, as follows:-

*The "run-down," called by French conjurors the practicable or pont (bridge), is a raised wooden pathway, generally carpeted, leading from the stage to the middle of the hall, so as to give the performer a ready mode of access to the centre of the audience.--ED.

"After the feats you have seen me perform, you naturally give me credit for possessing supernatural powers, and you are perfectly right in so doing. I shall now give you a further proof of these miraculous powers by showing you that even with the strongest man I can take away and restore all his strength at my pleasure. Let him who thinks himself strong enough to dare the test, come forward."

This boniment, as will be remarked, by putting the matter in another light, completely changed the aspect of the trick, and gave it a totally different effect. It was no longer mere conjuring, it was genuine sorcery. The result was extraordinary. The Arabs were so wonderstruck that they made up their minds that I was in league with the devil.

A trick stripped of its "patter" sinks down at once to the level of a mere curiosity. What would my son's pretended power of divination have been without the mise en scène of the "second sight?" What special marvel would have been found in the "aërial suspension" without the pretended application of ether? And so in many other instances.

Though the boniment is, strictly speaking, the verbal clothing of a given illusion, the
expression applies equally to all that is said in the course of a séance, even apart from any special trick. The introductory observations, the interludes, the occasional introductions of a comic element, and what are called *amphigouris*, all come under the head of *boniments*.

Moreau Sainti, the well-known actor of the Opera Comique, was a very skilful amateur conjuror. He possessed, in particular, the faculty of making even trifling matters effective by means of his patter. No one knew better than he how to conciliate popular favour by witty and appropriate speeches. Take, for example, a few words spoken by him at the commencement of a performance given at a *fête* in aid of a charitable object.

"Ladies and Gentlemen,--At this entertainment in aid of the poor, permit me to take as the watchword of my performance the three Christian Graces--Faith, Hope, and Charity.

"*Faith* is the unlimited confidence which I must entreat of you for the perfect success of my experiments.

"*Hope* may be considered to mean the hope which I indulge of affording you a pleasant evening.

"*Charity*, as all will admit, is represented by the happy result we shall have obtained if by the proceeds of this benevolent work we are enabled to succour some case of distress."

At the close of the performance in question, the collection made by the lady patronesses was exceptionally productive.

Sometimes, in order to enliven the company, it may not be out of place to introduce in the course of the *boniment* a few incidental sentences, under the form of casually suggested observations or playful sallies. These supposed *improptus*, though it may sometimes be necessary to rehearse them beforehand, will always have a good effect.

Thus, for example, let us suppose that having asked a lady to think of a card, and to tell you its name, the Queen of Hearts has been selected.

"The Queen of Hearts," you exclaim, "I knew it, madam--I was sure of it! I even wrote on my tablets at midnight yesterday, that you would think of that particular card." (Of course you have really done nothing of the kind.) "I congratulate you, moreover, on your choice, and I will tell you why. The Queen of Hearts, when it presents itself to the mind in a numerous company, indicates, according to Mdlle. Leonnormand, the celebrated fortuneteller, the approach of some auspicious event."

Whatever be the card which has been chosen, the performer should always be prepared to say something complimentary or amusing respecting it.

If you borrow pieces of money among the audience, you may remark, in a similar style, "You need not fear, gentlemen, for the safety of your money, for I almost always return what I borrow. And besides, you will lose nothing by lending to me, for when the coins are returned to you, they will multiply in your pockets."
Performing before an educated audience, a conjuror need not hesitate to show off a little of his erudition, provided always that he takes care still to be amusing. I will give a few examples to illustrate the way in which this may be done.

It often happens that for the purpose of some trick you have occasion to ask a spectator to choose a particular number. Let us suppose that he has fixed upon the number four. "Very good indeed, sir!" you remark, "a very excellent choice; four, as is universally admitted, is the number par excellence. The number four was held in the highest veneration by the Pythagoreans, as representing the perfect square. In almost every language the name of the Deity is written in four letters:-Deus in Latin, Theos in Greek, (th in Greek is one letter.) Ilah in Arabic (Allah being a contraction for Al Ilah, the Deity), Tewt in Celtic, Aydi in Turkish, Syré in Persian, Aded in Assyrian, Gott in German, Dios in Spanish, Dieu in French.

"What success may we not hope for from the choice of such a number!"

Or suppose some other number is chosen--the number one, for instance. You remark, to begin with, that it is a favourable number (this is a matter of course); and you add, in support of your assertion:-

"The number one is the principle of unity. It is indivisible, it is the mathematical point, it is the commencement of all being, first step from chaos to creation. Unity, as the generative principle, represents in the eyes of the philosopher the sublime attribute of the Deity.

"In an arithmetical point of view, the number one is the first and last of the numerical scale; it is also the first of the odd numbers. It is the only number which multiplied by itself is still the same; we say, twice two are four, but once one can never make but one."

You can always find something to say on any number, whatever it be; but the number which best lends itself to mystic interpretation is nine. Upon this number you may expatiate as follows:-

"Nine is the first number which each man reckons in the course of his existence, for nine months must elapse ere he sees the light.

"The number nine is the last and largest number that can be expressed by a single figure.

"The number nine possesses two special properties which have given it a fame peculiar to itself, and which are still a matter of wonderment to all who do not comprehend the secret." (Here you take a slate and some chalk, the better to illustrate your observations.)

"First--nine, multiplied by any number from one to nine, gives two figures as the product. And these two figures, added together, always again produce the number nine. To prove the fact, let us write on this slate a few multiples of the number nine."

18, 27, 36, 45, 54, 63, 72, 81.
(As you write down these figures in succession, you say "twice 9 are 18, three times 9 are 27, four times 9 are 36," and so on to the last.)

"Now, as I have just told you, if we add together the two digits of each of these multiples, we shall get in each case the number 9. Thus, in the case of 18, 1 and 8 are 9; in 27, 2 and 7 are 9; in 36, 3 and 6 are 9; &c. Before leaving these figures, gentlemen, I must draw your attention to a singular peculiarity in their arrangement. The first digits of these numbers are in order of arithmetical progression, increasing from 1 to 8, while the second digits follow in inverse progression, from 8 to 1, or the same as the former progression in a reverse order.

"To conclude, you will also observe that, after 45, if you read the first four numbers backwards, you have the last four of the series up to 81. Thus, 45 read backwards gives 54, 36, gives 63, 27 gives 72, and 18, 81, being the four numbers which come after 45."

These little semi-scientific interludes are very useful to a performer who has the judgment to introduce them neatly, and to deliver them in a genial manner, and without carrying them too far. It is easy enough to resume the experiment and again take up the thread of it where you left off, somewhat after the manner following:-

"But I beg pardon, sir. To return to our trick! You chose the number nine,

By way of concluding this chapter, I may say a few words as to a very amusing kind of boniment which one may make use of occasionally among private friends, but which I cannot recommend for use on a public platform. I refer to what is known as an amphigouri. The amphigouri is something very like a hoax, and hoaxes at the expense of the public are now gone out of fashion.

Comte had a special talent for a jest of this kind. His very countenance, beaming with good humour, inspired such complete confidence that even after an amphigouri of the wildest and most unintelligible character, the spectators, far from suspecting a practical joke, rather imagined that through some lack of intelligence or defect of hearing on their own part, they had failed to catch the meaning of the speaker. I have often seen Comte, after some trick the termination of which required a little warming up, come forward to the spectators, and deliver, in the most impressive manner, an amphigouri somewhat to the following effect:-

"You will observe, gentlemen, that the principles of the trick which I have just shown you have no relation to the occult and hermetic sciences, save in so far as the senses are surpassed by the expression of a sentiment not less characteristic than spontaneous. The impression which predominates over every erroneous influence is in some degree modified by the resonance of sound, and by the agitation of the molecules whereby the craters of the understanding are surreptitiously encircled; and if I might venture to make a comparison which is, in more than one particular, imperfect, I would remark that the direct rays of light emanating from the sun are to our eyes just what the prism of reflection is to the bi-convex surface of the double refraction of social relations"

But it was necessary to bring this burlesque piece of pathos to an end, and the
performer hoped thereby to gain the applause which the trick itself had failed to elicit. Assuming his most genial manner, and using, so to speak, his most honeyed tones, he continued:

"This little scientific digression is, perhaps, a little too abstruse for some of you, but it was really indispensable for your full comprehension of the experiment I have shown you. The ladies will pardon me, I am sure, for having for one moment laid aside the character of conjuror in order to assume that of the man of science. I may, however, assure each of my hearers that my sole object proloni fataroni n'a sasi patar to give you satisfaction, and that all my tricks de mi caseman on the sénemache à toté semivo to render myself always worthy of your kind support."

This last jumble of words, belonging to no language whatever, but pronounced in a subdued and indistinct voice, produced the impression of a little complimentary speech of which the hearers had only been able to catch the concluding, words, but to which they could not do less than respond by a round of applause.

I must again repeat that I give this specimen of an amphigouri as a joke, only permissible in a circle of private friends.

The reader having by this time got a clear notion of the meaning of the word boniment, and of its various applications, I shall proceed to give examples of its use in several tricks wherein the principles already explained will be further illustrated.

Previous  |  Next  |  Main Contents
SECTION X.

TRICKS WITH COINS

I. THE MELTING COIN.--To melt a Five-Franc piece, held in the Hand, at the Flame of a Candle, to cause it to pass into the Candle, to take it out again in a melted condition, and again to restore it to its original state.

II. THE FLYING COINS.--To make one or several Five-Franc pieces travel invisibly from the one hand to the other; and afterwards to pass through a Table and fall into a Tumbler held beneath.

III. THE SHOWER OF MONEY.--To produce Coins from different Objects, under the very Eyes of the Spectators.

IV. THE MULTIPLICATION OF MONEY.--To Increase at the Pleasure of one of the Spectators the Number of certain Golden Coins which such Spectator holds fast in his Hands. A curious incident, with a laughable termination.

V. MAGICAL FILTRATION OF FIVE-FRANC PIECES.--Two Five-Franc pieces, each wrapped in a Handkerchief, are entrusted to two Spectators, placed at a distance one from the other. The Performed, withdrawing one of the Coins through the Substance of the Handkerchief, sends it to join the other Coin, without going near the Handkerchief which contains it.

VI. THE INTELLIGENT COIN

VII. THE TWO HATS.--Two Five-Franc pieces having been placed in a Hat, to make them pass invisibly into another.

VIII. THE GOLDEN COIN IN A DINNER-ROLL.--To find a Golden Coin in an unprepared Dinner-Roll fresh from the Baker's.
I.

THE MELTING COIN

To melt a Five-Franc piece, held in the Hand, at the Flame of a Candle, to cause it to pass into the Candle, to take it out again in a melted condition, and again to restore it to its original state.

It will, of course, be understood that, both in this trick and in those which follow, the descriptions given of effects produced refer not to reality but to illusions.

"Certain metals," you remark, "only melt at a very high temperature. Silver is one of these; it must be heated to nearly 1000 degrees centigrade before it will melt. If, however, the coin is beforehand submitted to certain mesmeric frictions, the mere warmth of the flame of a wax candle is enough to melt it.

"If one of you gentlemen will oblige me with the loan of a five-franc piece, we will at once proceed to put my assertion to the test. You need be under no apprehension, by the way, as to the safety of your money, for when anybody lends me any money, I almost always return it."

We have omitted to state that the performer has provided himself with a candlestick holding a lighted candle, which he places close by him on a small table, or if there be none such at hand, on a chair.

Having received from one of the spectators a five-franc piece, you lay it beside the candlestick, and rub your hands briskly one against the other, remarking:-

"This friction of the hands is intended to develop the mesmeric power necessary for the operation." Then, looking intently at your left hand--"Very good, I see that the electricity is collecting in large quantities.... I think we shall succeed; at any rate we are far enough advanced to try the experiment. Let us see."

Take the coin in the right hand, move it towards the left as though to place it therein, but, during its passage, palm it in the right hand, according to the method described in Chapter I.

You have made believe to put the coin in the left hand, and you have closed the left hand accordingly, as though it really held something. Such being the position of affairs, work about the fingers of this hand as though to mesmerise the coin. At the same time take the candlestick in the right hand, your so doing appearing to exclude all possibility that you can have kept the coin in that hand.

"By this time," you continue, "I should think that the coin was sufficiently impregnated
with the mesmeric fluid to be easily melted. Let us try."

You hold the left hand, still closed, over the flame of the candle, and work the fingers a little as though to squeeze the coin and force it out.

"There, you see, it melts, and the metal passes right into the candle. Did you not see it go?"

Here you open the left hand, and show that the coin is no longer there.

"So far, we have succeeded very nicely; but I must own, ladies and gentlemen, that I should find some little difficulty in restoring the coin to its owner, unless I was also able, after having melted it, to bring it back again to its original condition.

"You observe a little bright shining point in the wick of the candle" (the spectators don't see anything of the kind, but they take the statement on trust). "Well, that luminous point is one end of the melted coin, and I shall seize it by that end, and so take it out, just as it is." (You pinch the flame of the candle with the fingers of the left hand, and make believe to take something from it.) "Yes, here we have it. Can't you see it?" (You show the tips of the fingers gathered together as if holding something.) "You don't? I will take it in the other hand, so that you may be able to see it better."

You put down the candlestick on the table, and with the fingers of the right hand, in which, as will be remembered, the coin remains hidden, you make believe once more to take the supposed molten metal which you pretend to be holding between the fingers of the left hand. In executing this movement, the palmed coin is brought immediately above the hollow of the left hand, into which, in the act of removing the imaginary melted metal, you secretly let it fall. For the *modus operandi* See Fig. 11, in the trick next following, save that instead of actually taking a coin from the left hand, as there represented, you only take an imaginary one.)

The right hand being now relieved of the coin, you may, by drawing attention in a careless manner to the imaginary melted coin between the tips of the fingers, show the interior of the hand empty, and thereby negative any idea that the piece was retained therein.

"As I hold it now," you remark, "you will all, I should imagine, be able to see the coin; which, by the way, is beginning to burn my fingers, so I had better make haste to restore it to its original form."

The left hand, after having received the coin, is not closed, but is held just sufficiently high to prevent the spectators seeing what it contains. You now lay the tips of the fingers of the right hand on the palm of the left, remarking:-
"I will place this melted metal in the hollow of my left hand, and by rubbing it in a particular manner with the tip of one finger, I shall proceed to harden it and bring it back to its original form." As you say this, you place the finger on the coin which is hidden in the left hand, and rub it for an instant or two; then you turn over the hand, and the middle finger which you keep pressing lightly against the coin, holds it poised upon it. You present it to the company on the tip of this finger, saying:-

"Here it is; take it, gentlemen; but it is still hot, you must take care not to burn yourselves."

This little feat of sleight-of-hand has a very pretty effect, and forms a good commencement to a series of tricks with coins. My description has been perhaps rather lengthy, but in explaining matters of this kind, it is impossible to go too fully into detail.*

*It is a great addition to the effect of this trick to show, before getting rid of the coin altogether, that it is growing gradually softer. this is done by bending it (apparently) backwards and forwards, after the manner described (in relation to a watch) at p. 214 of Modern Magic--ED.
II.

THE FLYING COINS

To make one or several Five-Franc pieces travel invisibly from the one Hand to the other; and afterwards to pass through a Table and fall into a Tumbler held beneath.

"I am about, gentlemen, to show you a trick: which I venture to think will fully justify the appropriateness of the term *prestidigitation*, applied to the art of conjuring. This word, as you are aware, is formed from two Latin words, which together signify nimbleness of fingers.* You will see what an extraordinary degree of rapidity may be attained in the performance of an act of a rather complex character. Will some one be kind enough to lend me a five-franc piece?"

*This is not strictly correct. See previous note.--ED.*

(It is always advisable to *borrow* the articles you make use of, as you thus preclude any idea that they are specially prepared; and besides, the spectators from whom you borrow the articles take the more interest in the trick, on account of having, as they imagine, indirectly assisted in its performance.)

"Now, gentlemen, having lent me the coin, I will ask you to lend me in addition--your best attention.

"You are doubtless aware, ladies and gentlemen, that when an object travels with extraordinary speed, it is impossible for the eye to follow it. Take, for example, the bullet fired from a rifle, which travels, on an average, more than 1000 yards in a second. I am about to pass this coin from my right hand to my left at a similar rate of speed."

You show, with apparent carelessness, the inside of the left hand, so that all may see that there is nothing in it. *(N.B.--You should never say "you observe there is nothing here, or there," because you may thereby suggest a suspicion that you are about to cause the appearance of something in that quarter. It is better to let the spectator note the fact of his own accord.) You then take the coin with the tips of the fingers of that hand, and say--

"Here is the coin. I take it in the right hand and hold my hands wide apart. I throw the coin with great force towards the left hand, and say "Pass!"

(Here you open the left hand and exhibit the coin.) "You see it has obeyed."

Each of these sentences is accompanied by its appropriate piece of sleight-of-hand. These we proceed to describe, recapitulating the trick from the commencement.
1. While the borrowed coin is being handed to you by the spectators, you secretly take another from your pochette, and palm it in the right hand.

2. Holding the coin which has been lent to you with the tips of the fingers of the left hand, you bring the right hand towards the left, in order to take the coin in the former hand.

3. In so doing, the palmed coin being just over the palm of the left hand, you secretly let it fall therein, while with the fingers and thumb of the right hand you take away the visible coin (see Fig. 11). Consequently, although you have removed the borrowed coin from the left hand, another still remains there, though unseen by the spectators, inasmuch as the hand remains partially closed.

4. Under these circumstances, the pretended passage of the coin from one hand to the other becomes a very simple matter. At the moment when you pronounce the word "Pass," you quickly open the left hand and show the coin which you have just before secretly let fall therein, and at the same time open the right hand, in which you palm and keep concealed the other coin. This last mentioned coin, which thereby vanishes from the sight of the spectators, appears to have passed into the left hand.

This sleight, neatly executed, deceives the eyes completely; but if you desire to render the effect still more startling, you may have the borrowed coin marked beforehand, and exchange it for the palmed coin by the methods described previously. You pass it (apparently) to the left hand as above described, and on showing it, have it identified by means of the mark.

"Although you must all, gentlemen, be pretty well satisfied of the genuineness of the experiment I have just shown you, I will give you a still more convincing proof; I will repeat the trick, and let you hear the sound of the coin in its flight, so that you may by that means know the precise moment of its arrival at its destination. But for that purpose I shall require a second five-franc piece."

(The spectators naturally believe that one coin only has been hitherto employed, the second having been put back again into the pochette.)

The loan of a second coin having been procured, you lay the two side by side on the table. "In this case gentlemen, the experiment will be much more easy to understand. I am about to take one coin in each hand, and at the moment when the coin passed from the left hand reaches the right, it will strike upon the other coin, and you will know by the sound the precise moment when it reaches its destination.

"Now, attention! I place this coin in my left hand, then I take this other in my right, and
I say "Pass!" It has done so, you see," and you show that the two coins have come together.

**Explanation.**--

1. In the act of (apparently) putting the coin in the left hand, "palm" it in the right.
2. Keeping this first coin palmed in the right hand, pick up the second with the tips of the fingers of the same hand.
3. Hold your arms wide apart, and at the moment when you say "Pass," make the two coins chink together by smartly closing the right hand, in which the first piece is already hidden.
4. You then open both hands, and show the result of the trick.

Up to this point the "patter" may or may not have carried conviction to the minds of the spectators, but in any case the trick is sure to have somewhat puzzled them. We will proceed to make it still more interesting by means of a few little artifices which, in repeating it for a second time, may be added in order to give it additional zest.

"I will repeat the experiment," you remark, "and perform it more slowly."

You this time really place the coin in the left hand, still imitating the movement which you used in order not to place it there, or in other words, in palming it.

(Some performers, when employing the feint just mentioned, purposely make a show of awkwardness, in order to provoke suspicion. This is a mistake. Why suggest to those who have no conception of such a thing, the possibility of the coin being palmed? The feint is in reality only used for the benefit of those who, having some idea of the trick, may entertain a suspicion of the actual fact. To these, and these only, is the sham proof directed.)

You now take, as before, the second coin with the tips of the fingers of the right hand, and make believe to be just about to "pass" the coin from the left hand to the right, as you did in the former instance.

As you make a slight pause at this point, and purposely glance towards the spectators with a crafty kind of expression, it is more than probable that some one or more among them will fancy that you have kept the coin in the right hand, and will either openly assert the fact, or intimate their suspicion by means of gestures, or at the very least a smile, of incredulity.

It would be indiscreet to open the hand in order to show the spectators that they are mistaken. They would be very apt under such circumstances to perceive that they had been intentionally "sold." You should appear, on the contrary, not to understand the meaning of the interruption, and show indirectly that they are wrong, as follows:-

"But I am forgetting," you remark. "I always turn up my sleeves before executing this trick, and I have omitted to do so."

This remark enables you, under the pretext of turning up the sleeves, to put the coins back on the table, and so to show that they really were as you had stated.
Those spectators who may have privately expressed suspicion to their friends, as well as those who have openly made similar remarks, in order, as they imagined, to catch the conjuror tripping, will probably be not only surprised, but somewhat annoyed at finding themselves mistaken; and you must therefore be prepared for a second attack.

Again you begin to repeat the trick as above described, still really placing the coin in the left hand, and you extend your arms as though with the intention of "passing" it into the right hand. The coin not having been put unmistakably in the right hand, some one of the spectators may still doubt whether it is really there. In such case, if any observation is made to that effect--" Good gracious, sir!" you reply, in a tone of good-humoured irony, "if you know the trick yourself, do at least be generous enough to allow the rest of the company to enjoy the pleasure of the illusion. I regret to have to tell you, however, that you are quite mistaken in your supposition, for the coin is really in the hand in which I professed to put it." (You show it accordingly.) "You must know, surely, sir, that I wouldn't deceive you."

If, on the contrary, nobody makes any remark, you lay down the coins on the table, as if struck by a new idea. "Stay, gentlemen," you remark, "I will finish with a pass which must carry complete conviction to your minds. I have told you of the extraordinary speed with which the coins pass from the one hand to the other. Well, that speed is such that when we impart it to a coin we can make it pass even through a table without leaving any opening whatever.

"The explanation of the phenomenon is this: the hole in the table is made by the coin with such rapidity, that the very moment it is made it closes again by force of the molecular attraction of the wood. Come, we will try the experiment.

"I take one coin in each hand. I place my left hand under the table, while the right remains above it, and then, at my command, the coins will come together. Listen. PASS! The coin has passed accordingly."

As you say the word "Pass!" you open the right hand, at the same time palming the coin which it holds, while you at the same time chink the coin which is in the left against another coin which you have taken therein in the act of passing the hand under the table. This last-mentioned coin has been beforehand stuck with soft wax under the frame of the table on the side remote from the spectators. It is not only perfectly easy to attach the coin in this position, even under the eyes of those present, but it is also very easy to get possession of it again by reason of the projection of its edges beyond the frame on either side, the frame being narrower than the width of the coin.

"I can perform this experiment," you resume, "with two coins, and even with four, if the condition of the atmosphere does not prevent it, but you will readily understand, gentlemen, that in that case the pass becomes more difficult, and that I can only overcome this difficulty by imparting to the coins a still greater velocity." (Here you borrow two more coins.)

"Come! before we pass them through the table, suppose we first try how they will travel through the air."
You take two coins, which you pretend to place in the left hand, but which you really palm in the right, as in the trick already described, remarking at the same time--"I place these two coins in the left hand." Then taking the two other coins with the tips of the fingers of the right hand, holding the arms far apart, and chinking the coins one upon the other in the act of closing the right hand, you say, "Pass!* 

*The best mode of producing the necessary chink is to make a quick "catching" movement with the hand, thereby jerking the two coins out of the palm against those held by the fingers. The sound produced by this method is much sharper and clearer than that caused by closing the hand on the coins as above described.--ED.

"Bravo!" you exclaim, throwing the four coins on the table, "a complete success. I will now endeavour to pass the four coins through the table."

You have at hand, on your table, a tumbler, of a tolerably cylindrical shape. You take the four coins with the right hand, and thence really place them in the left, still imitating as closely as possible the same movement you used when you did not really place them there, though without any appearance of special design in the matter. (I cannot too often repeat that you should avoid as far as possible suggesting by suspicion of the artifices you employ, even at the cost of special pains to prevent them, as in the present instance; for if the spectators to whom you give an opening for a particular supposition are taken in by a feint, they may take their revenge at some unlooked-for moment.)

"Ah! by the way," you remark, laying down the coins from the left hand on the table, and taking the glass in the same hand, "I forgot to show you the tumbler which I am about to use." The transparency of the glass enables all to see that there is nothing in it, and you replace the glass on the table, taking care to leave it laying down, the opening turned to the left hand.

It is prudent, after having so often employed the "palm," to vary the mode of getting rid of the coins from that which you have already used, so as not to arouse fresh suspicions. You therefore conclude the trick by the and of the tourniquet. This particular sleight has the advantage that four coins may thereby be easily vanished at once.

"Here are the four coins," you remark, "holding them as in Fig. 4." I take them in the right hand in order to have greater power" (here you make the movement indicated for the tourniquet), "and hold them suspended above the table. Now, with the other hand I hold this glass under the table, in order to catch the coins as I pass them through; I cannot, however, perform this marvellous trick until you are all so attentive as to be able to see the coins pass." (Here you pause for a few seconds.) "This is a favourable moment, I think. All listen and watch. Attention! PASS!!"

At this instant, the right hand, which appears to hold the coins, opens as though under the influence of a nervous spasm. The coins are at the same moment heard to fall into the glass, producing a very striking effect.
Explanation.--When the **tourniquet** is made, the four coins fall into the hollow of the left hand, as explained in the section treating of that sleigh. The two hands then part company. The left, containing the coins, drops slowly down, half open, and so turned that the spectators cannot see what it contains, while the other hand is elevated, swelled out with its imaginary contents.

I have above recommended the reader to keep the glass laying down, because, without this precaution, the four coins, which he will naturally have pushed forward a little towards the tips of the fingers of the left hand, would be likely by too sudden a contact with the glass to chink against it, and so betray the secret of their hiding-place, while, by adopting the plan above described, the fingers stretching a little forward, you are enabled to take the glass and allow the coins to settle themselves gently against its interior surface.*

*By a very slight variation of the mode of procedure, this unnatural laying down of the glass may be avoided. To this end, the coins, after the **tourniquet** is made, should be held fast, by a slight contraction of the second and third fingers, against the lower joints of those fingers. When you pick up the glass, do so with the extreme tips of the fingers and thumb, the opening of the glass being outwards, towards the back of the hand. Pass the glass, thus held, under the table, and when there, move it round by a turn of the fingers so as to bring the opening below the palm, when by slightly relaxing your grip of the coins, they may be made to drop into it.--ED.

Matters being thus arranged, you carry the glass under the table, and at the word "pass," by raising a little the second and third fingers of the left hand, you let the coins fall to the bottom of the glass.
"Why should we risk our lives, gentlemen," you remark, "in travelling to distant shores in quest of the precious metals, when it needs so little exertion to procure them close at hand When you have seen and heard what I am about to do, you may decide this question for yourselves; first, however, please to follow attentively the explanation I am about to give you

"The azure atoms of the air we breathe teem with metallic particles, formed from every coinage used upon the surface of the earth. This fact may be accounted for as follows:-

"The daily friction of the fingers on the innumerable coins which are in circulation, produces a perpetual waste, the particles of which are so fine and so infinitesimally small, that, being lighter than air, they are held in suspension therein.

"The chemical affinity--ladies, you must excuse these scientific terms, but they are absolutely necessary in order to make my explanation clear, the chemical affinity of these atoms gives them a constant tendency to reunite and combine together again, but their original shape cannot be recovered save by the aid of a charm of which I alone possess the secret, and of which, with your permission, I will at once make practical use."

(When you first come forward on the stage, you have in the right hand a five-franc piece, palmed after the Italian method--i.e., between the thumb and the lower part of the forefinger. (See Fig 7.) On your other side, you have beforehand placed in the left pochette seven other five-franc pieces)

"Will some one of you gentlemen oblige me with a hat?"

When the hat is handed to you, take it in the right hand, and while, in the act of turning round, the left hand is masked by your body, take from the pochette the seven five-franc pieces, which should be so placed as to be readily got hold of. You then take the hat in the same hand, in such manner as to let the coins lie flat against the
"The experiment, as you will readily imagine, gentlemen, is extremely difficult, for there are floating in the air three different metals, being the particles produced by gold, silver, and copper coins; I am obliged, therefore, in order to collect either of these metals separately, to put aside the others, so as not to produce a base coinage. This difficulty, however, will not deter me, and I shall at once begin to coin some money.

"Copper, by reason of its comparatively small value, is hardly worth one's attention; and as to the two other metals, though gold is the more valuable, I propose only to deal with silver, the coins of which have the advantage of being larger, and consequently more easily seen from a distance.

"Look gentlemen; to begin with, don't you see that five-franc piece just going to burn itself in the flame of that candle? Let us secure it!"

While speaking as above, you have moved the hand close to the candle, and at the final moment you have brought the coin to the tips of the fingers.

"Here it is, you see! dear me! it is quite hot, I will put it here in the hat"

At the moment that you put the right hand into the hat, as though to place therein the coin, you palm this by the Italian method, as before, but at the same time you let fall from the left hand one of the seven coins which you are holding against the inside of the hat.*

*Better: have at starting two coins in the right hand, palmed in the ordinary manner. Produce one only of these at the tips of the fingers, and drop this coin unmistakably into the hat, working the rest of the trick with the second coin. The use of this little expedient goes far to negative the suspicion, which every conjuror finds occasionally expressed in the course of this trick, that the same coin is produced over and over again. For the description of a piece of apparatus designed to heighten the effect of this trick, by enabling the performer every now and then to show his right hand empty, see Modern Magic, p. 207.--ED.

If these two movements are simultaneous, the illusion is perfect, and the spectators must perforce believe that it is really the coin in the right hand which has just fallen into the hat.

Then, stepping up to a lady, "Excuse me, madam," you remark, "will you allow me to take this coin which I see in your handkerchief?"

You make believe to take a five-franc piece from one of the folds of the handkerchief, though in reality you merely produce that which is hidden in the hand, as you did just before in the case of the candle. Pretending to place this coin also in the hat, you palm it, as before, and let fall one of the coins in the left hand. You go through the same little comedy with respect to the five other coins, which you find, one under the collar of a gentleman's coat, one in a child's hair, one under a fan, one in a shawl, one floating in the air, and so on.
When the seven coins in the left hand have all dropped into the hat, you make believe to find "just one more" in some place or other, but this time you really put the coin which has all along been in the right hand into the hat. In order still further to confirm the illusion produced by the fall of its predecessors, you let fall this one openly, holding it a little above the hat.

You now shake the hat to make the coins rattle, after which you take them and count them into the left hand.

"You observe, ladies," you continue, "that these are genuine coins" (here you hand one or two for examination). "They are pretty solid, are they not, madam? Well, you will be surprised to hear that the solidity is only in appearance. If you like, you shall yourself reduce them to an impalpable powder, as they were at first. Will you take them? Please hold your two hands together, so as to lose none of them."

You hold the eight coins between the fingers and thumb of the left hand, and make believe to take them in the right hand by the tourniquet. When you bend over towards the lady in the act of offering her the coins with the right hand, the left, falling naturally close to the pochette, places them therein, and you continue--

"Be kind enough, madam, to close your hands as quickly as possible, squeeze the coins, and rub them like this." You yourself set the example of the movement. It will be readily understood that when the lady a moment later opens her hands, they are found to be empty.

"You see, madam, that the effect is produced just as well in your hands as in mine, which shows that you possess in a marked degree what is known in hermetic science as the faculty of transmutation."

This pretty little trick, which even as above described is complete in itself, serves as the introduction to a stage trick to which I gave the name of the "Shower of Gold." The sequel is in this case as follows:-A glass vase, covered with a silk handkerchief, is instantaneously filled with golden coins; and lastly, the hat which has been used for the reception of the five-franc pieces is found crammed with an enormous quantity of bank notes. These notes, as may be well imagined, are of the "Bank of Elegance" description, bearing, instead of the words "five hundred francs," "five hundred times," or the like, in the same kind of print. At a little distance they cannot be distinguished from the genuine article.

This portion of the trick requires the aid of stage accessories, and would therefore be out of place here, but will be described in the course of the second volume, which will be devoted to stage tricks.* I may, however, say in passing, that by means of a mechanical contrivance forming part of a small fancy table, the coins are lifted up under the handkerchief and fall into the vase.** The bank notes, laid one on another, and rolled into a ball, are placed behind the performer's table, and are secretly taken thence and introduced into the hat.

*This promise was never performed.--ED.
The terms of this description are somewhat misleading. In the table generally used for the performance of this trick, by pulling certain cords in due order, wires are made to rise through the table and support the lid of the vase, while the vase itself stalks down through a trap to a level with the surface of the table, and a large number of coins, stored between the upper and under surface, are swept into it by means of a rake-like apparatus. On relaxing the pull of the cords, all returns to its original condition, save that the vase, originally empty, is now filled with the coins—ED.
IV.

THE MULTIPLICATION OF MONEY

To Increase at the Pleasure of one of the Spectators the Number of certain Golden Coins which such Spectator holds fast in his Hands. A curious incident, with a laughable termination.

On coming forward to perform this trick you hold in your hand a little tray either of silver or of glass, upon which are a number of counters, gilt in imitation of twenty-franc pieces. (Similar in general appearance to sovereigns.--ED.) It is well as a measure of precaution to use imitation coins, for in a mixed audience genuine gold coins might possibly go astray in the hands of some of the spectators. You shake the coins, making them jump about a little, so as to indicate by the "chink" what it is you have on the tray, and you say--

"The trick which I am about to perform, gentlemen, will give you an idea of my profound respect for the property of others, or, in other words, of my scrupulous honesty, for you will be able to judge, from the facility with which I shall make these coins travel from place to place, of the ease with which I could take out of your pockets, unknown to you, all the money you may have placed there.

"I fancy, however, that the trick in that form might possibly not be universally agreeable, and it is my desire to execute it in a manner which shall be equally satisfactory to you all.

"I have here on this tray a number of twenty-franc pieces. Which of you will give me permission to pass them all into his pocket? If any one is so disposed, he will be good enough to give me an intimation to that effect by holding up his hand."

This proposition, which is made merely in jest, invariably meets a general acceptance. It is by no means unusual to see nearly as many hands raised as there are spectators present.

"Oho!" you continue, "my proposition seems to be rather tempting, for I see there are plenty of volunteers. Decidedly, the poet must have made a mistake, and money is not a delusion."

(Supposing that, by an exceptional chance, nobody holds up his hand, you may still make the same remark, speaking à la cantonade. To speak à la cantonade, in conjuror's parlance, is to make an observation intended for the audience generally, but ostensibly addressed to one or more imaginary spectators.*)
*Parler à la cantonade, a phrase which has no English equivalent, is derived from the French stage. It is used by actors to denote the addressing of an observation to some person who is supposed to be at the "wing," or elsewhere on the stage, but out of sight of the audience.--ED.*

"But, gentlemen, allow me to say that, wizard as I am, or as I profess to be, I really can't make these coins pass at the same time into the pocket of everybody who asks. As I have no partiality in favour of any one, or rather, as I have a partiality for each one of my spectators, I shall be obliged, in order to get myself out of the difficulty, to change the form of the trick. I shall make it, by the way, still more effective, for the marvel shall be performed openly, so that every one may have the opportunity of seeing a number of these coins pass from my hand right into the very hand of one of the company."

Then addressing yourself to a person whose countenance indicates an easy and accommodating disposition, "Will you have the kindness, sir," you say, "to take a handful of these coins?"

This having been done, you pour the rest of the coins on your table.

"I see," you observe, "by the small quantity I have left--pray don't imagine, sir, that I make the remark in any reproachful sense--that what you have taken may fairly be regarded as a good handful. Let us see, by the way, how many you have. Will you have the kindness to count those coins one by one on this salver, aloud, so that all may participate in the experiment?"

So saying, you draw near to the spectator, and present the salver, holding it with the thumb and forefinger of the right hand.

It should here be mentioned that underneath this salver are hidden nine coins, which you have in your hand. These coins are the more easily concealed from sight, inasmuch as the three last fingers, which hold them, are covered by the tray. If you make use of a glass dish by way of salver, it should be "cut," and of a tolerably complex pattern, so as not to give too clear a view of the hand which holds it.

As your volunteer assistant counts the coins one by one, you repeat after him the numbers as he names them, so that there may be no mistake, and when he has finished, having reached, let us suppose, the number twenty--

"Very good," you say; "now be kind enough to take these twenty pieces in one of your hands." Suiting the action to the word, you pour the twenty coins into your own right hand, where they mingle with the nine which you had already concealed there, and you place the whole in the hand of the spectator. Nine coins added to twenty make no perceptible difference. You have, therefore, nothing to fear on this score; but by way of precaution, in order to give the spectator no opportunity to count over again, you request him to hold with his disengaged hand the tray, which you hand to him for that purpose; you also recommend him to hold his right hand high up, in order that all present may be able to see the effect of the trick. Then, moving away from him, you take from your table a handful of the coins, and count, aloud, ten of them into your left
hand, replacing the remainder on the table.

"I have here," you remark, "ten gold coins. Will you allow me to pass them from where I stand into your hand along with the others?"

The spectator invariably answers in the affirmative, and you proceed:-

"I beg your pardon, sir, but it has slipped my memory: how many coins have you in your hand?"

"Twenty!" the spectator answers.

"Twenty," you repeat, "and ten which I am going to send you--how many will that make?"

"Thirty!"

"Barême himself * could not have done the sum more correctly. You must excuse this minuteness, sir, for it is absolutely necessary for the demonstration of the astounding fact which you are about to witness. Move the hand which holds the twenty coins a little nearer to me, please. Very good. You are not nervous, are you, sir? I fancied I saw your hand shake a little. No? Then I must have been mistaken. I must warn you, by the way, that you will feel a slight electric shock, but you need not be at all alarmed about it, it wont be painful."

*The French "Cocker."--ED.

Here you take the ten coins between the thumb and first finger of the left hand, which you hold pretty high up; then you make believe to take them in the right hand by the tourniquet, while they really fall into the hollow of the left hand. This latter sinks gently down, half-closed, by the side of the thigh, while the right hand is elevated and held puffed out, as though it contained the coins.

"Will you be kind enough, sir, to move your hand just a little bit nearer, so as to lessen the distance between us?"

So saying, you yourself move your right hand forward, as though to indicate to the spectator what it is you want him to do. This temps,* attracting the attention of the spectators, allows the left hand, which has drawn back a little, to place the coins in the pochette; the necessary movement being covered by the coat-tail. As soon as the left hand is empty, it is brought forward and shown open, though without apparent design.

*A temps is an act designed to afford a pretext for some necessary sleight-of-hand movement.

"Very good indeed! That will do nicely!" you say to the spectators. "Now then!" You place yourself in position as though to throw the coins, and say "Pass! Did you feel the shock, sir?"

Whatever be the answer of the spectator, you add, "I was certain you would, you could not do otherwise. That shows that the coins have reached their destination. Will you
kindly verify the fact for yourself by counting them upon the tray?"

While this is being done, you secretly take one coin from the table, and, keeping it concealed in your right hand, draw near to the spectator just as he has all but finished counting.

It will be readily understood that only twenty-nine coins are found, inasmuch as you only added nine. You make believe to be disconcerted.

"It is very surprising, you say. "Are you quite sure, sir, that you have made no mistake?" On receiving an answer in the affirmative, you add, "Perhaps the coin fell in its passage. I beg your pardon, madam," you continue, addressing some lady seated near the spectator, and taking up her handkerchief or fan, which you shake over the tray, "I wonder whether perchance the coin strayed in this direction."

So saying, you release the coin, which appears to come from the handkerchief, and falls upon the other coins. This little interlude always causes considerable amusement. In the absence of a fan or handkerchief, you may take the hat of a make spectator, and produce the coin from thence.*

*It has a very good effect to apparently try one hat or handkerchief and fail to find the coin therein, then to try a second, and produce it from thence.-ED

It very often happens that the person who undertakes the duty of counting the coins, instead of finding one piece short (as should naturally be the case from the arrangement of the trick), either by mistake, or from a good-natured disinclination to place you in a difficulty, reports that the number is exactly as you have stated that it would be.

So far from being prejudicial to the effect of the trick, this mistake may be made considerably to enhance it.

"You have found just thirty, sir," you say, "neither more nor less. It could not be otherwise. Well, I will now show you a yet more surprising effect; be kind enough to hold those thirty coins as tightly as possible. Now, even at this distance, I will take one of those coins from your hand, and make it pass again from hence into that lady's handkerchief. Will you allow me, madam? Here it is, you see."

This last effect is a mere matter of course. You have, still hidden in the right hand, the single coin, for which you have had no use, owing to the supposed correctness of the total. You make believe to withdraw this coin, and to call it into your left hand, then to pass it (still all being make-believe) towards the handkerchief in question; and in picking up the handkerchief with the right hand, you introduce the coin therein in order to let it fall on the tray. The coins are counted over for the second time, and as a matter of course are found to be one short.
V.

MAGIC FILTRATION OF FIVE-FRANC PIECES

Two Five-Franc pieces, each wrapped in a Handkerchief are entrusted to two Spectators, placed at a distance one from the other. The Performer, withdrawing one of the Coins through the Substance of the Handkerchief, sends it to join the other Coin, without going near the Handkerchief which contains it.

This is a very pretty trick. It is by no means difficult to perform, and it is very striking in effect. It has but one drawback, that of being rather awkward to explain with reference to a certain special sleight which is, to a certain extent, the key to the trick.

We will endeavour, however, to render our explanation as lucid as possible, and the intelligence of the reader must do the rest.

1. Borrow a couple of rather large handkerchiefs (silk for preference), and two five-franc pieces, which you place before you on a small table. (If you cannot procure the loan of these articles, there is no objection to using some of your own.)

2. Take one of the two coins, hold it upright between the tips of the fingers of the left hand, and cover it with one of the handkerchiefs in such manner that the four corners hang down equally all round.

"I place this coin," you remark, "in the middle of the handkerchief. To prove to you that the coin is really there, I will show it you once more."

Attention, reader, for here comes in the special sleight I have mentioned, and which I will proceed to explain.

1. In order to show the coin, turn over the right-hand palm upwards, and clip the coin through the handkerchief: between the first finger and thumb. (See Fig 13.)

2. The fingers of the left hand let go of the coin, and are lowered, beneath the handkerchief, about a couple of inches.

3. The right hand, still holding the coin, turns over from right to left, rolling the handkerchief over the second finger, and so again presents the coin to the left hand;
while this latter seizes it through the handkerchief at the point where, in the figure, the outline of the left thumb is seen.

4. As soon as you have got hold of the coin, withdraw the middle finger of the right hand from the fold in which it is now wrapped, and lifting, with the same hand, one of the corners of the handkerchief, show that the coin is really therein.

To do this neatly some little dexterity is required, for the coin is really outside the handkerchief, as shown in Fig. 14.

5. The left hand still holding the coin, turn it over, so as to let fall all the corners of the handkerchief.

If you have strictly followed the above directions, the coin, instead of being in the middle of the handkerchief, is on one side of it, hidden by a fold, as already described.

6. This fold is on the side towards yourself, and cannot be seen by the spectators. But nevertheless, in order to conceal it still more effectually, twist it a little, and ask some one to hold the handkerchief, thus arranged, with the tips of his fingers.

Before beginning to deal with the second handkerchief, take secretly from your pochette a five-franc piece of your own, and hold it palmed in your right hand.

1. With this same hand take the second five-franc piece, which has remained on the table, and place it under the second handkerchief.

2. Under cover of the handkerchief, add to it the palmed coin.

3. With the left hand take hold of the two coins together through the handkerchief, and let the handkerchief hang down around them.

4. Next, grasping the lower part of the handkerchief with the right hand, let fall one of the pieces held by the left hand. This piece is kept from falling out of the handkerchief by the right hand.

5. Ask some one to be good enough to hold the handkerchief in a horizontal position, taking hold of it in the same manner as you yourself hold it. The person who does so can feel plainly enough, through the handkerchief, the coin held in the left hand, but does not suspect the presence of that which rests loosely near the right hand.

Stepping up to the person who holds the first handkerchief, you ask, "Now, sir, do you believe that it is possible for me to take out the coin which you have so carefully wrapped up in that handkerchief, and to send it, even from this distance, to join the
other coin which that lady is holding? Well, at any rate, I intend to make the attempt."

Take hold of the coin through the handkerchief (which you ask the spectator to hold a little lower for that purpose), and in order to produce it you have only to disengage it from the fold in which it was wrapped.

"Here is the coin," you remark, producing it. "I shall now perform my other undertaking, by making it pass from here into the handkerchief of which that lady holds possession. To facilitate that object I must ask you, madam, to be kind enough to follow the directions I am about to give you--namely, at the moment when I despatch this coin towards you, be kind enough to let go of the piece which you hold with the left hand, while you still grasp the handkerchief firmly with the right hand, at the spot at which you are now holding it.

"You quite understand? Then let us try the experiment."

You make believe to place the coin in the left hand, really palming it; then opening the left hand with a movement in the direction of the handkerchief you say, "Pass!"

The lady, following the directions you have given her, lets go of the coin in the left hand, and, as a natural consequence, the handkerchief, falling over, causes the two coins to come together, and to announce, by the chink of their contact, that the one which you have made believe to pass thither has reached its destination.

This trick, I may once more remark, produces an astonishing effect.
VI.

THE INTELLIGENT COIN

This is a trick which, ever since the latter part of the last century, has enjoyed a large share of public favour. There are few prestidigitateurs who have not, at some time or other, included it in their performances. I do not think I could fairly pass it over. I shall, however, describe it as briefly as possible, inasmuch as it must be already known to the majority of my readers.

You offer for examination by the company a glass goblet with a foot, which you are about to employ for the purpose of the experiment.

The inspection having been made, you place the glass on a book, which is in turn placed on a table. The introduction of the book beneath is, as you inform the company, to preclude all possible supposition of any connection between the glass and the table.

You borrow a five-franc piece, have it marked, and drop it into the glass.

At the command of the magician the coin begins to dance, keeping time to the music, and answers Yes or No to any questions which may be put to it. To indicate "Yes" the coin jumps once in the glass, for "No" it remains motionless.*

*The more general plan, at the present day, is to make the coin jump three times for Yes and twice for No, giving successive single jumps to indicate numbers.-ED.

Explanation.--The coin is fixed, by the aid of a little virgin wax, to the end of a black silk thread. A confederate, placed either behind a screen, in an adjoining room, or behind the scenes in a theatre, pulls the thread and makes the piece dance and "talk," according to the requirements of the trick.

To prevent the assistant upsetting the glass when he pulls the thread, this latter is passed through a little loop made of an ordinary pin, and stuck into the edge of the cover of the book.

The performer comes forward, holding in his hand the book, to which is attached the silk thread, the other end remaining behind the scenes. The wax should be stuck upon the cover of the book in such a way as to be readily got hold of.

Before dropping the coin into the glass, you press against it the wax, to which is attached the end of the silk thread. This done, the success of the trick rests with the confederate.

The trick concluded, you remove the wax with the finger-nail, and return the coin to
the owner.

I have used the term "confederate," as likely to be more readily understood by some of my readers, but in conjuring parlance the word "servant" or "assistant" is the more proper term. A confederate is an officious spectator, who lends to the conjuror some article which the latter has beforehand handed to him for that purpose.* The servant is a concealed assistant who does some act or acts to facilitate the execution of the tricks exhibited by the conjuror. We shall have occasion to make further reference in the following pages to this servant.

*An article thus placed in the hands of a friendly spectator for the purpose of being offered as above described, is technically said to be "planted." The artifice in question is, however, very sparingly used by first-class performers.-ED.

The coin is sometimes made to dance by means of a glass through the foot of which a vertical hole has been drilled. A little steel rod, made to rise through the surface of the table by means of a string pulled by the assistant, passes through the foot of the glass and lifts the coin.

The results which may be procured from such an arrangement may be readily imagined; the coin having, after its own fashion, the faculty of speech, appears to be animated by some mysterious power, producing effects and displaying intelligence of which the performer appears to be only the interpreter. The rapping-tables of the spiritualists exhibit a close analogy with this trick. You may make the piece declare, for example, what card a person has secretly chosen, the number of coins contained in a purse, the time indicated by a watch, &c. The performer by forcing a given card, or by the principles of the second-sight trick (to be described hereafter*), indicates to the assistant the number of raps which the coin must give.

*The undertaking here implied was never performed by the author; but the principle of the trick in question will be found admirably explained in La Seconde Vue Dévoilée, by F. A. Gandon, Paris, 1849.--ED.

It was formerly the fashion with conjurors to execute, by means of the coin, a practical joke of very doubtful taste--viz., they asked the coin to point out the most amorously-disposed person in the company, and took care to make it indicate someone more or less disfigured in face or person; they even sometimes went so far as to make the coin say how many times the gentleman in question had inspired a tender passion. In our own day performers no longer venture on such familiarities with the public.
VII.

THE TWO HATS

Two Five-Franc pieces having been placed in a Hat, to make them pass Invisibly into another.

1. Borrow two hats and two five-franc pieces.

2. Place the hats on the table, about three inches apart, and have the two coins marked.

3. As soon as the coins have been marked, take them in the right hand, and making believe to place them in the left hand, palm them.

4. With the same hand in which the coins are hidden, take up the right-hand hat, holding it in such a way that the coins may rest against the lining (see Fig. 12), and, turning it upside down, show that there is nothing therein.

5. The left hand has remained closed as though it held the two coins; place it above, and just a little within, the left-hand hat. Then, suitting the action to the word, as you say, "I place these two coins in this hat" (that on the left), open the left hand, which you forthwith hold up to show that it is empty.

At the very same moment that you open the hand, you let fall into the other hat the two coins held by the right hand against its inner surface.

These two simultaneous movements confirm the illusory effect of the sound, and it is impossible, at the distance at which he is placed, that the spectator can imagine but that the coins really fell into the left-hand hat.

The rest of the trick is mere matter of course. You announce that you are about to cause the two coins to leave the left-hand hat and pass into that on the right. You place the two hats at a distance one from the other, and bring the supposed powers of the wand into play, or pronounce some cabalistic formula, and the trick is done.
VIII.

THE GOLDEN COIN IN A DINNER-ROLL

To find a Golden Coin in an unprepared Dinner-Roll fresh from the Baker's.

We will suppose that the performer is a guest at some gathering of friends, upon whom he desires to play a mild practical joke.

As soon as you are seated at table, and have unfolded your table-napkin—a moment when the general attention is readily attracted—you take your dinner-roll, and pretending to feel its weight, say—

"It's very curious, this roll seems to me a good deal heavier than it ought to be."

You turn it about in all directions, thereby indirectly enabling all to see that there is no opening in it.

"Let us see! perhaps it has something in it intended for me." You break it open, and find, imbedded in the middle, a twenty-franc piece.

"Allow me, sir," you remark to the master of the house, "to compliment you on your very ingenious method of sending me this little card of invitation to your dinner. I am really excessively obliged to you," &c., &c.

The mode of executing this trick is as follows:-

While you turn the roll over and over to exhibit it, you have a gold coin in your right hand, and when you prepare to break it open, you slide the coin to the tips of the fingers, when it will be hidden under the roll.

The roll being held by the two ends, you first bend it in such manner as to raise the two ends, and depress the middle. This movement produces, underneath and in the middle of the roll, a yawning opening into which you secretly introduce the coin, pushing it in with the fingers. It will readily be understood that on turning the roll over and breaking it completely asunder, the coin which you have introduced as above is discovered.

You may, if you please, though it is a little more difficult, introduce into the roll a five-franc piece (silver) instead of a twenty-franc piece.

It was formerly the fashion with conjurors, before giving their public performances in a town, to exhibit some minor tricks of a comic character in shops, &c., to stimulate the popular curiosity. The trick which I have just described was very often so employed by them at a baker's or pastrycook's. After having found the coin in a loaf or cake, they
pretended to pocket it, but really kept it in the hand, and were able, in this manner, with
the same coin, to find in cakes as many twenty-franc pieces as they pleased.

It would be impossible to describe here all the tricks which have been performed with
coins. I have selected some of the best, which will serve as specimens whereby lovers
of the art may arrange others at their pleasure, making use of the principles laid down
at the outset of this chapter.

By way of wind-up to my description of coin tricks, I may add, with reference to this
subject, a few minor matters which are only worthy of a cursory enumeration.

I have seen coins made of wax, silvered over, which were placed in a hot glass. These
coins, which had all the appearance of genuine money, melted and disappeared,
passing through a hole drilled in the stem of the glass.

There are also coins made of silvered chocolate, which the performer exchanges for
genuine coins, and swallows bodily.

I have also seen copper and silver coins (of like diameter), such as a five-centime and a
two-franc piece, filed down to half their thickness, and soldered the one to the other.
The value of the coin appeared to be changed according as the one side or the other
was uppermost.

I have myself arranged a five-franc piece to contain a twenty-franc piece. The latter
coin was brought out through an opening made in the exergue of the five-franc piece.

There is also the coin which rolls along the edge of a sword or of a thin flat rule.
Behind the coin is fastened, by means of wax, a little pulley, the groove of which
corresponds in form with the edge of the sword. The trick explains itself.

We do not, however, here completely abandon the subject of coin tricks; we shall
revert to them again when we come to describe stage tricks, in connection with which
they will form a very interesting chapter.*

*As already remarked, this intention of the author was, unhappily, never carried
out.--ED.
CARD TRICKS

VARIOUS SLEIGHTS EMPLOYED IN THE EXECUTION OF CARD TRICKS

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL SLEIGHTS

To make the Pass
False Shuffles
   The French Shuffle
   The Italian Shuffle
   The Partial Shuffle
   The Classifying Shuffle
   The "Fan" Shuffle

To Force a Card
To Change a Card-Modern Method
   Old Method
To Palm a Card
   Second Method
   Third Method
To Replace a Palmed Card
To get Sight of a Card

SPECIAL SLEIGHTS:

The Card thought of
The Pass, Reversed
To Slide Back a Card
The Wide or Long Card
The Bridge
Marked Cards
Cards Arranged in a Given Order
To Change one Pack for another

ORNAMENTAL SLEIGHTS:

To make the Pass with One Hand
   Old Method
   New Method
   With the Tips of the Fingers
To Change a Card with One Hand
To Ruffle the Cards
To Throw the Cards
To Spring the Cards from Hand to Hand
To Pick up the Cards
To Turn over the Cards

TRICKS WITH CARDS
CHAPTER II.

CARD TRICKS*

*Probably the most skilful living card-conjuror is a foreign professor named Charlier. M. Charlier does not appear in public, and is consequently little known outside of conjuring circles. He may, however, claim to be without a rival in this particular branch of the art, being in fact the inventor of certain special methods, which produce most marvellous results. Having myself studied card-conjuring under his tuition, I can personally testify to his extraordinary ability, which may be further estimated by the fact that he claims to have numbered the great Robert-Houdin himself among his pupils. He is somewhat migratory; but may be heard of by application to Professor Hellis, 13, Silver Street, Kensington, W., or the principal magical dépôts-ED.

Of all the marvels produced by sleight-of-hand, card tricks are, beyond question, the most amusing, and the most generally appreciated.

They have the advantage of requiring, for the most part, no preparation, and of being performable, so to speak, extempore.

A pack of cards is to be found everywhere, and with this sole piece of apparatus, and a fair amount of dexterity, you may afford much amusement.

The surprising effects produced by this means will be the subject of the present chapter.

Card tricks may be divided into two very distinct classes--namely, tricks dependent on mathematical combinations, and tricks of dexterity.

Card tricks dependent on some mathematical principle, surprising though they may be, have the disadvantage of being very generally known; for two reasons--first, that they are described in many books, and secondly, that they are extremely easy to perform. The genuine conjuror must therefore eschew them, if he wishes to spare himself the annoyances of seeing his tricks explained, and even performed, by persons of the smallest possible pretensions to a knowledge of the magic art.

Tricks of dexterity, on the other hand, offer the performer sundry great advantages, among which I may specially mention the following:-

1. They are known but to comparatively few persons, and those persons experts in the art.

2. They are susceptible of unlimited variation.

3. The many resources which they afford give the performer a ready way of escape
from any difficulty, whether arising from a slip on his own part, or intentionally
caused; by some spectator.

I shall discuss in the present chapter this last class of tricks only, referring the reader
for the others to such books as specially treat of them.

All card tricks may be appropriately exhibited in a drawing-room, but there are many
of them which cannot be effectively presented on the stage; in a public hall many of the
spectators are necessarily too remote to distinguish the identity of the cards exhibited
to them, and cannot in consequence take any part in the illusion. The conjuror must
choose for himself among these tricks such as are likely to be effective, having regard
to the extent of the building in which he performs.

N.B.-It is absolutely essential, in order to thoroughly understand the explanations
which I am about to give, both as to the methods of sleight-of-hand, and the set tricks
in which they are employed, to follow them with the pack of cards in hand. Unless this
is done, persons who have not had much personal experience in these manipulations
would be extremely likely to get confused by the many minute details of execution,
and to lose heart even before they have fairly made a beginning.

Previous  |  Next  |  Chapter Contents  |  Main Contents
VARIOUS SLEIGHTS EMPLOYED IN THE EXECUTION OF CARD TRICKS

These sleights are of three kinds, namely:-

1. Sleights of general use.
2. Special sleights.
3. Ornamental sleights.

1. *Sleights of general use* are such as are employed in all card tricks in the performance of which dexterity is required.

2. *Special Sleights* will be understood as meaning such as are only employed in certain special tricks

3. *Ornamental Sleighs, or Flourishes*, are such as are only intended to display the personal dexterity of the operator.
SECTION I.

TO MAKE THE PASS

The "pass" is the most important of the various artifices employed in the performance of card tricks. The student should, therefore, seek to acquire this sleight before proceeding to any other.

At the outset the task may appear difficult, but with steady perseverance the novice will soon find that he begins to improve. An hour a day for a fortnight should be long enough to attain fair dexterity in the needful movement. But whether this be found the case or not, it is useless to attempt to shirk the necessary labour, for without the pass card-conjuring is simply impossible.

The pass is performed as follows:

1. *Preparation.*--Hold the pack of cards (face downwards) in the left hand, and divide it by means of the little finger into two pretty nearly equal portions, as in Fig. 15.

![Image 15](http://www.magic4you.co.uk/books/rhoudin/043.htm)

2. Cover the pack with the right hand, and grip the ends of the lower packet between the thumb and middle finger of the same hand, as in Fig. 16.

![Image 16](http://www.magic4you.co.uk/books/rhoudin/043.htm)

3. *The Pass.*--With the aid of the little finger and middle finger of the left hand, draw away the upper packet and make it "pass" lightly and noiselessly under the lower packet.

The movement last above described may be analysed as follows:

At the moment when the fingers of the left hand draw away the upper packet, those of the right hand, pushing the lower packet into the "fork" of the thumb, cause it to make a hinge-like movement on that point, which movement facilitates the passage of the upper packet below the other.

By removing the right hand, which serves, in practice, to mask the operation (see Fig. 17), the reader will be enabled to see the
position which the cards should occupy at the moment when the two packets change places, and will understand the manner in which the packet, which was originally undermost, passes above the other.

These different movements, though described separately for the purpose of our explanation, should be executed with such rapidity that they, in effect, form but one only. Steady practice will enable the student to perform the whole in less than a second of time.

By way of giving an example of the utility of the pass, I will suppose that after having had a card drawn and replaced in the pack, you desire to find it again with ease. You will proceed as follows:-

As soon as the card has been taken from the pack, separate the cards into two packets, which you hold at a very minute distance, the one above the other. (See Fig. 18.)

Have the card replaced on the packet in the left hand, and cover it instantly with the packet in the right hand.* But, in so doing, you take care to secretly introduce the little finger beneath the upper packet, thereby dividing the pack, though imperceptibly to the spectators, into two portions, as shown in Fig. 15.

*Unless it is absolutely necessary, as sometimes happens, to have the card replaced at a particular part of the pack, it is far more artistic merely to spread the cards fanwise, and allow the drawer to replace the chosen card wherever he pleases, immediately slipping the little finger of the left hand above it, and closing the "fan." I have seen Professor Charlair (referred to previously) driven to the verge of lunacy by artistic anger and disgust upon being invited by a pupil (who shall be nameless) to replace a drawn card between the upper and lower halves of the pack as above described.-ED.

If you now make the pass, following the instructions already given, the chosen card will be found on the top of the pack.

We shall see further on how, by means of a false shuffle, you may make believe to mix this card with the others, though in reality you never lose sight of it.

N.B.--You should never make the pass immediately after having had the card replaced in the pack, but should wait to do so until the suspicions which are sure to suggest themselves at this particular moment have passed away; unless, indeed, you have arrived at such a pitch of perfection as to be able to make the pass in an absolutely invisible manner.*

*This is by no means so difficult as would at first sight be imagined. If covered by ever so slight a movement of the hands, either upwards, downwards, or horizontally, the pass should be absolutely invisible. The novice should, however, use small-sized cards (the ordinary English playing cards being inconveniently large, save in the hands of an adept), and limit the pack to the piquet number, thirty-two.--ED.

Practice and observation will suggest little artifices which may be used to render the pass as little noticeable as possible; any further explanation I might give on the subject would only tend to
complicate the instructions I have already given. Suffice it to say, that the movement of the pass, however deftly executed, should be masked by the back of the right hand, and merged, so to speak, in some gesture appropriate to the language used by the performer.

The mode of making the pass with one hand only will be described further on.
SECTION II.
FALSE SHUFFLES

The false shuffle is an artifice designed to neutralise any suspicions which the spectators might conceive as to any special arrangement of the cards for the purpose of a given trick.

There are five principal shuffles, each possessing its special utility. They are--

1. The French Shuffle
2. The Italian Shuffle
3. The Partial Shuffle
4. The Classifying Shuffle
5. The "Fan" Shuffle
I.

The French Shuffle

When in the course of a trick we have brought a card to the top of the pack, and desire not to lose sight of it, we make use of the French shuffle. This is executed as follows--

1. Having the pack in the left hand, first take in the right hand the card which you desire to keep in view.

2. Pass successively on to this card four or five cards, then four or five more, and so on, until the whole pack is in the right hand; but after each time that you place one of the little packets on the pack, make believe to place also a packet underneath, producing the effect of so doing by rubbing the one heap upon the other.

3. Take the pack once more in the left hand, and for the second time pass all the cards into the right hand by the same mode of shuffling, but this time without any make-believe, placing four or five cards above and then four or five cards below the first card, until the very end of the pack. When the shuffle is complete, the reserved card will be found to have returned to its original position at the top.*

*That is, the card, which at the termination of the first stage of the shuffle was left at the bottom, is finally taken and laid on the top.--ED.

It will be readily understood that this shuffle may be used to retain possession of several cards; all that is necessary is to gather the cards in question into a parcel together, and deal with this as with the single card.
II.
The Italian Shuffle

This shuffle is one of the simplest and most easy to execute.

You divide the pack into two parts, which you hold one in each hand, spread out in the form of a fan. Then you "weave" the cards of the two packets one between the other, thus really shuffling them; but you take care that the top card of the pack remains always in its original place. To secure this, all you have to do is to insert other cards always beneath and never above this card.

Fig. 19 exhibits this manoeuvre in execution; the top card is the one reserved.

The same plan we have just explained for the reservation of one card may, as in the preceding instance, be employed to retain several you have only to take care that the cards in question are not separated in the process of shuffling.
III.

The Partial Shuffle

When we have a considerable number of cards to retain. A dozen, for instance, it would be hazardous to the success of the trick to risk using either of the shuffles already described. We make use, in such case, of the partial shuffle, which is both natural in appearance, and certain in effect. It is performed as follows:

You transfer the dozen cards to be retained (by means of the pass) to the bottom of the pack, taking care to keep the little finger between such parcel of cards and those above them. You then shuffle the twenty uppermost cards,* and when you reach the reserved packet, replace it, apparently by way of termination to the shuffle, on the top of the pack.

*The author assumes throughout that the performer is using the piquet pack of thirty-two cards only.--ED.
IV.

The Classifying Shuffle

The effect of this sleight is to simulate a shuffle, while in reality actually arranging the cards in the particular order which may be necessary for the trick.

Let us suppose, for example, that for the purpose of proving the danger of playing at cards with persons whose honesty is not a matter of absolute certainty, you wish to show how easy it is to cheat at écarté it becomes necessary to have recourse to the classifying shuffle in order to arrange the cards, which may be done under the very eyes of the spectators, the process being as follows:-

Glancing through the cards with apparent indifference, you pass to the bottom of the pack a sequence of six cards to a king, the king being undermost.*

*The original says: "dont le roi occupe le dessus," but this is evidently, from what follows, a printer's error for dessous.-ED.

This once achieved, nothing is easier than to so place these cards that they may fall to the share of the performer.

To that end, under the pretence of shuffling, you pass in succession to the top of the pack--

1. Four cards from the bottom (good).
2. Three cards from the middle (bad).
3. Two cards from the bottom (good).
4. Two cards from the middle (bad).*

*The following would be a neater method of effecting the same object:-Get the six cards on the top of the pack Take the upper half of the pack in the right hand and on it slide three cards from the other half. Then take these three cards only in the right hand, and on them slide two of the six reserved cards, and on these two more indifferent cards. Lastly, replace the packet thus made on the top--ED.

This done, you invite the adversary to cut, and you neutralise the effect of the cut by the method above indicated (the pass); you deal, and are found to have five winning trumps in your hand, and the king by way of "turn-up."*

*It should be mentioned, for the benefit of those not acquainted with the game, that at écarté five cards only are dealt to each of the two players, and such cards are not dealt one by one, as at whist or cribbage, but first two, then three (or vice versâ) to each player.--ED.
The classifying shuffle may also be executed in another manner. You desire, for example, to place a certain card at a given number from the top:-

You divide the pack into two parts as in the Italian shuffle, and while intermixing the cards as described for that shuffle, you pass in succession upon the noted card as many cards as you desire.
V.

The "Fan" Shuffle

The "fan" is a very useful shuffle for the purpose of retaining the whole of the cards in the order in which they have been arranged. To execute this shuffle you must proceed as follows:-

1. Spread the pack fanwise, and divide it into two parts, one of which you hold in each hand.

2. With the aid of the fingers of the right hand, which you work backwards and forwards accordingly, pass the cards you hold in this hand under those held in the left hand. This movement produces (to the eye) the effect of intermingling the cards of the one packet with those of the other.

The cards are not really shuffled at all by this process, but are in the condition which they would assume if the pack had been cut; it is necessary, therefore, to perform the operation a second time, in order to restore the two parcels to the positions which they originally occupied.

In order to produce a complete illusion, it is well, in performing this shuffle, to hold the cards upright, the artifice employed being thereby more completely disguised.

We may refer the reader, by way of illustration, to Fig. 19, with this difference, that in the present case the right-hand packet, instead of being intermingled with the other, passes beneath it.

My reason for expatiating at such length upon the subject of false shuffles is, that each of those I have described possesses its special advantage, and that they are all indispensable in conjuring. There is, indeed, a very large number of these shuffles employed in the magic art. Every professor has at least one pet shuffle peculiar to himself. These "fancy" shuffles, however, being all based on the methods which I have above described, it is not necessary to go into further details respecting them.
SECTION III.

TO FORCE A CARD

A conjuror, offering the pack for a card to be drawn, must be able to cause the spectator, whether he will or no, to take such card as he (the performer) chooses. The doing this is called "forcing" a card.

It must be owned that the operation is one of some little difficulty, and demands considerable address, both mental and manual but after a reasonable amount of practice in the manoeuvre in question, the performer may be quite confident of complete success. Indeed, were it otherwise, the conjuror would often find himself in a very awkward position; for there are a great number of tricks in which it is indispensable that he should compel the drawing of certain given cards. If any one of the persons with whom he has to do could at pleasure resist the influences which the performer brings to bear upon him, the trick would have failed. For the credit of the magic art this must never be. The magician must run no risk of forfeiting the prestige of his mystic power.

I will now endeavour to describe this important sleight. I have already stated that the power of forcing a card demands a high degree of address, mental and physical. This will readily be understood when I remark that it is by no means enough to come forward and coolly present a particular card to a spectator in order to induce him to draw it; on the contrary, he must be so influenced that he may himself choose that particular card from the others, and may remain fully persuaded that he has simply followed his own free will and pleasure.

The kind of skill herein displayed may be likened to that employed in a fencing bout-you read the eyes of your adversary, you instinctively divine first his hesitation, then his resolve, indeed, his every thought, and with a skilful movement make yourself master of his will.

Let us, however, pass on to the practical demonstration of my theory.

Preparation for Forcing a Given Card.--1. After having placed the card which you desire to have drawn on the top of the pack,* you bring it (by means of the pass) to the middle, taking care to keep the little finger between the two portions of the pack, as shown in Fig. 15. (It is understood that these preliminary preparations must be made out of sight of the spectators, unless, indeed, the performer is expert enough to make them openly without detection.)

*Some performers force from the bottom of the pack. The mode above described is, however, preferable for many reasons.-ED.
The cards being thus arranged, before even spreading them out, step up to one of the spectators and say, as unconcernedly as possible--

"Will you have the kindness, sir, to take a card from this pack?"

(N.B.-It is well to say take, and not choose, though the latter word is frequently used. The word choose implies a liberty of action which it is better not to suggest too strongly.)

The spectator prepares to comply; he fixes his eyes on the cards, and seeing them scarcely spread, he puts forward a hesitating hand and then pauses, as though to beg you to make the matter easier to him. Matters having reached this stage, spread the cards a little fanwise, leaving the card you desire to force a shade more exposed than the rest, as in Fig. 20.

The slight additional surface thus shown will infallibly catch the eye of the spectator, and there is little doubt but that his thoughts will follow the direction of his eyes. It would, however, be a great mistake to put forward this card at once, and the so doing would very probably excite suspicion; accordingly, when the spectator moves his hand towards the pack, you should first pass rapidly in front of his fingers a dozen cards or so, as though offering them to him, and at the very moment when his finger and thumb advance for the purpose of taking some card or other, you so arrange that the forced card shall be precisely in position to be caught hold of. And then, in order to avoid any possible change of intention, the moment his fingers grip the card, you gently draw the pack away towards your own body.

To Force a Card with one Hand.--Skilful performers sometimes force a card with one hand only. To effect this, they offer the pack spread in the form of a fan, with the cards equidistant and pretty close together, but leaving the card which they wish drawn a little more exposed than the rest. The spectator is almost invariably influenced by this additional space. Both in this case and in the former all the cards of the pack should be held tightly, except the one to be forced. The spectator, not suspecting any special design on the part of the performer, and feeling a resistance, acquiesces, and takes the forced card, which he draws away more easily.

To Force a Card, the Performer not even Holding the Pack.--The influence of greater space in causing the choice to fall on the exposed card is so great, that if you spread the pack on a table with the cards equidistant, leaving, however, the card to be forced a shade more exposed than the others, and ask a spectator to take a card, he will inevitably take that particular one, which will have more especially caught his eye.

N.B.-In forcing a card, never address yourself to nervous persons, or to those whose
youth tends to make them uncertain in their choice. If you offer the pack, for instance, to a young girl, and ask her to take a card, she blushes, hesitates, gets nervous, puts forward an uncertain hand, tries to take the top card, or sometimes the bottom one, and when, spreading out the pack, you bring the card to be forced right in front of her fingers, she is afraid to take it for fear of putting you in a difficulty, and very often stops short altogether without having made a choice at all. In such a case even ill-will is really a smaller evil than good-will.

But if the worst comes to the worst, and you have not succeeded in forcing the desired card, has the trick failed? By no means. The adept in sleight-of-hand is fully armed against such a partial breakdown. Let us suppose, for instance, that the spectator has taken some other card than that which you desired. You have the card replaced in the middle of the pack, make the pass to bring it to the top, and "get sight" of it, as described previously. Then, in a half-serious, half-joking manner, you say:-

"Now see, madam, how conscientious I am. I think it only fair to tell you that when you put your card back in the pack, you did not conceal it carefully enough, and I saw what it was. It was the of "(you name the card). "Now I need not have told you this; but my conscience makes it a point of honour to do so. I scorn to take advantage of an accident." So saying, you again endeavour to force the card originally intended, either on the same or some other person.

This little incident, so far from being prejudicial to the trick, is generally found to heighten its effect. It is of course understood, in the case supposed, that the performer has strictly complied with Rule No. 5, which impresses on you never to inform the spectator beforehand what trick you are about to perform.
SECTION IV.

TO CHANGE A CARD

I. Modern Method

I know of nothing more surprising than the effect of a card neatly "changed."

The performer holds, with the very tips of his fingers, a card which he freely exhibits, yet in the very same instant this card is found changed to another.

The mode of performing this delicate operation is as follows:-

1. Take between the thumb and first finger of the right hand a card, which you show to the spectators, and which we will call No. 2, indicated in the figures (Figs. 21, 22) by two dots.

2. Hold, meanwhile, the rest of the pack in the left hand, taking care to allow the card which is to be changed for that which is in the right hand, to project a little. This latter card we will call No. 1 (indicated in the same figures by one dot).

3. In the course of your "patter" gently bring the right hand near to the left, and place card No. 2 on No. 1, as in Fig. 21.

4. Quickly seize both cards at once between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, and make them slide in opposite directions the one upon the other--i.e., so as to push No. 1 on to the top of the pack, while you at the same time draw away No. 2, as in Fig. 22.

5. The right hand, leaving card No. 1 on the top of the pack, carries away No. 1, and with it moves away from the pack.

These movements, which I have been obliged for the sake of clearness to analyse into their component elements, should be executed simultaneously, and with the swiftness of a flash of lightning.
Skilful performers, at the moment when the change has been made, instead of drawing the right hand back again from the pack, move away the left hand from the right, which completely disguises the operation.

The "change," well executed, is imperceptible, even to the most watchful eyes. In a words, it is made invisibly.
TO CHANGE A CARD

II. Second Method of Changing a Card (Old Method)

This method is much less subtle than the preceding, but, on the other hand, it is very much easier, which is probably the reason that it is adopted by a good many performers.

The necessary movement for this change is somewhat complicated, and requires to be covered by a certain amount of gesture. It is as well, in any case, to have practiced this method, which may be used with advantage under certain circumstances, as, for example, where we desire to change several cards for one; an exchange which cannot be effected by the preceding method.

It is performed as follows:-

1. Take in the right hand, between the first and second fingers, the card which you desire to change, and which we will call No. 1.
2. Holding the pack in the left hand between the thumb and forefinger, and keeping the other three fingers of that hand extended, leave between the first and middle fingers an opening forming, so to speak, a forceps ready to lay hold of the card, as in Fig 23.

It will be observed in the diagram that the card to be substituted, which is on the top of the pack, and which we will call No. 2, is pushed a little forward towards the right hand.
3. In the course of some gesture arising out of the observations you are making, lightly seize card No. 2 with the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, and
simultaneously place No. 1 beneath the pack, between the first and second fingers of the left hand.

This transposition made, the cards will be in the position shown in Fig. 24. But without the smallest interval, card No. 1, in order not to be noticeable, must be drawn beneath the other cards and be merged in the pack, as in Fig. 23.

![Image of card handling](image)

I have already remarked that, by means of this form of the change, it is possible to change several cards for one. This is a very simple matter. The cards to be changed, being collected between the fingers of the right hand, are exchanged for the single one, precisely as above described.
SECTION V.

TO PALM A CARD

I. First Method

In order to palm a card, you first hold, in the left hand, the card to be palmed, placed diagonally upon the others, and projecting a little towards the right as in Fig. 25.

The right hand is laid upon the card and carries it off, gripping it between the extremities of the four fingers and the thenar, or ball of the thumb—the performer assisting the fixing of the card in the right spot by pressing it into the palm with the middle finger of the left hand.

Being so held, the card is necessarily a little curved, as in Fig. 26.

The hand thus holding a card cannot be expected to appear graceful or natural it is well, therefore, when the circumstances permit, to disguise its rigidity by grasping the wand or any other article which compels you to close the hand. You may even, after having palmed the card, offer the pack with the same hand to a spectator and request him to shuffle. The expedient is a bold one, but is well adapted to lull suspicion.

It will be readily understood that several cards at once may be palmed in the same manner.

The reader may perhaps be somewhat astonished to find that it is possible to hold even a considerable number of cards concealed in the hand without their presence being at all noticeable; but he will be still more surprised when he is told that an adept in sleight-of-hand can, with the same hand in which the cards are hidden, cut the pack or offer it to be cut, hold a candlestick, and in the course of conversation, gesticulate with perfect freedom.
This method has an advantage over that last described, in the fact that the hand which palms the card need not be contracted, and that the stiffness of the hand can be more easily disguised, either by ordinary gesture, or by dropping the right arm naturally by the side of the body.* It may be described as follows:-

1. The cards being in the position indicated by Fig. 25 in the foregoing description, you remove the card by pressing it between the thumb and little finger of the right hand, as in Fig. 27

*If it is permissible to differ from so eminent an authority as M. Robert-Houdin, I venture to think that most performers will find the appearance of the hand more natural when the card is palmed by the first than when it is palmed by the second method. With a fairly large hand, the palming of a card should not cause the performer a moment's uneasiness. The main point is, not to be afraid of bending the card, which should form a complete semicircle, being again straightened by bending the ends upward in the act of placing it on the pack-ED.
For this "palm," the card to be palmed should be *underneath* the pack, separated from the other cards by the little finger of the left hand, as in the position indicated for making the pass. (See Fig. 15.)

Taking the pack by its upper end between the middle finger and thumb of the right hand, you separate it from the undermost card by drawing it forward out of the hand, as in Fig. 28.

The card which it is desired to retain remains (as shown in the figure) sufficiently behind the other cards to be concealed in the left hand; accordingly, when you take the pack by its upper extremity in handing it to some one to shuffle, you have only to press lightly with the thumb on the end of the card, in order to conceal it from all eyes, and to let fall the arm by the side of the body.

If the palm in this form is neatly executed, the movement appears as natural as possible.*

*I have never seen this method of palming used by English conjurors, and should imagine that it could scarcely be employed with confidence save with French cards, which, as the reader is probably aware, are very much smaller than those used in England. It is, moreover, very rare that it becomes necessary to palm the bottom card of the pack.--ED.

Among the different methods of palming above described, neither can be said to be superior to the others, each having its special advantages. It is for the conjuror to select among them that particular artifice which most facilitates the trick in hand.

This diversity of methods offers in addition the advantage of enabling the performer to throw the spectators off the scent by varying his mode of procedure.
SECTION VI.

TO REPLACE A PALMED CARD

The conjuror, having obtained possession of the cards which he has palmed, must be able, at any given moment, to replace them on the other cards. This operation is the simplest of all those which I have to describe.

Let us suppose, in the first place, that you palmed the cards at the moment when you handed the pack to be shuffled. You in this case take back the pack with the left hand, and place the palmed cards thereon in the act of bringing the right hand over it, as though merely to take it in that hand.

If the pack has been left on the table, the replacement of the cards becomes easier still, being effected spontaneously in the act of picking up the pack, or merely pushing it with the hand in which you hold the palmed cards. In this case, in the act of drawing the pack towards your own body, you replace the palmed cards thereon, taking care, however, to cover the operation with the full width of your hand.

In replacing a card palmed by the third method described in the preceding article, the pack itself, when you take it back with the right hand and thence pass it to the left, goes of its own accord, so to speak, to rejoin the palmed card.

Card sharpers make very skilful use of these methods at the games of Lansquenet, Baccarat, and Vingt-et-un, in order to introduce among the cards used "portées," or "hands," of cards so arranged as to insure their winning.

While on the subject of the above methods of replacing a card, we may also refer to what is called the introduction of a card. It often happens that, in the course of a performance, it become necessary for one reason or another to introduce a card into a person's pocket, or into some other portion of his clothing. The performer should strive to do this as easily and naturally as possible, and to give the idea that he goes to the pocket to take something out, and by no means to put anything in. The reader will find in the trick of the Four Aces an amusing illustration of the employment of this artifice.
SECTION VII.

TO GET SIGHT OF A CARD

It is often requisite to ascertain what a given card is, under the very eyes of, and yet unknown to, the spectators.

Suppose, for example, that you desire to know what a given card is in order to "force" it; or that you desire surreptitiously to look at a card which you have had drawn haphazard, and replaced in the pack. In such case you make use of the device which forms the subject of the present section. It is executed as follows:-

You slip the little finger under the card which you desire to know, then with extreme rapidity you open the pack at that point, and, with a swift glance, ascertain what the card is.*

* This description is hardly as precise as it might be. The upper half of the pack, terminating with the card in question is gripped between the third and little fingers, and by a slight extension of these fingers the opposite edge of the pack is made to open like a book. See Modern Magic, p. 39.--ED.

The necessary movement, quick as lightning, cannot possibly be perceived by the public, inasmuch as it is made while carelessly waving the hand about, and with the backs of the cards towards the spectators.
SECTION I.

THE CARD THOUGHT OF

The performance of this sleight requires not only great dexterity, but also a large amount of tact, and especially a great power of observation, as will be gathered from the description following:-

1. Select privately from the pack a card likely to catch the eye, the queen of spades, for instance, and place it on the top. (Some conjurors select for this purpose the king of spades, but this is ill-advised, a card of the highest rank being more likely to suggest some idea that you desire to influence the choice.)

2. Transfer this card by the pass to the middle of the pack, taking care to keep the little finger upon it, as shown in Fig. 15, in relation to the pass.

3. Draw near to one of the spectators, and holding the pack scarcely spread at all, ask him secretly to fix his choice on a card. (The expression to secretly fix his choice on a card is synonymous with the phrase to think of a card, but it is preferable in this instance, because it suggests to the spectator, in fixing his choice, to consult the pack rather than his own imagination.)

4. Under presence of showing him the cards, make them all pass one after the other before his eyes, sliding them one by one from the left hand to the right. This should be done so quickly that the spectator only sees confusedly the colour of the cards without distinguishing their form, and in such manner that each one as you show it may be immediately covered by that which follows it.

5. When you reach the queen of spades, whose position you know, thanks to your little finger, make an imperceptible pause at that card, then continue and pass on the rest of the cards into the right hand moving them as rapidly as possible. (For the position of the cards see Fig. 29).

The performer, looking over the tops of the cards as he presents them, follows every movement of the eyes of the spectator, and is thereby enabled to judge how far he is successful in his attempt at influencing the choice, as follows:-

If the spectator's eye has wandered in an uncertain manner until the arrival of the queen of spades, and from that instant, having caught sight of that card, takes no further note of the remainder of the pack,
you may rest assured that he has thought of
the queen of spades.

If on the other hand his attention, his uncertainty, or his indifference, as the case may be, are maintained to the last card, you may safely infer that he has made no choice whatever; in such case the chances are that he will seek in his own mind for some card which will in all probability not be that which you have presented for his choice, unless, indeed, the recollection of this particular card, the only one of which he has had a distinct view, should present itself, unconsciously, to his thoughts.

(N.B.-The performer should be careful to cover with his left hand the bottom card of the pack, which might otherwise catch the eye of the spectator, to the prejudice of the queen of spades.)

This artifice, used with skill and intelligence, almost always succeeds, and very marvellous results may be produced by its means.

To say, however, that an operation almost always succeeds, implies also that it may sometimes fail but as in conjuring a trick must always succeed, or at least appear to succeed, this sleight is supplemented by certain ways of escape, which in the event of a failure, render the trick just as surprising as if the performer had completely succeeded in getting the right card thought of the explanation of these expedients cannot, however, be well given save in connection with a complete trick, and we shall therefore postpone it to our chapter on card tricks, under the title of "the Card Thought Of."

There are other methods also of forcing the choice of a spectator; but, inasmuch as they are not specially applicable to card tricks, and, as on the other hand they form an essential element in certain tricks of a different character, I purpose to make them the subject of a special chapter.*

*This intention was never carried out.--ED.
 SECTION II.

 THE PASS, REVERSED

It is sometimes necessary, for certain tricks, to arrange the pack in such manner that it shall be divided into two portions, pretty nearly equal, with their faces turned inwards,--i.e., so that the two halves of the pack are face to face. Both ends of the pack thus show backs only.

This arrangement is produced in the act of making the pass, as follows:-At the moment when, in the course of that operation, the upper portion of the pack passes below the other, it is turned over in such manner that the faces of the two heaps are turned inwards, and placed the one on the other.

This arrangement is generally designed to supply the place of the pass in effecting a change. Suppose, for instance, that we have placed on the lower packet certain cards which we desire to produce at a given moment; we place the pack in the left hand towards the ends of the second and third fingers, and, waving the hand about in conversation, close it. This, causing the pack to turn over, brings the cards which were previously undermost, uppermost, and vice versâ.*

*For another, and, as it seems to me, a more artistic, method of turning over the pack, see Modern Magic, p. 37.--ED.
SECTION III.

TO SLIDE BACK A CARD

The object of this sleight is to make the spectator believe that you take the last or bottom card of the pack, while in reality you take the last but one. The necessary substitution is effected as follows:-

1. Hold the pack in the left hand, breadthwise, and show the spectators the lowest card, which we will suppose to be the ace of diamonds.

2. Turn the pack over, face downwards, and pass the middle finger under the pack, as though to draw towards you the card which you have just exhibited (see Fig. 30).

3. With this finger, which should be slightly moistened, push this last card back a little, and draw out the card next following. Fig. 30 shows the position of the hands and the cards as they would be seen if any one stooped down and looked beneath during the operation in order to see its working.

Some conjurors, instead of using the middle finger of the right hand to push back the last card, make use of the second and third fingers of the left hand, which are naturally just beneath the card.

This mode of substitution, which is intended as a makeshift for the "change" proper is very far inferior to the latter, both in point of naturalness and elegance. It has, however, the advantage that it is very much more easy to execute. It is here given only from a conscientious desire on my part to omit no expedient employed in relation to sleight-of-hand. However, every one is not bound to possess dexterity, and amateurs may be glad to make use of this makeshift until they succeed in attaining more perfect manual skill.
SECTION IV.

THE WIDE OR LONG CARD*

*Among English performers a card of this description is generally spoken of as a long card, whether its greater dimension be in length or breadth.--ED.

The title of this section of itself almost sufficiently indicates the nature of the artifice which I am about to describe. It consists of a card a shade wider than those you have in use; which, being introduced into a pack, indicates by its projection the point at which the performer must "cut." In other words it forms a kind of mark, serving to divide the pack at the particular spot arranged for the performance of a trick.

Instead of a "wide" card, a "long" card may be used in like manner. Indeed, there are cases in which both are simultaneously employed.

The wide card is also used in certain cases in order to force a spectator to cut at the point desired by the performer.

Biseauté or tapering cards may be ranked under the head of wide cards, inasmuch as they serve the same purpose. Supposing that all the cards are narrower by the thickness of a shilling at one end than at the other, it will be readily understood that if one or more of these cards are turned round (endways), they will project beyond the others, and will thus serve as a mark to facilitate their withdrawal from the pack.
SECTION V.

THE BRIDGE

The bridge is used to supply the place of the wide card. The effect is precisely the same, the fingers, instead of being influenced in cutting by the projecting edges of a card wider than the rest, being guided by an open space intentionally made half way down the pack.

The bridge is made as follows:-

1. Holding the pack in the left hand, by its middle, make it assume a curved form by bending it downwards with the right hand over the forefinger of the left.

2. Next grasp the upper half only of the pack, and bending it backward over the thumb of the left hand, which lies for the time being across it, give it a curve in the opposite direction to that of the lower half.

3. Having done this, next, by means of a false shuffle (the "fan," ) pass the upper packet beneath the lower, as though to shuffle the pack.

The curved portions are now brought face to face, and it is the space produced by these two curves which compels the cut to be made at that point rather than any other.
SECTION VI.
MARKED CARDS

It will hardly be believed that a single minute dot made on each of the cards of a piquet pack will enable the performer to distinguish them all and yet nothing can be more true.

Let us suppose that the pattern of the cards is composed of spots or any other shape, several times repeated, as is customary with designs of this character. These dots or other shapes are made use of to disguise the distinguishing mark of which we speak. Thus, for instance, the first large spot or pattern in the left-hand top corner may represent hearts, the second (proceeding downwards), diamonds, the third, clubs, and the fourth, spades. If we now add to one of these spots which are placed on the card as part of its pattern, another little spot, it will mark, according to the position in which it is placed, at once the value and the suit of the card.

Thus, this dot placed at the top of the larger spot, will represent an ace; turning a little to the right, a king; the third point will be a queen, the fourth a knave, and so on (in succession right round the larger point) down to the seven.*

*It will be remembered that the seven is the lowest card in a piquet pack, there being no twos, threes, fours, fives, or sixes.--ED.

It is also possible with a single scarcely perceptible point to indicate all the cards even in a white-backed pack, the only requirement being that the point shall be placed in different positions which the eye can readily distinguish. The method of proceeding is as follows:-

We must imagine the card divided into eight portions in the direction of its shorter diameter, and its upper part into four similar portions in the direction of its longer diameter, starting from its left-hand top corner. The former of these divisions will indicate the value of the cards, the latter their respective suits. The distinguishing mark of the card is placed at the point of intersection of those two of these divisions to which it belongs, as will be seen in Fig. 31.

At first sight it may perhaps seem somewhat difficult to ascertain with certainty the divisions to which an isolated point on the back of a card belongs. If, however, a moderate amount of attention is used, it will quickly be perceived that the point
which I have placed by way of illustration on the card represented by Fig. 31 cannot possibly belong either to the second or fourth vertical divisions, but clearly belongs to the third; and by a similar calculation it will be seen that the same point belongs horizontally to the second division. It will therefore represent the queen of diamonds.

It will be understood that the mark must be repeated in a corresponding position at the opposite end of the card, so that it may be visible whichever end of the card may be uppermost.

The mention of this mode of marking cards always recalls to my mind the conjuror who communicated it to me. This professor, named Lacaze, had so keen an eye, that he could discover at the distance of more than a yard, and upon cards of a complex pattern, a mark which ordinary eyesight could scarcely distinguish upon close examination, even when its position was known. In his hands, this expedient, which he applied with great ingenuity, produced the most marvellous results.

Lacaze built in 1847 an elegant little theatre in the *Champs Elysées*, just opposite the Circus, for the purpose of his performances. It was in this house that the *Bouffes Parisiens* originated.
SECTION VII

CARDS ARRANGED IN A GIVEN ORDER
(Le Chapelet)

The Chapelet* is a certain order of the cards, arranged according to the words of a special formula which the performer learns by heart. In other words it is a kind of memoria technica serving to recall a certain arrangement of the cards. The easiest formulas to remember are those which present to the mind a sentence or a definite idea. The one which I arranged for my own use was as follows:-

*Literally, necklace or rosary. There is no corresponding name among English conjurors, though packs arranged in a given order are constantly used.--ED.

Le roi dix-huit ne valait pas ses dames.
Roi, dix, huit, neuf, valet, as, sept, dame,

signifying in English, king, ten, eight, nine, knave, ace, seven, queen.

These cards are arranged according to a given succession of the suits, as, for instance, spade, heart, club, diamond. But at the close of the formula, after the queen, instead of putting the king of the suit next following, you let the king and queen be of the same suit. The reason is clear. You began with the king of spades, and finished with the queen of diamonds; so to follow implicitly the order of the suits you would need a second king of spades, and there being only one in the pack, you are driven to the expedient to which I have referred. The following example will give a clearer idea of the arrangement of the cards:-

Proper Order of a Piquet Pack

1. King of spades
2. Ten of hearts
3. Eight of clubs
4. Nine of diamonds
5. Knave of spades
6. Ace of hearts
7. Seven of clubs
8. Queen of diamonds
9. King of diamonds
10. Ten of spades
11. Eight of hearts
12. Nine of clubs
13. Knave of diamonds
14. Nine of clubs
15. Nine of clubs
16. Nine of clubs
17. King of clubs
18. Ten of diamonds
19. Eight of spades
20. Nine of hearts
21. Knave of clubs
22. Ace of diamonds
23. Seven of spades
24. Queen of hearts
25. King of hearts
26. Ten of clubs
27. Eight of diamonds
28. Nine of spades
29. Knave of clubs
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14. Ace of spades</th>
<th>30. Ace of hearts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. Seven of hearts</td>
<td>31. Seven of diamonds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Queen of clubs</td>
<td>32. Queen of spades</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be remarked that in arrangements of this kind no amount of mere cutting, however often repeated, makes the least change in the relative position of the cards.
SECTION VIII.

TO CHANGE ONE PACK FOR ANOTHER

It sometimes happens that the conjuror has occasion to secretly change one pack of cards for another. This substitution is effected as follows:-

He should for this purpose be provided with a special pocket, called in French a finette, at the back of his trousers, in which is beforehand placed the pack which he proposes to substitute for the one which he holds in his hand.*

*The reader will find fuller particulars of the finette in Robert-Houdin's Tricheries des Grecs. For the benefit of those who may not have the opportunity of referring to the work in question, I may state that the finette is a pocket about three inches square, placed just below the waistband of the trousers at the back, and opening vertically towards the right. The pack is inserted into this pocket horizontally, nearly half of its length projecting, so as to be readily caught hold of.--ED.

At a favourable moment, while he keeps the attention of the spectators employed by his remarks, he places his hand on his hip, as though merely resting for an instant from his manipulations, and secretly lets fall the pack he has been using into the profonde, and takes the other from the finette, after which he brings the hand back to its original position on the hip.

These two movements, which in practice form one only, are the less noticeable as being generally executed under cover of gestures which appear to be the natural accompaniment of the remarks of the performer.

Where it is desired to exchange a pack placed upon a table, that object may be effected as follows:-

1. Hold the prepared pack palmed in the right hand, after the manner explained at previously. (Fig. 27.)

2. Take the pack from the table in the left hand, as though to examine it, and bring the other pack over it by placing the two hands one above the other. Being thus hidden, the two packs for the time being form but one.

3. Bring the lower pack uppermost by means of the "pass", and palm it off after the manner described previously.

4. Replace on the table, with an appearance of perfect unconcern, the pack which is now in the left hand, and get rid of the other pack by dropping it into the profonde.

I think I have now described every process incidental to the performance of card tricks,
even of the most elaborate character. Those which still remain to be explained being of quite secondary utility, I shall content myself with merely giving their names, and referring the reader for their details to my work entitled *Les Tricheries des Grecs,* in which these special artifices are described with the utmost minuteness. They are:

The pass-cut (*le passe-coupe*); the pass-over (*l'enjambage*); the bent card (*la carte tuilée*); the box for the sleeve; the "dove-tail" shuffle; the cards which will and will not slide (*les cartes adhérentes ou glissantes*); shaded cards; cards out of square; pricked cards; cards marked with the nail (*cartes morfilées*); bent cards (*les cartes ondulées*); fancy-backed cards, &c.

*An English translation of this book, under the title of *The Sharper Detected and Exposed,* is published by Messrs. Chapman & Hall.*-ED.
ORNAMENTAL SLEIGHTS

SECTION I.

TO MAKE THE PASS WITH ONE HAND

The single-handed pass is rarely used in the performance of card tricks, being generally exhibited merely as a specimen of digital dexterity. For this reason I have placed it in the category of ornamental sleights.

There are many methods of making the pass with one hand. I have selected three of the best and most frequently used, and have discarded the rest; for otherwise, this sleight demanding rather minute description, I should fear to devote too great a space to a subject which is but of secondary utility.

Old Method
New Method
The Single-Handed Pass Made with the Tips of the Fingers
I.

The Single-Handed Pass
Old Method

1. Holding the pack in the left hand, divide it by means of the thumb and second and third fingers, into two portions (see Fig. 32.)

2. Pass the first and fourth fingers below the lower packet, so as to be able to clip this packet between these two fingers and the two others, the right hand remaining, unemployed upon the pack.

3. Matters being as above described, the upper packet being held up by the thumb, lift the lower packet with the four fingers, which you extend for that purpose as in Fig. 33.

4. Let fall the upper packet into the hollow of the hand, and cover it with the lower packet, taking care to draw the thumb aside, so as to facilitate the change of position.

5. Bring back the first and fourth fingers to the top of the pack, and press the cards together in your hand so as to square up the edges.

This mode of making the pass, though described in every treatise on conjuring, and used by a great many performers, is nevertheless very imperfect. It is subject, in particular, to the following drawbacks:- It cannot be used by persons with short fingers; it spoils the cards by bending them out of shape; and it is noisy in execution.
II.

The Single-Handed Pass
New Method

This mode of making the pass has great advantages over that last described; it is elegant, is executed noiselessly and all but invisibly, and in addition, it enables the performer to see the bottom card without the spectators having any suspicion that he does so.

The movement is in truth the same as the two-handed pass, but executed with one hand only. It is performed as follows: -

1. As in the case of the two-handed pass, hold the pack in the left hand and divide it into two parts by means of the little finger, as in Fig. 15, but instead of keeping the three other fingers on the cards, as in that figure, extend the forefinger close to the upper end of the pack, as in Fig. 34.

2. With the aid of the little finger, gently turn over the upper packet on to the second and third fingers (see Fig. 35), and at the same moment take the corner of the lower packet between the thumb and root of the forefinger so as to lift it, and so separate it from the other portion.

3. Having proceeded so far, you have only to close the second and third fingers in order to pass the upper packet beneath the lower one.

It is scarcely necessary to remark that the moment the upper packet has passed below the other, you square up the cards so that the pack may assume the appearance shown in Fig. 34.

The operation above described is unquestionably very difficult, but impracticable though it may appear at the outset, the hands ultimately grow accustomed to the niceties of the movement, and after a reasonable amount of practice, the student finds that he has overcome the difficulty.

As I have already remarked, the pass above described is precisely the same as the tug-handed pass, and it consequently has the advantage of rendering the latter much more easy to execute when two hands are employed instead of one.
III.

The Single-Handed Pass made with the Tips of the Fingers

1. Take the pack in the right hand, between the thumb and forefinger towards the upper part of the cards, as in Fig. 36.

   The second and fourth finger are, as shown in the figure, bent behind the pack, while the third finger remains extended ready to perform its duty, for upon this particular finger the greater part of the operation rests. In fact, the very moment that you exhibit the cards to the spectators, as in the figure, you commence the following manipulation:-

   1. Secretly introduce the third finger between the cards so as to divide them into two pretty nearly equal portions.
   2. Sharply press the lower packet against the second and fourth fingers, which are behind it.
   3. As soon as the pack is fairly clipped, as in a forceps, between the three last-mentioned fingers, slightly raise the front packet so that the forefinger which holds it may offer no obstacle to the outward passage of the hinder cards, and at the same moment compel the two packets to move simultaneously in opposite directions, the one to the right, the other to the left.

   (In order that the reader may be better enabled to comprehend this movement, we give a sketch of it in Fig. 37. It will be observed that the front packet is held between the forefinger and thumb, while the hindmost is clipped between the third and the two other fingers-viz., the middle and fourth fingers.)

4. Quickly join the two packets in one, introducing what was originally the front packet between the other packet and the two fingers which are below it, as in...
Fig. 38.

5. This done, remove the first finger and thumb, and replace them in their original position, as in Fig. 36.

It will, perhaps, scarcely be believed that these different movements, so numerous and so complicated in appearance, can be executed as to form one only, and so as to be practically invisible. But it should at the same time be mentioned that this pass, however dexterously executed, would always be perceptible, but that it is covered by a very natural movement. After having shown the front card, as in Fig. 36, you place the pack either in the left hand or on the table, and in the course of the transit the pass is made; this movement of the pack from place to place rendering the manipulation invisible.*

*This pass is most conveniently used with fifteen or sixteen cards only (about half of the piquet pack), and for passing a single card, or some very small number of cards, say four, from back to front. It may be used either with the right or left hand. As the author has not given, among the tricks which follow, any instance of its use, I quote by way of illustration the following passage from the excellent series of papers on "Sleight-of-Hand" by Edwin Sachs (published at the Bazaar Office, 3a, Wellington Street, Strand):

"Place secretly at the bottom of the pack" (of fourteen or fifteen cards) "three of any denomination of card, say the fours. At the front place the other four, which suppose to be the four of clubs, and request one of the audience to say into which other suit the card shall change. You will know the order in which the three fours at the back are placed, so you will only have to place the third finger beneath the one named and pass it to the front. If it is the actual top card, you will bring it forward alone: but if it is the second or third, those above it must come forward as well. As this pass cannot be effected without noise, it is always best to pretend to pass the card chosen as the one into which the original four is to change, from some cards held in the other hand. Ruffle these cards with the thumb, and say, "Did you not hear it go?" The slight noise heard will be accounted for by the cards passing from one pack to the other....

But the best trick performed by means of this pass is by the aid of two duplicate cards, say the knave of clubs and the ace of hearts. A pack must be held in each hand. At the top of the right-hand pack put the ace, and at the bottom the knave. At the top of the left-hand pack put the knave, and at the bottom the ace. The cards at the top are placed there secretly, those at the bottom openly before the audience. Hold the faces of the packs towards the audience, and calling particular attention to the position of the cards, say that you will make them change places. Turn the packs face downwards with a flourish executing the pass with both hands, saying, 'Presto! Pass! Did not you see them go?' On holding the cards up again, it will be seen that the knave has gone over to the left-hand pack, and the ace to the right-hand one."--ED.
The Single-Handed Pass made with the Tips of the Fingers
SECTION II.

TO CHANGE A CARD WITH ONE HAND

This is an extremely elegant piece of manipulation; but must be considered rather as a flourish than as of practical utility. However skilfully it is executed, it is impossible to disguise the operation. For this reason, conjurors, so far from affecting to make any mystery about it, rather draw attention to their elegant execution of the movement.

1. Hold the pack in the left hand, the thumb across the pack, and the other fingers half extended, as in Fig. 39.

2. Push the top card off the pack with the thumb until it rests on the middle finger.

3. In the course of its return movement, let the thumb rest on the second card so as to draw it back and get it clear of the first.

4. This second card in drawing back tips up a little, and in rising makes an opening into which you introduce the top card by the aid of the middle finger, as in Fig. 40.

Although it is scarcely good manners to moisten the fingers with the mouth, it is nevertheless indispensable to have recourse to this extreme measure for the execution of this sleight, unless, indeed, one's fingers are naturally moist. The performer should, however, take care so to do this as not to be perceived by the spectators.

In the actual performance of a trick, it is better to use, instead of this elegant change, the easy and natural two-handed change which we have described previously.
SECTION III.

TO RUFFLE THE CARDS

The object of this sleight is to produce with the cards a slight crackling sound, which is made to accompany certain tricks, and assists in giving your illusions an appearance of reality. If it is necessary, for example, to simulate the passage of a card from one place to another, you make the "ruffle" at the same moment that you pronounce the mystic word "Pass!"

The crackling sound in question may be produced as follows:-

1. Hold the cards in the left hand, with the thumb across the back.
2. Double the forefinger underneath the pack, and with the tip of the middle finger, which rests on the cards, bend them one after the other towards the interior of the hand. As the cards again escape, by reason of their natural elasticity, they will produce a sort of prolonged crackle (see Fig. 41).

If it is desired to produce this sound with a single card, you hold the card in the right hand between the forefinger and thumb, then, resting the other three fingers of the same hand on this finger, you let them escape in rapid succession so as to fall on the card, and produce by their triple impact the sound in question."

*For other modes of producing the "ruffle" see Modern Magic, p. 27.--ED.
SECTION IV.

TO THROW A CARD

Nothing produces a more marked impression of a conjuror's dexterity than to see so light and airy an object as a card shot from the hand with the speed of an arrow, and impelled into the most distant corners of a spacious hall.

The performance of this sleight depends upon a certain knack, by no means easy to explain in words. The student will sometimes seek long and vainly to acquire it, and when at last it is acquired, will feel quite surprised that so small a matter should have given him so much trouble. We will endeavour, at any rate, to describe the necessary movement.

1. Take the card which you desire to throw, and hold it at about half its width and a quarter of its length between the first and second fingers of the right hand (Fig. 42).

2. Drawing back the wrist towards the left breast, extend the arm smartly, at the same time letting go the card in the direction in which you desire to impel it. But before you let it leave the hand, you impart to it, by a sort of backward jerk of the hand, a spinning motion, which aids its flight, and without which, indeed, it would fall at your feel.

By the aid of this sleight you may perform a little incidental trick, which has a very pretty effect. You tell the company that the cards thus impelled into space are so obedient that they will come back if you call them, and you proceed to give an illustration of the fact.

To obtain the above result, you proceed as already stated, but instead of impelling the card to any great distance, you simply throw it a yard or two from you, at the same time imparting to it with the hand a sort of "return" movement, similar to that which one gives a child's hoop, in order to make it run back as soon as it has reached the limit of its impulsion.

In order to aid this return, you start the card diagonally, at an upward angle of about 45 degrees. If this be done, when the card reaches the end of its course, its inclined plane revolving on its own axis in the air, helps to bring it back again to its starting point.
bring the trick to a neat conclusion, you catch the card with the tips of the fingers.

I have seen this trick very skilfully performed by a Hungarian conjuror named Well.

It is the more important to have practiced the accomplishment of throwing cards, inasmuch as the performer will frequently find it useful in conjuring entertainments for distributing to the spectators little presents in the form of newspapers, memorandum books, pamphlets, &c. I remember that on one Occasion, when performing in the theatre at Strasbourg, I threw one of the little sketch-books from my Horn of Plenty, right across the chandelier, to the spectators in the upper gallery, and gained tremendous applause for the boldness of the feat.
SECTION V.

TO SPRING THE CARDS FROM HAND TO HAND.

(La rayonnement)

This sleight is, beyond question, the most brilliant of all the flourishes performed with a pack of cards. Its object is to pass all the cards from the one hand into the other, making them leap one by one over the interval between the two hands. The wider this interval, the greater the difficulty. The effect is produced as follows:--

1. Hold the pack lengthwise between the thumb and the second and third fingers of the right hand, and bend it, with the convex side towards the inside of the hand. Being thus held, the pack naturally tends to spring from the fingers.

2. Place the left hand at some little distance from the right, and continuing the pressure on the pack, the cards escape one by one, and fly into the left hand. An inspection of Fig. 43 will render my explanation perfectly clear.

The thicker the cards, the greater the impulse caused by their resistance, and the greater, as a natural consequence, will be the distance that they can be made to fly. Conjurors who have practiced this sleight make the cards spring in this manner over a space of a foot to eighteen inches But by the use of a little artifice, you may (in appearance) greatly increase this distance. To produce this effect, let both arms, while employed as above, describe an arc of a circle, coming to an end simultaneously with the escape of the last card from the right hand.

This piece of sleight-of-hand may be imitated with very pretty effect, but a prepared pack of cards is necessary, which to my mind is a drawback. This, however, is a matter
of opinion. The trick is prepared and executed as follows:-

**Preparation of the Pack.**--You fasten together the fifty-two cards of a full pack, gluing their ends together in such manner that the first and second are joined by their upper ends, the second and third by their lower ends, the third to the fourth by their upper ends, and so on, throughout.

**Execution of the Trick.**--The pack being in the left hand, if you keep hold of the lowest card while the right hand lifts the top one perpendicularly up-wards, this last mentioned card will draw all the others after it in the form of a zigzag chain of a yard or so in length. Forthwith, and without letting go, you press back the cards one upon another, when the pack will be brought together again as at first.

These two movements, which should be executed with extreme quickness, give the spectator no chance of detecting the artifice employed, and the trick is naturally put down to the credit of the performer's dexterity, inasmuch as it exactly resembles in effect the springing of the cards above described.

The junction of the cards at their ends should be pretty substantial. The slip which joins them at each end may be a third of an inch wide, or there-about. Thick cards are better adapted for this purpose than thin ones.
SECTION VI.

THE CARDS SIMULTANEously TURNED OVER

You lay a pack of cards on the table, and spread them out so as to form a row of considerable length, you place one finger under the last card, and turn it over, when all the other cards turn over also.

The manner of executing this sleight is as follows:-

1. Having placed the pack on the table, towards your right, spread the cards with a swift movement, pressing slightly on the top card, and pushing them towards the left.

2. Slip the forefinger of the right hand under the last card, and turn it over, taking care that the finger shall follow the direction in which the rest of the pack lies. This movement causes the whole of the other cards to turn over.

In order to ensure perfect success in the execution of the above flourish, it is desirable--

1. That the table at which you perform be covered with a cloth, the friction of the cloth causing the cards to work more steadily.

2. That the cards be spread lengthways in such manner that pretty nearly two-thirds of the first card are covered by the second, and so on with the remainder. The more completely each card is covered by its neighbour, the more certain, though the less surprising, is the effect.

If the cards are not disarranged by the operation, it may be repeated from the opposite end.

This sleight may be introduced, with very good effect, as follows:-In spreading out the pack on the table to show the company that it is quite unprepared, you place it as above described, and turning it over twice, you remark, "You see that there is no preparation about the cards, either on this side.... or yet on this."

This flourish, neatly executed, has an extremely pretty effect.
SECTION VII.

TO PICK UP AN OUTSPREAD PACK OF CARDS

As in the case of the sleight last described, you lay the pack on the table towards your right hand, and spread it with a sweep of the hand into an arc of a circle, directing the movement toward the left, just as, in fact, is done in drawing cards for partners at the game of whist. Then slipping the right hand under the first card, you slide it quickly under all the others in succession, following the curve of the pack. The cards are thereby all brought into that hand, and are thus gathered up at one stroke.

The mode of laying out the cards differs from that last described in the fact that in that instance they were spread out lengthways, in this sideways.
TRICKS WITH CARDS

I. **CLAIRVOYANCE BY TOUCH**.--A Card having been secretly chosen, to Shuffle it well with the rest; to place the Pack in the Pocket of a Spectator, and to produce therefrom the Chosen Card after a given number (fixed by the Audience) of other Cards.

II. **MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN**.--To cause Three Cards to Leave the Hands of One Person, and Pass into those of Another, without yourself going near either of them.

III. **THE CARDS PASSING UP THE SLEEVE**.--To allow a Card to be Drawn, and having thoroughly Shuffled it with the rest, to make it Appear inside your Vest at any given Number, making all the Cards Pass in succession up your sleeve.

IV. **THE CARDS MADE LARGER AND SMALLER**.--(Sequel to the "Cards passing up the Sleeve.") With any Pack, to Cause the Cards to Increase to an extraordinary Size; then to make them Smaller, and after having Reduced them to very minute dimensions, to make them Disappear altogether.

V. **THE LADIES LOOKING GLASS**.--Eight Cards having been Chosen by different Persons, to have them Replaced in the Pack, and the Pack well Shuffled; then after having Shown that the Cards are neither at Top nor Bottom, to cause them by a slight Movement successively to take those Positions.

VI. **THE SYMPATHETIC CARDS**.--Two Packs of Cards having been placed upon a Table, and Two of the Spectators having secretly withdrawn One Card from each, to cause both Cards to be identical, although the Performer has remained throughout at a distance from the Table.

VII. **THE ELECTRIFIED CARDS**.--Four Cards having been Drawn, to Shuffle them well with the rest, and having placed them in a small Case, to cause them to Rise therefrom at the Command of the Spectators.

VIII. **THE POWER OF THE WILL**.--Four Cards having been freely Chosen, Replaced in the Pack, and Shuffled, to hold up all the Cards in the Hand, and by the Power of the Will, to cause the four Chosen Cards to rise in turn from the Pack.

IX. **THE MESMERISED CARDS**.--Having had Three Cards Drawn, Replaced, and Shuffled with the rest, to place the Pack in a Tumbler, and to Make such Cards Rise out of the Pack at Command, under the very eyes of the Spectators.

X. **THE METAMORPHOSES**.--Four Cards having been Selected from a Pack; to make one of them Change successively into each of the three others.

XI. **A MAGICAL TRANSFORMATION**.--To Cause the ACe of Spades to Change Visibly into the Queen of Hearts.
XII. **THE CARD THOUGHT OF**.--A Card having been thought of by a Spectator, to Cause another Card Chosen from the Pack by another of the Company to be the Very One which was Mentally Selected.

XIII. **THOUGHT ANTICIPATED**.--To Place the first Card that Comes to Hand on a Table, and to Predict that whatever be the Card another Spectator may Please to Think of, such Card shall be identical both in Suit and Value with that which you have previously Removed from the Pack.

XIV. **THE THOUGHTS OF TWO PERSONS ANTICIPATED**.--To Cause a Card Secretly Thought of by one Person to Appear at such Number in the Pack as another Spectator may Choose at pleasure.

XV. **THE FOUR ACES**.--To Make the Four Aces Travel to different Parts of the Pack, to Transform them into other Cards, and Cause them to Multiply to an unlimited extent.

XVI. **THE CARD IN THE POCKET-BOOK**.--To have a Card freely chosen from a Piquet Pack; marked with a Pencil and replaced in the Pack; to hand the Cards to be Shuffled, and while the Spectator is still Shuffling, to take a Pocket-Book out of one's own Coat Pocket, and show that the Marked Card has already passed into such Pocket-Book.

XVII. **NOW!**.--To have three Cards drawn by three different Persons, and replaced in the Pack; then to Cause these Cards to appear at such Numbers as may be Chosen.

XVIII. **THE FLYING ACES AND KINGS**.--The four Kings having been placed under a Hat, to make them come from thence into your Hand, while you send in their place four Aces which you have just shown to the Company.

XIX. **THE PROTEAN PACK OF CARDS**.--Three Cards having been drawn by three different Persons and replaced in the Pack, to cause the Pack to Change again and again into Thirty-two Cards of the same kind as those which were drawn.
SECTION VIII.
TRICKS WITH CARDS

I.
CLAIRVOYANCE BY TOUCH

A Card having been secretly chosen, to Shuffle it well with the rest; to place the Pack in the Pocket of a Spectator, and to produce therefrom the Chosen Card after a given number (fixed by the Audience) of other Cards.

This is a trick which, though composed of very simple elements, always produces a pleasing effect. It is performed as follows:-

1. Offer the pack to some person, and ask him to select a card at his pleasure.
2. As soon as the pack is returned to you, divide it into two portions, have the card replaced between them, and get sight of it.
3. Make the pass so as to bring the card to the top of the pack.
4. Make a false shuffle, leaving the card at its termination still on the top of the pack. (You may however, if preferred, place it second, so as to be able to show that the chosen card is neither at top or bottom.)
5. Ask a spectator to permit you to place the pack in the breast-pocket of his coat, previously emptied for that purpose.

The pack being placed in a vertical position in the pocket, you will have no difficulty in knowing on which side is the top, and on which side the bottom of the pack.

6. When, upon your request, the audience have decided upon the number at which you are to produce the card, it is of course perfectly easy for you to take cards from the bottom of the pack until you reach one short of the given number, finally producing the card which you placed first or second from the top, as above described.

The bare technical explanation which I have above given imparts to the trick an appearance of simplicity which may perhaps prejudice the reader against it. The generality of people are not aware that conjuring tricks are just what the performer makes them, and that very often the most simple illusion may, by force of mise en scène and appropriate "patter," be made to assume a very imposing appearance, as I have already shown in relation to coin tricks. I will now give a further illustration of this transformation of a trick by presenting the above illusion as it should in reality be
"Ladies and gentlemen, I shall commence my conjuring performance by a trick with which sleight-of-hand has nothing whatever to do." (See General Principles, No 9.) "I propose simply to show you the extraordinary degree of sensibility, discernment, nay, even intelligence which may be imparted to the sense of touch.

"The senses, as you are aware, gentlemen, are the various faculties by the aid of which the mind is placed in communication with the external universe.

"We possess five senses—sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste. In the natural condition of things, each of these senses enjoys only one faculty. But when the powers of magic are brought to bear, the case is widely altered; the five senses, concentrating their perceptions on one only of their number—touch, for example—we can see, hear, smell, taste, and touch with the tips of the fingers. "Then continue à la cantonade "Don't laugh, gentlemen, I beg. Nothing can be more serious than what I am telling you, and I venture to hope that in a few moments you will regard the curious fact which I have just mentioned as fully established.

"Here is a sealed pack of cards, which I have, as a necessary preliminary, purified from the soil of contact with the manufacturer's hands. I open it carefully, and ask you, madam, to do me the favour to take from it whatever card you please. Be kind enough to hold the card for a moment in your hands, so as to imbue it, so to speak, with the mesmeric influence of your touch; then replace it in the middle of the pack.

"In order to exclude all idea of sleight-of-hand, I will now thoroughly shuffle the cards, after which, as a satisfaction to my own mind, allow me to show you that the card is neither at top nor at bottom, and consequently that it occupies in the pack whatever position chance may have given it.

"Will one of you gentlemen be kind enough to empty the breast pocket of his coat, and permit me to place the pack there." (This is done.) "Now, the cards being placed in perfect darkness, I shall proceed, by the aid of the five-fold perception which I have just mentioned, to distinguish with my fingers only, the card which that lady drew. In order to make the experiment still more difficult, I will only produce the card at such number as you your-selves may choose. What number do you fix on?" (We will suppose that "eight" is the answer.)

"Eight, so be it! Then seven times in succession I must avoid taking the lady's card, and produce it at the eighth attempt, neither more or less.
"To begin, then. Here is one card." (You take out the last card, taking care, however, not to show what it is, as the audience have just before seen it.) "Now I will take out another. What is this card, by the way?* The ten of spades, I fancy." This card is the last but one, which you secretly took note of in showing the top and bottom cards. You produce it, and show that it is really the card which you stated. You then produce five other cards in succession, without, however, showing what they are.

*"Oh, mais! quelle est donc cette carte qui me pique ainsi? ....Tiens, je ne m'étonne plus, c'est le dix de pique." This mild little joke is unavoidable sacrificed in the translation.--ED.

"Now let us look for the lady's card. I fancy I have it! Before I take it out, I will try to read it with my little finger, which is the cleverest of the five. Yes! It is not a small card, it is not a club, nor yet a spade, nor yet a diamond. It is the king of "(You take the card out face downwards, so that it cannot be seen what it is.) "Be kind enough, madam, to finish naming the card yourself before I show it, and we shall see whether my little finger has been correct in its calculations."

"The king of hearts."

"You see, madam, the card I have taken out is really the king of hearts. Be kind enough, sir, to take the pack out of your pocket, and ascertain for yourself that the experiment has really been performed precisely as I have stated."

"
II.

MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN

To cause Three Cards to Leave the Hands of One Person, and Pass into those of Another, without yourself going near either of them.

This is a trick which I can specially recommend to conjurors as producing an extraordinary illusion. The modifications which I have made in it give it an entirely new effect.

1. Before beginning the trick, **palm** and keep hidden in your hand three cards, alike in colour and pattern with the pack which you intend to use.

2. Place on the table a pack of cards, still in the government wrapper. Invite a spectator to step forward, and say to him, "Will you be good enough, sir, to open that pack of cards, and see if the manufacturer has given us the proper number. How many do you make them? Thirty-two?* Good! Now be kind enough to place the pack on the table, and cut it into two pretty nearly equal portions... Just the thing! Now choose which you please of these two heaps. This one? Very good." (You push aside the other heap with the back of the left hand.) "Now, please take the packet you have chosen, and count, one by one on the table, the cards it contains... How many are there? Fifteen? A very favourable number for our experiment." (The number chosen, whatever it be, must always be declared favourable--the remark being merely made to occupy the attention of the spectators.) "Now be good enough to take these fifteen cards in your own hands."

*It is assumed throughout that the performer uses a piquet pack.--ED.

3. As you pronounce the last words, you place on the cards in question the three palmed cards, at the same time giving the cards a push with the hand towards the spectator, as though to place the cards nearer to him and farther from yourself.

4. Pick up the other packet and count the cards thereof aloud, letting them fall one by one on the table. "Seventeen," you say, as you reach the last one, "quite correct; seventeen which I have here, and fifteen which this gentleman is holding, make exactly thirty-two."

5. Pick up the cards of the heap on the table, and in the act of stepping forward to some one of the company, **palm** off three cards, and say--

"Will you have the kindness, madam, to hold these seventeen cards for a moment in your hands?" (You say **seventeen** cards; but there are, of course, in reality only fourteen left in the packet.)

6. In returning to your table, get rid of the three palmed cards, by letting them fall
either upon the servante or into the profonde.

"I am about," you continue, "to attempt an operation, I won't say of a diabolical character because I don't wish to frighten any one; but which at any rate is completely out of the common order of things.

"Each of you, gentlemen, will remember the three mystic words which Belshazzar saw written on the wall in letters of fire at his famous Feast. Well, those are the words which I shall use in the performance of my cabalistic operation.

"As I pronounce each of those words I shall strike a blow upon the table, and at each word one card will leave this lady's hands, and go to join the other fifteen cards, which that gentleman has in his possession. But I should tell you, gentlemen, that in order to ensure the success of the experiment, one half at least of the spectators must repeat with me (mentally, be it understood), the three magic words.

"I begin--'Mene! Tekel! Upharsin!'"--giving at each word a rap with the wand on the table.

"The experiment is a complete success; for I observed two scarcely perceptible movements of the hands, indicating the departure and arrival of the flying cards. Before we proceed further, however, let us be certain of the facts. Of the thirty-two cards, there were seventeen in this lady's hands, and fifteen in the care of that gentleman. That is so, I think?.... Be kind enough, sir, once more to ascertain the number you hold, and count, one by one on the table, your heap of cards. How many have you now?"

"Eighteen."

"Just as it should be! You had fifteen, and three more came to you, which make eighteen. And you, madam, how many cards have you left?"

"Fourteen."

"It could not be otherwise. You had seventeen; three have quitted your hands; there must necessarily be fourteen left."

The verification of the number of the cards showing that the two heaps form a complete pack, seems to exclude all idea of palming off or adding cards. To prevent any one turning over the pack and perceiving that there are duplicate cards, proceed at once to some other trick.*

*Even this remote risk may be avoided, as follows:-Let the three bottom cards at starting be the same as the three palmed cards. After the pack has been counted (the order of the cards being thereby reversed) these three cards will be on the top. The pack being cut, give the other half to the spectator, and after they are counted, add the palmed cards to these. In counting the other heap yourself, turn each card face upwards on the table, so as to retain their order. The three special cards will consequently be still left at the top, and being palmed off in due course, there will be no possibility of discovery.--ED.
III.
THE CARDS PASSING UP THE SLEEVE

To allow a Card to be Drawn, and having thoroughly Shuffled it with the rest, to make it appear inside your Vest at any given Number, making all the Cards Pass in succession up your Sleeve.

1. Offer a pack of cards to a spectator, with a request that he will choose one.
2. Have the card replaced in the middle of the pack, and make the pass, so as to bring the chosen card to the top.
3. Make a false shuffle, and leave the card in the same place, though producing the impression that you no longer know where it is.
4. Palm off about a dozen cards from the top of the pack, and keep them in your right hand, assuming an easy offhand manner.
5. Then, addressing yourself to the person who selected the card, "Now, sir," you remark, "I am about to show you a curious feat of dexterity." (Here you "ruffle" the cards.) "You hear that little crackle, don't you? Well, the vibration, and the sound which it produces, compel the cards one by one to leave the pack and travel up my sleeve, finally arriving just here." (Here you place your hand inside your waistcoat towards the arm-hole, as though merely to indicate the spot referred to, and leave there the palmed cards. The spectators have no suspicion of what you have done; for the cards were palmed some moments previously, and the right hand has not since been near the pack.)

"Now, if you will lend me your attention, you will see the cards pass."

6. With the right hand give a "fillip" on the back of the pack, which you hold in the left, and which the company believe to contain the full number of cards. (This "fillip" is only intended to draw the attention of the audience to the pack, and to divert it from the idea that the cards have already been placed inside the waistcoat.)

7. Ruffle the cards with the left hand, and, showing your right hand open so as to prove that you have nothing therein, place it inside the waist-coat.

8. Take the undermost card of the packet (not the uppermost), and taking it out, say, "It has reached its destination, you see. There is not the least difficulty about the matter."

9. Replace the card on the pack. "Now," you continue, "I will make the experiment more extraordinary still, by causing several cards to pass in the same way, and yours, sir, shall do so at such number as you may yourself choose. At what number would you like it to pass?"
We will suppose that the answer is "Sixth."

"So be it."

10. Five times in succession you execute the three movements which I have described; but the sixth time, instead of taking as previously the bottom card, you take the top one, and drawing it out without showing what it is, you say, "Be kind enough, sir, to name your card."

11. You turn over the card, and show that it is really the card named.

12. Take advantage of the surprise caused by the appearance of this card to palm six or eight more, and keep them still palmed.

"You might have selected any other number," you continue, "and it would have been precisely the same thing, inasmuch as I can make all the cards pass in the same way. However, as you may see for yourselves, the passage is rather narrow, and you might imagine that the cards would get blocked in the sleeve. But if you give a short, sharp crack, like this" (ruffling the cards), "you are sure to succeed."

13. Placing the hand inside the waistcoat, as though merely to take out a card, introduce those which you have just palmed.

14. Produce three or four cards, one by one as before, each time replacing the card on the pack, then pause, and remark, "Now, I daresay every one present has, in his own mind, hit upon a very simple explanation of this trick. You imagine, probably, that I have put beforehand in my sleeve a pack of cards of the same pattern as this, and that I merely draw out the cards of such second pack, one after the other. However, you are mistaken, and I will prove it to you. To that end, instead of putting the cards which I take out of my sleeve back upon the pack, I will place them one by one on this table. Naturally, as soon as the thirty-two cards are all on the table, there will be none left in my hand. You will also, sooner or later, see the last of the cards disappear. Now watch me as closely as possible.

"Here I have in my hand the whole of the pack." (In reality you have only about half, the rest being inside the vest, but at a little distance it is impossible for the spectators to form a correct estimate of the quantity.) "I begin."

15. You produce three or four cards, as before, but suddenly pause, and say, "Now I come to think of it, it would be rather a long affair to make all the thirty-two cards pass singly; I will send several at a time, so as to get the business over sooner. Then à la cantonade:-" How many would you like? Three?" You place the cards, as you produce them on the table. "A few for you, madam? Will that be enough?" You take out three or four.

16. The cards which you palmed off at your two attempts will by this time be pretty nearly exhausted. You must therefore again have recourse to the same expedient, in order to continue the production of the cards, either one by one, or several at a time.

17. At last, when you have only three cards remaining in the left hand, you say, "All
the cards have now passed, with the exception of these three." (you exhibit them fanwise.) "See, they will go the same way as the others; watch me well." You palm these last three cards, and place them in the vest, forthwith again producing them.

It must be admitted that this final "palm" is difficult to perform without being detected, particularly while so many eyes are riveted on your hands. The following little artifice, however, with neatness of manipulation, will be found to greatly aid this paring operation:-At the very moment that you palm the cards, raise the left hand with a quick movement, keeping the fingers half-closed, as though still containing the cards, and, above all, let your eyes follow the hand with the greatest attention.

(In conjuring, the glance of the performer has such an influence in directing the attention of the spectators, that all eyes will almost infallibly turn to any object at which he himself looks with marked attention. See "The Eye."

Simultaneously with the movement last described, the hand really containing the three cards places them inside the waistcoat, and immediately produces them again.

The above was a favourite trick of mine, and I always succeeded in performing it, whether on the stage or in private circles, in such a manner as to produce a complete illusion.

I remember that on one occasion, at the St. James's Theatre, London, where I was exhibiting, the Queen, who was present at my performance, expressed a desire to see a particular trick a second time. The trick in question involved some little preparation, and it therefore became needful to gain time for the necessary arrangements behind the scenes, while I occupied the stage. I performed on that occasion, by way of interlude, the trick of the "cards passing up the sleeve," and was fortunate enough to win for it the royal approbation.
IV.

THE CARDS MADE LARGER AND SMALLER.

(Sequel to the "Cards passing up the Sleeve")

With any Pack, to Cause the Cards to Increase to an extraordinary Size; then to make them Smaller, and after having Reduced them to very minute dimensions, to make them Disappear altogether.

This is a very pretty trick, but by reason of its very short duration, I generally worked it in combination with that last described, to which it lends an added grace.

"Many of you, gentlemen," you remark, "will probably imagine that I must have great difficulty in thus passing these cards up my sleeve. The operation would in truth be difficult, not to say impossible, but that I have discovered a mode of reducing the cards to extremely small dimensions.

"I will show you, if you like, how I manage this diminution. I should, however, tell you at the outset, that the cards which I use contain a considerable quantity of indiarubber." (This is, of course, merely part of the "patter," the cards being ordinary cards.) "This enables me to increase or diminish their bulk by pulling or pressing them in a particular manner; which is in truth the whole secret of the trick.

"Now observe, I proceed as follows:-Be kind enough to note, by the way, that the pack is of the ordinary size." (You open it fanwise in the left hand.) "If you desire to make it larger "(here you close the pack as you would a fan), "you pull the pack a little, in this way."

After having pulled at the pack lengthwise as though to make it longer, you replace it in the left hand and again spread it fanwise, taking care that the cards shall project a little more from the hand.

"You see it is now a little bigger. If you want it larger still, you have only to do like this." (You pick up the cards as before, and, spreading them fan-wise, make them project as much as possible, which makes them look considerably larger, as shown in Fig. 44.)

"Supposing you now wish to make them smaller, the process is very simple, just a little tap like this, and the thing is done." (You close the cards, give them a little
pat on the top with the right hand, as though to compress them, and once more spread them fanwise, holding them a little more hidden by the fingers of the left hand.)

"Would you like them smaller still? It is just as easy." (You close the pack, spread it again like a fan, but more and more hidden by the fingers.) "In fact," you continue, "you can, by the same method, make them so small, so very small, as to be scarcely visible." As you say this, you again close and open the pack, and this time, hold it in such manner that the spectators, seeing only the extreme ends of the cards, take them for very small cards. (See Fig. 45.)

It is desirable to put an ace at the bottom of the pack, lest the visible portion of that card should, by the disproportionate size of its design, reveal the nature of the artifice employed. The designs of the other cards are hidden one by another.

Still holding the pack, thus apparently reduced in size, give it another tap on the upper edge with the right hand, as though to compress it still further, then palm it, closing the left hand in order to make believe that you still have the pack therein.

With the hand (the right) in which the pack is palmed, take a salver, and holding the left hand above it, simulate the movement of placing particles of cards thereon (Fig. 46), at the same time remarking, in continuation of your previous observations:-

"And now, you see, it has become so small, that it is merely an invisible and impalpable powder."

N.B.-- The salver should be placed on a goblet or tumbler with a stem, so that even if the spectators were to suspect you of having palmed the cards, they could not possibly imagine that the hand in its approach to the table had got rid of the pack of cards thereon. By taking the salver in the right hand you effectually conceal the fact that the
cards are still held in that hand.

For the purpose of this trick, the performer should practice spreading the cards smartly with a single movement of the hand, as would be done with a fan.

I may say once more that this is really a charming experiment. This also was a favourite trick of mine, and I was fortunate enough to be able to perform it in such a way as to leave nothing to be desired in point of illusion. I admit that it is not easy of execution, but the result obtained from it is such as to render it quite worth the student's while to practice it as diligently as may be necessary to completely master it. If the student finds too great difficulty in the execution of the trick as above, he may work it in another way; but in that case he can only diminish the cards once, and cannot increase their size. The trick in this shape is performed as follows:

You arrange one of those miniature packs, which are used as toys for children, and which are little more than an inch long, in such manner that one of its corners is pierced by a rivet, and that the cards can therefore be opened like a fan without fear of being separated. This pack is, moreover; fastened to a piece of elastic, which carries it up the sleeve as soon as the hand lets go of it.

When you desire to make use of this little pack for the performance of the trick, you draw it down out of the sleeve, and place it behind an ordinary pack. The remainder of the trick will be readily anticipated. After having shown the full-sized pack of cards, you palm it and show in its place the miniature pack, which you spread fanwise; and while attention is drawn to this latter, get rid of the larger pack by dropping it into the profonde.

You may, if you please, dispense with the india-rubber cord; and get rid of the small pack on the servante. But in this latter case, you are obliged to draw near to the table, and the trick loses much of its effect.
V.

THE LADIES LOOKING-GLASS

Eight Cards having been Chosen by different Persons, to have them Replace in the Pack and the Pack well Shuffled; then after having Shown that the Cards are neither at Top nor Bottom, to cause them by a slight Movement successively to take those Positions.

This trick was christened by Comte "The Ladies' Looking-Glass," why, I know not, but my ignorance need not prevent my retaining so graceful a title. The trick at any rate does credit to its name, for its effect is very pretty, and it has the additional advantage that it is received with equal favour on the public stage and in the private drawing-room.

It is performed as follows:-

1. Offer the pack to one of the spectators, with a request that he will choose from it any two cards at pleasure, and retain them in his possession; then hand the pack to three other persons in succession, asking each of them to do the same.

2. When the eight cards have been taken from the pack, return to the person who first drew, holding the pack open (as in Fig. 18), and request him to replace his two cards in the middle of the pack.

3. This done, make the pass, so that these two cards may be brought to the top.

4. Make a false shuffle, so as to induce the belief that the cards are thoroughly well mixed.

5. Again make the pass so that the two cards may return to the middle of the pack,
at the top of the lower half.

6. Open the pack at that spot (but as though chance alone decided the place of opening), and ask the second person to replace his two cards therein.

7. These two cards will now be lying on the two first. Again making the pass, the four cards are brought to the top, and you are enabled to make a false shuffle as before.

8. Go through the same manoeuvres with regard to the cards drawn by the two other persons, and so finish with the eight cards on the top in the order in which they were replaced, which order you must carefully bear in mind.

9. If you have sufficient confidence in your skill in palming, palm the eight cards.

10. Then, addressing yourself to some one whom you think least likely to be in the habit of handling packs of cards (a very young lady, for instance), ask her to shuffle the pack, which she conceives to be a whole one, but which in reality only contains twenty-four cards. (The suggested choice of a very young lady is by way of extra precaution. I have handed the pack to spectators of all ages, and have never found any remark made as to its diminished number.)

11. In the act of taking back the pack, replace the eight cards thereon.

12. Make a false shuffle, and in so doing place some indifferent card above the eight top cards. (By an indifferent card, I mean any card not being one of those specially employed in the trick.)

The mechanical arrangement of the trick being thus complete, we will now pass to its dramatic element.

"Be kind enough to bear in mind, gentlemen," you remark, "what has been done. Four persons have freely selected cards. Those cards have been replaced in the pack and shuffled with particular care. There can, therefore, be no doubt but that chance alone has determined the position which each of those eight cards occupies.

"Well, I am about to show you how wonderfully obedient these cards are. You will find that scarcely have they been named, than, by the aid of a gentle impulse which I shall give them, they will all come and place themselves, in successive couples, at the top and bottom of the pack. I must, however, in the first place, show you that neither of the chosen cards is at present in that position."

1. So saying, turn over the pack and show its under side, holding it vertically, by the two ends, in the right hand.

2. Transfer the pack to the left hand, and (with the right hand) take the top card and exhibit it. (The reader will remember that, by means of a false shuffle, an indifferent card was brought above the eight chosen cards. It is this card which is now shown.)

3. While you are showing this card, you push the card which is now on the top slightly with the thumb of the left hand, so as to facilitate the slipping of the little finger between this and the rest of the cards.

4. Replace the card which you have just shown on the other, and bring them both to
the bottom by the pass.

It will be readily understood that the effect of this proceeding will be that the top card (the indifferent card) will now be last but one, and that the other (which is the first of the eight cards chosen) will be at the bottom. There are, therefore, now at top and bottom the two cards of the person whom you last invited to draw.*

*And whose cards were last replaced.-- ED.

You must therefore begin with this particular spectator.

"It appears," you remark, "that neither of the cards drawn is either at top or bottom. I shall therefore proceed to compel them to pass successively to those positions. We will begin with this lady's cards. Will you be kind enough, madam, to mention the names of your two cards?"

We will suppose that the answer is the "queen of hearts," and "knave of diamonds."

"Very good. In order to bring your cards, I have only to do like this. Here you make a little up and down movement, giving the cards a slight shake. You then immediately turn over the pack, which you have hitherto kept face downwards, and show the bottom card, saying, "The queen of hearts has arrived, you see. Now I give a second shake, which will bring the knave of diamonds to the top."

Here you transfer the pack to the left hand, and, turning over the top card, show that it is the knave of diamonds.

While you are showing this card, you push the top card, as before, so as to get the little finger beneath it, and the moment that you replace the knave of diamonds on the pack, bring both cards to the bottom by the pass. You then proceed as already explained, in order to exhibit to the second and third persons their cards passed in due course to the top and bottom of the pack.

After having shown to the third person who drew, his two cards, instead of making the pass with the two top cards as before, you only do so with the actual top card. Then, in order to make a brilliant finish to the experiment, you pretend to overlook the fourth person, and say, "That completes the number of the chosen cards."

At the same moment you transfer the now top card to the bottom by the pass, taking care in so doing to turn it round so as to be back outwards- i.e., face to face with the bottom card.

Moisten, as secretly as possible, the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, and with them nip the pack tightly by the middle. (It is not exactly the thing to wet one's fingers at the mouth in public; but, as under certain circumstances this moistening process is absolutely necessary, the performer must effect it as secretly as possible. The best mode of doing this is to stand for a moment with the chin resting on the right hand, as one naturally does when in a reflective mood. In this position it is easy, by turning aside ever so little, to satisfy the requirements of the trick.)
The fourth spectator is sure to call upon you to name her cards also.

"I really beg your pardon, madam," you reply; "I quite thought I had finished the trick; and I must candidly own that I had forgotten you. It would now be rather difficult for me to find your cards by the method I have so far employed; but in order that you may not be disappointed, I will have recourse to another method. I will throw all the cards in the air, and try to catch yours in the middle of their flight."

You throw up the pack a little above your head, and as it begins to fall, make a snatch at it with the two outer cards, which remain clinging to your fingers. By so doing you scatter abroad the rest of the cards.

Finally, opening the two fingers, you show the two cards, which you profess to have caught in the air, and which remain sticking to the ends of the fingers. (See the sketch at the head of this article.)

**N.B.--**You must be careful, when you make your dash at the pack with the two cards, to press them well one against the other, that they may not become detached from the tip of the fingers.
VI.

THE SYMPATHETIC CARDS

Two Packs of Cards having been placed upon a Table, and Two of the Spectators having secretly withdrawn One Card from each, to cause both Cards to be identical, although the Performer has remained throughout at a distance from the Table.

Provide yourself with a couple of packs of cards, still enclosed in the usual stamped wrapper. One of them is beforehand arranged according to a chapelet, or formula. (See "Chapelet." To prepare this pack, unfasten the stamped envelope by holding it over the steam of boiling water; and after having arranged the cards in the desired order, fasten it again.) There should also be a candlestick on the table which you use for the trick.

"The experiment which I am about to exhibit, ladies, is not a feat of dexterity. It depends entirely on a curious effect of sympathy. I venture to hope, from the kindness with which you have hitherto received my illusions, that this also will be a complete success.

"Here is a piquet pack of cards, composed, as usual, of thirty-two cards, all different. Be kind enough to examine it, and verify the fact for yourselves." (You show the cards by running them over rapidly before the eyes of the spectators, taking care, however, not to disturb their order. The pack thus shown is the pre-arranged pack.)

Next go through the processes following:-

1. Spread this arranged pack, by one sweep of the hand, in a long row on the table, face down-wards, still taking care that the order of the cards is not altered.

2. Ask some one to come and select a card from this row, requesting him simply to draw it from the pack, and without looking at it, slip it under the candlestick.

3. This done, pick up the pack, starting from the space left in the row by the card removed,* place it in the left hand and the rest of the pack upon it.

4. Under these circumstances, the card which preceded the card removed is now at the bottom; you will therefore have little difficulty in getting sight of it (see "To Get Sight of a Card"). This card being known to you, indicates the one which has been placed under the candlestick. Thus, suppose the bottom card is the seven of clubs, then the order of the formula (see "Chapelet") indicates that the card next following was the queen of diamonds.

5. Replace this pack on one corner of the table; take the other pack and remove the

*The author appears to have overlooked the fact that the direction above given would equally apply to either half of the pack. The half originally uppermost, starting from the space in question, should be first placed in the left hand.--Ed.
6. Advance to the spectators, and show them, as you did with the first pack, that no two cards are alike. The object of this display is that you yourself may be enabled rapidly to ascertain the whereabouts of the queen of diamonds, and having found it, to pass it to the top of the pack, and palm it.

7. Take an ordinary tea-tray, spread these last cards upon it, face downwards, and invite several of the spectators to take, indeed to select at pleasure, as many as they please of the cards; the greater the number of persons who participate in the choice, the more interesting the trick becomes. You hold the tray with the same hand in which the card is palmed, thereby completely concealing it.

(N.B.--If you have no tray at hand, the cards may be spread on the table, to which the spectators step forward to select their respective cards.)

8. When you see that there are but five or six cards left, transfer the tray to the left hand, and in the act of spreading abroad these remaining cards with the right hand, lay the palmed card upon them, and continue to offer the cards for selection as before.

9. At this point you must employ a certain amount of artifice to cause all the cards to be taken save the queen of diamonds, the position of which you alone are acquainted with. There is very little difficulty about this; first, because the spectators, having hitherto been allowed to choose with perfect freedom, have no reason for suspecting that you now influence their choice, and secondly, because the card to be left to the last being on the side towards yourself, you have only to present the tray in such a way that the hand of the spectator cannot reach that card. The operation is simplicity itself. It is, so to speak, the forced card (see "To Force a Card") over again, but with the opposite result.

10. When the queen of diamonds is the only card left, you ask some one to hold the tray for a moment, while you move to a little distance and recapitulate what has been done.

11. "We have to bear in mind, ladies," you remark, "that a card has been taken from the pack with the utmost secrecy; that such card has been carefully placed under that candlestick, and that not one of us here present can possibly know what that card is.

"It must also be noted that from a pack placed in this tray all the cards have been freely chosen, with the exception of one only. What that card is, nobody knows. Still, by a surprising effect of that sympathy of which I spoke just now, the card which is under the candlestick will be found to be precisely similar, both in suit and value, to that which is under the candlestick.

"Having myself nothing to do with the experiment, I will not even go near the cards. Will you be good enough to see for yourselves, gentlemen, if the fact is as I have stated?"

The spectators take up the card which is under the candlestick, and the card on the tray being also turned up, each of the two cards is found to be a queen of diamonds
VII.

THE ELECTRIFIED CARDS

Four Cards having been Drawn, to Shuffle them well with the rest, and after having placed them in a small Case, to cause them to Rise therefrom at the Command of the Spectators.

This trick, more generally known by the name of la houlette,* dates from the latter part of the last century. It is, therefore, quite an ancient among card tricks; but though it has been performed an extraordinary number of times by one conjuror or another, it nevertheless still produces as much wonderment as ever. It is, so to speak, a little comedy, in which the spectators, the pack of cards, and the performer, all play their part. It is garnished with witty sayings and mild practical jokes; such being the invariable accompaniment of conjuring tricks of the olden time.

*i.e., among French performers. Among English conjurors it is known as the "rising cards."--ED.

This particular trick was the "trump card" of Comte. I wish the reader could have seen him, electric rod in hand, as though to compel the belief that the rising of the cards was due to electricity, and delivering his jokes with a humour which was specially his own. This trick invariably won for him the heartiest applause.

The only apparatus used is a small case, either of metal or of glass, and of such a size as to contain with ease a pack of cards. In order to allow room for the upward passage of the cards, the case is open at top, and the front is also cut away in such manner as to allow the pack to be seen, a little frame with very narrow borders preventing the cards falling cut on this side. This little apparatus is fixed upon a stopper, which just fits the neck of a decanter. This arrangement gives it a fanciful resemblance to a trowel (houlette), from which it derives its name.

Preliminary Preparations.--Single-headed cards are used, it being necessary that the top and bottom of the card should be different.

You take five cards--the ten of hearts, the seven of diamonds, two queens of spades, and the knave of clubs.

The seven of diamonds and the knave of clubs will require a special preparation, as follows:-You split apart the lower edge of the knave of clubs, and insert therein a very thin slip of lead, so as to render the card a shade heavier. This additional weight will, later on, be utilised to make the card dance. Upon the seven of diamonds you stick, with a little virgin wax, a single diamond pip (cut out), so as to give the card the appearance of an eight.
Arrangement of the Cards. -- Take a long black silk thread, at one end of which you make a knot. With a pair of scissors cut a little notch in the lower edge of the knave of clubs, and pass the end of the silk through it. The knot will naturally form a "stop" against the slit.

1. Holding the knave of clubs in the left hand carry the thread across the back of this card in an upward direction.
2. Upon this card lay any indifferent card.
3. Bring the thread down again over this card, and lay on it the queen of spades.
4. Bring up the thread, and lay on it another indifferent card.
5. Bring the thread down again over this last, and upon it place the second queen of spades, head downwards.
6. Thread brought up again, and indifferent card.
7. Thread brought down again, and on it the prepared eight of diamonds.
8. Thread carried up again, and indifferent card.
9. Thread down again, and ten of hearts.
10. Thread brought up, indifferent card, and thread carried down again.

The reader will readily comprehend the object of the interposition of the indifferent cards. These serve as bearings to cause the other cards to rise when the thread is pulled.

The packet of cards arranged as above is placed somewhere on the table in such manner as to be out of sight of the audience.

The performer "forces" from a piquet pack the four cards above named, he has them shuffled with the rest, and in placing the pack in the houlette, adds to it, from behind, the prepared packet.

The remainder of the trick is a matter of course. The other end of the thread is in the hands of an assistant, hidden either behind a screen, in another room, or (in a theatre) behind the scenes, whence he hears all that passes, and is ready to cause the cards to appear in due course.

The conjuror himself from this point only plays an actor's part. I will describe the scene in the regulation form, suppressing nothing. The reader must accept the "jokes" for what they are worth.

Addressing yourself to the person who drew the ten of hearts, you ask him what his card was.

"The ten of hearts," he replies.

"Very good," you reply, "I will order that card to rise out of the pack. Attention! 'Ten, appear!'" But the card does not appear. You pass your magic wand, or an electric rod, over the pack, but no effect is produced.

"Oh, I see," you exclaim, "though the card disobeys me, it may really be quite
obedient. The fault probably rests with the vagueness of my own command. I said 'Ten, appear' but the cards did not know which ten I meant. We will make the command more precise--'Ten of hearts, appear!'"*

*I have been here compelled slightly to vary the text, the sense of the passage as written depending on a certain play upon words, which must necessarily be lost in translation.-ED.

The ten of hearts rises slowly from the pack. You take it completely out, and hand it to the spectators.

After having had the next card named, you carelessly move to the rear of the decanter, and order the seven of diamonds to appear. It is however the eight of diamonds which appears. Not being so placed as to see the card, you are supposed to be unconscious of the mistake. The moment the card rises, you take it, and holding it towards the spectators, remark, "You see, gentlemen, I never make a mistake; here is the seven of diamonds."

A score (more or less) of the spectators, fancying they have caught you tripping, exclaim, "That is the eight of diamonds!"

Lowering the card a little so as not to show its face, you remove with the three fingers beneath it the loose "pip," taking care not to let it fall on the ground, and make believe to misunderstand their exclamation.

"You want the eight of diamonds, gentlemen?" you remark. "Then I was mistaken; I thought the gentleman said it was the seven of diamonds he drew."

The retort is "Yes, the gentleman did draw the seven of diamonds, but you made the eight appear instead."

"The eight, gentlemen?" you reply, with an assumed air of innocence, and showing the face of the card, which is now transformed into a seven-- "The eight? I really think you are mistaken!"

The audience, seeing that the card is now the seven of diamonds, and not having seen you employ any sleight-of-hand movement, are silenced, and join in a general laugh at their supposed mistake.

You have taken care that the queen of spades shall be drawn by a make spectator, who, at your request, orders his card to appear. But in vain. He may cry "Appear" as much as he pleases, but there is no result.

You pretend to be embarrassed at the supposed breakdown, and say, "Excuse me, sir! What card was it you drew?"

"The queen of spades," is the reply.

"The queen? Oh, if that is so, I don't wonder that she declines to rise. The peremptory manner (if you will excuse my saying so) in which you spoke has probably offended her majesty's dignity. I will speak to her more politely, and I have no doubt she will
appear at once. Madam, will you do us the favour to come out of the pack?"

The card rises at once, but appears feet-foremost.

"Oh dear," you remark, taking out the card, "that is a very peculiar way to make one's appearance in polite society. However, it is not altogether surprising, our rather rough summons has perhaps upset her a little."

You replace the card, still head downwards, in the pack, but towards the front, so as not to interfere with the appearance of the remaining cards.

"Come, madam, go back to the pack, and have the kindness to turn over and appear in a more becoming manner."

This the card forthwith does, it being in reality the duplicate queen of spades which appears.

"That's better," you remark; "you see, gentlemen, the lady is very obedient, considering she is only a card."

The fourth spectator having named the knave of clubs, that card appears. After having risen in due course, it sinks down again and comes up a second time. Then, by way of saluting the company, it sinks again several times. Finally, it is made to dance, keeping time to the music of the orchestra, and is ordered by way of conclusion to jump completely out of the pack.

It will be remembered that there is inserted in the lower part of this card a thin slip of lead, the weight of which causes it to sink down again as soon as the thread ceases to draw it up. It is by means of this alternate movement that the assistant makes it appear and retire, and subsequently compels it to dance to music in the case.

I have purposely gone somewhat at length into the description of this particular illusion, partly out of respect for a trick which has done excellent service in the magic art, and partly by way of introduction to two other very pretty tricks, which are modifications of the same idea.
VIII.

THE POWER OF THE WILL

Four Cards having been freely Chosen, Replaced in the Pack, and Shuffled, to hold up all the Cards in the Hand, and by the Power of the Will, to cause the four Chosen Cards to rise in turn from the Pack.

This trick, which I might almost describe as the houlette worked in the hand, has the advantage over that last described, in this particular--that it may be performed with any pack of cards, and without either preparation or assistant.

As in the preceding trick, you have four cards drawn from the pack, but in this instance, instead of "forcing" particular cards, you allow perfect liberty of choice.

Have these cards replaced in the middle of the pack, and transfer them (by the pass) in due order to the top. The four cards being thus really together, make a false shuffle, so as to induce the belief that you really do not know where they are.

"I propose to show you, gentlemen," you remark, "a very curious effect which may be produced with cards."

Here you take the pack in the right hand, as shown in Fig. 47.

"You are probably acquainted, gentlemen," you continue, "with some of the mesmeric effects produced by the power of the will. What I am about to show you is a very curious instance; it is sufficient to will firmly that a card shall rise from the pack, to immediately induce it to appear." Then addressing yourself to the person whose card comes first (i.e., hindermost)--" Madam," you say, "will you have the kindness to name your card?"

We will suppose that "the king of hearts" is the reply.

"Let us try the experiment." Here a little of the dramatic element must be introduced. You frown as though wrapped in deep thought, then in a tone of stern command pronounce the words, "King of hearts, appear!"

From the position of the hand, the first and second fingers are behind the pack (Fig. 48), though the spectators cannot detect this at a little distance, and if you have these two fingers slightly moist, it is easy with their tips to work up the card,
which appears to rise spontaneously from the pack.

When the card is all but out of the pack, you take it with the left hand and remove it entirely.

You go through the same process to produce the other three cards; but in order to preclude any suspicion that the cards are placed one upon another at the back of the pack, you take care between the production of each to make a false shuffle.

This trick, neatly executed, produces a complete illusion. It seems impossible to imagine but that the cards rise from the middle of the pack.
IX.
THE MESMERISED CARDS

Having had Three Cards Drawn, Replaced, and Shuffled with the rest, to place the Pack in a Tumbler, and to Make such Cards Rise out of the Pack at Command, under the very eyes of the Spectators.

This illusion is the invention of Professor Alberti, and may fairly be reckoned one of the most elegant of drawing-room tricks.

The only preparation is to have a human hair of about thirteen inches in length, to each end of which is fixed a minute pellet of virgin wax. One of these pellets is fixed on the lowest, and the other on the highest, button of your coat.*

*Very fine black silk will be found decidedly more manage-able than hair in the performance of this trick, and scarcely more visible. It will be found an improvement to have it lied to the lower button, thereby dispensing with the second pellet of wax.--ED.

You should also have on your table a glass goblet, and a small wooden slab about twenty inches long by seventeen wide. To perform the trick, proceed as follows:-

1. Have three cards freely selected by three different persons.
2. Have these cards replaced in the middle of the pack, and transfer them by means of the pass to the top, taking care to remember the order in which they were replaced.
3. Make use of a false shuffle to induce the belief that the three cards are scattered apart in the pack.
4. Palm the three cards, and hand the pack to one of the spectators to shuffle.
5. When the pack is handed back to you, replace the three cards thereon, and under pretext of going to fetch the glass which is on the table, ask some one to hold the pack for you.
6. While fetching the glass, loosen the little pellet from the top button, and when, on your return, you reach the person who is holding the cards, offer him the glass with the left hand, and ask him to place the cards therein.
7. "I beg your pardon, sir," you remark, "I quite forgot to ask you to examine the glass." This remark serves as a pretext for removing the pack from the glass. In taking it out, which you do by the upper end, you press the pellet of wax against the end of the first card, which should be the hindmost, and towards yourself.
8. While the glass is being examined, you turn the pack upside down, after which you replace it in the glass, the face of the cards towards the spectators.
9. The person to whom the first card belongs having named it at your request, you very gently move the glass, either in an upward or forward direction. The hair, being thus pulled taut, slips over the edge of the glass and lifts the card, which appears to the spectators to rise from the middle of the pack. While doing this you hold the right hand at a short distance above the pack, and make believe to mesmerise it.

10. When the card has got so high as to be in full view, take it between the thumb and forefinger as though to show it. This enables you to detach the pellet of wax, after which you hand the card to the spectator for examination.

11. Take the pack out of the glass, and offer this latter once more to be examined, so that the spectators may be fully satisfied that there is no mechanical arrangement about it to cause the rising of the cards. This gives you an opportunity to again press the pellet against the top card.

12. Have this card named, and cause it to rise out of the glass, as before.

13. You go through the same process with the third card as with the two others, making it appear in due course. But as soon as it has come out of the glass, exhibit it without detaching the pellet of wax, and put the glass aside.

14. The card thus remains attached to the hair. You replace it in the middle of the pack, and then take the little wooden slab and lay the cards upon it.

"I have shown you," you remark, "one effect of mesmeric attraction; I shall now make use of the same power to produce a totally different result-- namely, by the force of my will upon the card drawn by this gentleman, I will make that card remain motionless while all the other cards go away and leave it alone."

You then slope the wooden slab, and all the cards naturally slide off and fall on the ground, with the exception of the one which is attached to the hair.

By way of conclusion, you remove the pellet from the card, and throw the latter to the spectators to be examined.

By gas or candle-light the hair is absolutely invisible, even at the closest quarters.
THE METAMORPHOSES

Four Cards having been Selected from a Pack, to Make on of them Change successively into each of the three others.

This trick can only be performed before a tolerably large company, for it is essential that the spectators to whom the performer successively ad-dresses himself should be at some distance apart, so that they may not compare notes. Even with this drawback, it is an admirable trick. The mode of performance is as follows:-

1. Have a card freely drawn from the pack.
2. Have this card replaced in the pack; bring it to the top by the pass; "change" it, and place the substitute card, face downwards, on your table. To the eyes of the spectators, you appear to have simply placed the chosen card on the table.
3. As a necessary consequence of the "change," the card which was chosen, and which we will suppose to be the knave of spades, is left on the top of the pack. Transfer it, by means of the pass, to the middle of the pack and force it (see "To force a card"), on a second person.
4. Take the knave of spades from the last-named spectator, "change" it as before for some other card, and lay this latter on the table beside the one already there.
5. Proceed as already described with a third spectator, so as to make him also draw the knave of spades, which you once more cause to be replaced in the pack, and lay it, without changing, by the side of the other two cards.
6. Have a card drawn (without forcing) by a fourth spectator, and, as if through inadvertence, leave such card in his possession.
7. Take the three cards which are on the table, and spreading them fanwise, exhibit them to the company, remarking, "Here are the cards which have been chosen." Each of the three persons who drew sees his own card (inasmuch as they all drew the knave of spades), and imagines that the other two cards are those which were drawn by the other two spectators.
8. Addressing yourself to the fourth person who drew, you inquire whether he sees his card among the rest. He naturally replies that he does not, inasmuch as it was left in his own possession.
   "I beg your pardon, sir," you reply, "it was a slip on my part. Be kind enough to hand me back your card."
9. While so saying, you place the three cards on the pack, which you hold in your left hand, taking care that the knave of spades is uppermost, and slightly pushed
forward on the pack, in readiness for the change.

10. Take the fourth person's card, which we will suppose to be the ten of hearts, exhibit it with apparent carelessness to the spectators, and "change" it for the knave of spades, keeping this card face downwards, so that the audience cannot see what it is.

11. If the change has been neatly executed, no one will have any suspicion as to the identity of the card you hold; accordingly, stepping close to the first person who drew, "Here," you say. without showing it, "is the ten of hearts that gentleman drew. Would you be surprised to find that I can change it for the card which you selected? I have only to do so." You "ruffle" the card and exhibit it."

12. "Now," you continue, holding the card again face downwards, and turning to the second person who drew, "by repeating this simple movement" (you ruffle the card again) "it is no longer your card, sir; it is this lady's." You show her the card.

13. Proceed as above described with the third person also, so as to prove to her that her card has taken the place of the other. This is by no means difficult, inasmuch as it is still the knave of spades which you show.

14. Just before you reach the fourth person, "change" the knave of spades once more for the ten of hearts, and showing it to the company generally, remark, "And now, by way of conclusion, it is no longer that lady's card, it has become this gentleman's again."

I may once more remark that this trick, skilfully executed, is one of the most surprising that can well be performed. The successive "changes" which I have directed to be made in the course of this trick, including the last, can be made with perfect ease, under cover of the performer's frequent movements from one spot to another.

In order to divert the minds of the spectators from any idea that the same card was drawn three times in succession, you may perform the trick next following. In such case, you remark, addressing the company--

"You would like to know, I daresay, ladies and gentlemen, how the cards are metamorphosed in this manner. I will endeavour to explain it to you by effecting the same transformation as visibly as possible."

Previous  |  Next  |  Chapter Contents  |  Card Tricks  |  Main Contents
XI.

A MAGICAL TRANSFORMATION

To Cause the Ace of Spades to Change Visible into the Queen of Hearts.

Secretly take the ace of spades and the queen of hearts, place them back to back, and hold them in that position with their edges between the thumb and third finger. The foremost card is alone visible, and suggests no suspicion that there are in reality two cards.

The first and second fingers are behind the cards, and one of them (the forefinger) is brought close to the thumb, so as to be ready, at a given moment, to nip the edge of the cards and turn them round.

"I have here," you remark, showing the foremost card, "the ace of spades. Well, we will endeavour to change it, while in full view of you all, into some other card. Let us see, now, what card would form the most marked contrast to the ace of spades? The queen of hearts would answer that condition very well: suppose we say the queen of hearts.

"The queen of hearts is at present here in the pack, but I shall make it instantaneously pass away from it, and take the place of the ace of spades, while the ace of spades will go back to the pack. This is all I have to do!"

You slightly "ruffle" the pack which you hold in your left hand, while with the right you smartly turn the two cards vertically round, so that the queen of hearts takes the place of the ace of spades and vice versa.

This turn is a very simple matter. If, while holding the two cards, the forefinger presses them slightly outward, a little in the direction of the thumb, the moment the third finger releases them they will be drawn round by the forefinger and thumb, and make a right-about-face.

To prevent the edges of the two cards spreading apart, and so betraying the artifice used, you may rest them against the lapel of your coat.

When the trick is over, you get rid of the hindermost card as follows:-You lay the two cards on the pack, which you are holding in your left hand, the card you have last shown being upwards. The hindermost card thus facing the same way as the others, unites with the pack, while the queen of hearts, which is the only card whose face is visible, is taken off alone and handed to the spectators for examination.
XII.

THE CARD THOUGHT OF

A Card having been Thought of by a Spectator, to Cause another Card Chosen from the Pack by another of the Company to be the Very One which was Mentally Selected.

Tricks dependent on thought foretold or divined are unquestionably the most striking in the whole range of conjuring. In truth, how is it possible to explain (unless indeed you know the secret) how any one can know what you have chosen to think of, or even sometimes what you are going to think of presently?

Tricks of this class are, however, infallible, as the reader will be able to judge from that which we are about to explain.

1. Advance to one of the spectators, and, using the method explained previously (see "The Card thought of"), make him "think of" a given card, which we will suppose to be the queen of spades.

2. Present the pack to another spectator and force upon him the same card. When the card is drawn, request the drawer not to look at it, but to keep it for a few moments in his possession.

Then, addressing yourself to the first spectator, say, "Will you have the kindness, sir, to name the card you thought of?"

"The queen of spades."

"You are sure you followed your own inclination in choosing that particular card?"

"Quite so."

"And you, sir," addressing the other spectator; "did you also freely choose the card you hold?"

"I am quite certain that I did."

"Well, gentlemen, I will now call your attention to a very curious fact, which I myself can't undertake to explain, but which is probably attributable to some mesmeric influence. I beg your pardon, sir; what card was it you said you thought of?" (This pretended obliviousness has a good effect, as tending to exclude the suspicion of prearrangement.)

"The queen of spades."

"As for you, sir, neither you nor I know the card you have drawn; but if you will now turn it up, we shall be able to see what it is. Be kind enough to show it to the company."
You see, gentlemen, it is the very same card which this other gentleman thought of."

While we are on the subject of the divination of thought, reader, I can guess, without any very great effort of imagination, what you are thinking of at this moment, and may as well answer a question which you have just framed in your own mind, as follows:-

"But suppose," you say to yourself, "that the first spectator did not think of the queen of spades, or that having thought of that card, he named some other in order to put the conjuror in a fix; in that case there would be a break-down of the trick?"

By no means, the trick would not have broken down, but it would have been finished after another fashion. Let me remind you that we requested the person who drew the card not to look at it. If the second spectator names the queen of spades, the trick proceeds as above described. If any other card is named--the knave of hearts, for instance--you take the pack, and addressing yourself to the person who thought of the card, "I must show you, sir, in the first place, that the knave of hearts is no longer in the pack," and you spread the cards out in order to do so. But this pretended proof is in reality only designed to enable yourself to see the cards, and while you run them quickly over before showing them, you make a rapid search for the knave of hearts. As soon as you have found it, you draw it underneath the pack. You then pass all the cards before the eyes of the spectator, taking care, however, not to let him see this card, which is the last of the pack.

"You see, sir," you continue, "that your card is not in the pack. Where is it then? Here!" You take from the hand of the second spectator the card which he drew (and which, as we stated at the commencement of the trick, is not known to any of the spectators), and without showing what it is, move across the room as though to show it. But during your short passage from the one spectator to the other, you change the queen of spades for the knave of hearts, and handing this latter card to your interlocutor, ask him to name it aloud.

"Observe, gentlemen," you remark, by way of conclusion, "how an influence, at once mesmeric and sympathetic, has caused this gentleman to choose, even without seeing it, the card which this other gentleman had secretly thought of."
XIII.

THOUGHT ANTICIPATED

To place the first Card that Comes to Hand on a Table, and to Predict that whatever be the Card another Spectator may Please to Think of, such Card shall be Identical both in Suit and Value with that which you have previously Removed from the Pack.

1. Address yourself to a spectator at some distance from you, and ask him to think of a card.

2. When you are informed that a card has been thought of, "I will now," you remark, "prove to you that I anticipated your thought, by showing you that I have placed that very card on yonder table. First, however, in order to preclude the supposition of a private understanding between us, I must ask you to name the card you mentally selected."

We will suppose that the "ten of hearts" is the answer.

"As an additional test," you continue, "I will first show these gentlemen that the ten of hearts is not in the pack.

3. Advancing towards the company, and at the same time running over the pack, you will have no difficulty in finding the ten of hearts and slipping it to the bottom. You then continue to spread the cards before the company, taking care not to show this last card, which you keep covered by two or three others, as in the preceding trick.

4. Having done this, palm the ten of hearts, holding it with the face towards the inside of your hand.

5. Place this card on the one which you take up from the table, moving both together towards the edge, as though merely for greater facility in picking them up. The two cards, so picked up, will naturally be back to back.

6. Place these two cards in the left hand, taking care that their edges coincide. Thus disposed, take them in the right hand, and show the ten of hearts, remarking, "If I mistake not, you thought of the ten of hearts; you see I was quite right, for here is the ten of hearts which I laid upon the table."

7. In the meanwhile you have taken the remainder of the pack in your left hand, and as soon as you have shown the card thought of, lay both cards on the pack, thus getting rid of the indifferent card, which becomes united with the rest.
XIV.  
THE THOUGHTS OF TWO PERSONS ANTICIPATED

To Cause a Card Secretly Thought of by one Person to Appear at such Number in the Pack as another Spectator may Choose at Pleasure.

This is a trick which I can recommend to the reader as one of the most surprising that can possibly be performed.

1. As in the trick previously described, compel a spectator to "think of," say, the queen of spades.

2. By means of a false shuffle, place the queen of spades seventh from the top, and leave the pack on the table.

3. Then addressing one of the spectators, "Will you have the kindness, sir," you say, "to think of a number between one and ten?"

It is all but certain that the number seven will be chosen. The reasons which compel the choice of this particular number will be explained hereafter in a special chapter upon the modes of influencing thought.* But in the exceptional case of this number not being chosen, the trick would not on that account fail, as we shall proceed to show presently. For the moment we will continue our description as though the number seven had been actually chosen.

*This promise appears to have been overlooked by the author, the work containing no such chapter--ED.

"Will you be kind enough, madam, to name the card you thought of?"

"The queen of spades." "And you, sir, what number did you think of?"

"The number seven."

"Be good enough, then, sir, to take the pack with your own hands from the table, and satisfy yourself that the card the lady thought of is placed precisely at the very number which you, of your own accord, selected. Take particular notice, gentlemen, please, that I have not been even near the cards."

Where the trick is completely successful, as above, it invariably calls forth a round of well-merited applause.

Let us now take into consideration contingencies unfavourable to the success of the trick.
Let us suppose that the queen of spades has been chosen (we will consider presently the case of that particular card not being chosen), but that on the other hand the spectator has thought of one of the numbers following, two, three, four, five, six, eight, or nine. I do not mention either one or ten, because the terms of your request are between one and ten. Should either of those numbers be selected, you remind the spectator that those two numbers are excluded by the very terms of your question.

Supposing the choice falls on one of the numbers two, three, four, or five, nothing is easier than to produce the queen of spades at that number; the only difference being that instead of having the cards counted by the spectator, you yourself take the pack in your left hand, and secretly transfer from the top to the bottom by means of the pass (as the case may be) five, four, three, or two cards, thereby bringing the card thought of to the required position.

If "six" is the number chosen, the use of a double meaning brings the trick to as satisfactory a termination as if seven had been thought of. In point of fact, you have only to ask the spectator to take the pack, count off six cards from the top, and look at the card which comes next.

For the numbers eight and nine, you count the cards yourself, and when you reach the queen of spades, which is the seventh card, you "change" the card once for the number eight, and once for the number nine—i.e., instead of actually taking the seventh card in its proper turn, you leave that card and take the next following.

Let us now suppose (which is a much more serious contingency) that instead of fixing on the queen of spades, the spectator has thought of some totally different card, the ten of diamonds, for instance.

As soon as the card is named, you ask what number has been chosen, and proceed as above described, as though the ten of diamonds was the seventh card;* but when you reach the queen of spades you place it on the table without showing what it is.

(Or any other number which may have been chosen —ED.)

You then pass the ten of diamonds, as already explained, to the top of the pack, while showing the spectators (ostensibly) that the card, not being in the pack, must be the one on the table.

Take the queen of spades in your right hand, and showing it to the lady who thought of the card in such manner that she alone can see what it is, "Here," you say, "madam, is the card you thought of; you see the experiment has completely succeeded."

You forthwith return to your table, and in so doing "change" the queen of spades for the ten of diamonds, which you lay upon the table. The lady to whom your observation was addressed naturally exclaims that instead of the ten of diamonds, you have shown her the queen of spades. "I really think, madam, you must be under a mistake, or perhaps some optical illusion has made you take one card for another; for I am sure I showed you the ten of diamonds." The lady of course insists on the correctness of her assertion. During the discussion, you palm the queen of spades, which remained, after
the change, on the top of the pack, and putting it in the breast-pocket of your coat, as though merely to take something out, you leave the hand there for the moment.

"Pardon me, madam," you reply, "if I still insist that you are wrong; but you see the success of my experiment is at stake. You can, however, readily satisfy yourself that you could not have seen the queen of spades, for knowing that that card is unlucky in a trick, I put it in my pocket before the performance began, and here it is, as you see." (You take the queen of spades out of the pocket and exhibit it.) "As a further proof of my sincerity, there is the card I showed you, still on the table; any one may take it up who pleases, I wont even go near it." "Will you, sir, be good enough to turn up that card yourself?"

Previous | Next | Chapter Contents | Card Tricks | Main Contents
XV.

THE FOUR ACES

To Make the Four Aces Travel to different Parts of the Pack, to Transform them into other Cards, and Cause them to Multiply to an unlimited extent.

The trick of the Four Aces, which I am about to describe, was the invention of the well-known conjuror Conus. It was his favourite trick, and was performed by him with equal artistic finish and charm of manner. Its effect, as I have seen it executed by the inventor himself, was as follows:

The performer asked one of the spectators to step forward, and handing him a pack of cards, requested him to pick out the four aces.

Then, himself taking the rest of the pack, he opened it bookwise, and asked his interlocutor to place the four aces in the opening. He then immediately inserted his little finger between them and transferred them by means of the pass, two to the top, and two to the bottom. The pack being thus disposed, he laid it on the table.

"Now, sir," he said, "without my touching the cards in any way, the four aces which you have placed in the middle of the pack shall go and place themselves in such positions as you may choose. For instance, would you like them all at top or all at bottom; or would you rather have them three at top and one beneath; or three at bottom and one at top; or two at top and two at bottom? Stay one moment; for greater safety be kind enough to put your hand on the pack."

As the various positions mentioned were enumerated with great rapidity, and as it was somewhat difficult to remember them, the mind of the spectator was always struck by the arrangement last suggested, and this arrangement was almost invariably the one selected. "Two above and two below," answered the spectator.

"Take them yourself," replied the conjuror, without even going near the pack. If, on the contrary, some other distribution of the cards was demanded, Conus took the pack in his own hands, saying:-

"Did you feel them pass? No? In any case I will show you that your orders have been faithfully complied with." And he forthwith, by means of the pass, placed the aces in the positions selected."*

*Thus, if all four were demanded at top or bottom, he would pass the two which at the outset were at the opposite end of the pack, to that position. If three were required at top and one at bottom, he would pass one of those at the bottom to the top, and vice versâ.--ED.
"Now, sir," he continued, taking the four aces, and making a feint of exchanging them somewhat awkwardly for other cards, "I will place these four aces on the table; be kind enough to put your hand on them, and take care not to let one of them escape. You are quite sure you have the four aces?"

The extempore assistant, taking the make-believe movement for a genuine change, naturally expressed some doubt on the subject. "What, you are not certain! Why surely, there they are under your hand. Ah! I see what it is. The fact is, you distrust me, and perhaps you are right; for most unquestionably those cards will change presently under your very hand, and that without your knowing anything about it."

While thus speaking, he slipped the little finger under the first card of the pack, and when, after having placed the aces once more on the top, he removed them again, he took off this card with them.

He held them for a moment or two, taking care only to show the last of the five cards, which was not an ace, replaced them on the pack in order to get rid of this fifth card, and once more taking the four aces only, laid them on the table.

"Take notice, sir," he remarked, "that at any rate I have not changed them this time, and that I place them really here on the table."

The spectator, who had noticed the undermost card, fancied, not unnaturally, that the aces had been changed; but notwithstanding, when asked whether he was sure of having them, he hesitated to reply, or sometimes from a polite desire to spare the performer embarrassment, said that he believed he had got the aces under his hand.

"Come, that's better," said the performer; "we shall agree at last, I see. Come now, you have such confidence in me, that you wont mind making a bet with any gentleman present that you really have the aces."

"Oh dear, no!" the victim was sure to exclaim, "I shant bet, for in point of fact I am certain that I have not got the aces."

The conjuror showed that the spectator was again mistaken, by turning the aces face upwards, and then down again on the table. He then secretly palmed off five cards, and placed the rest of the pack by the side of the four aces. In picking up these latter, he placed the five palmed cards on the top of them, squaring up the packet thus made so that the addition might not be noticeable, and placed the whole on the pack. When he, a moment afterwards, inquired, "Where are the aces now?" the spectator answered with confidence that they were on the top of the pack. Then, taking successively the four first cards of the pack, the performer laid them delicately on the table, and requested the spectator to place his hand upon them. He drew attention to the fact that the card which next followed was not an ace, and spreading the pack fanwise, showed that neither was there an ace left in the rest of the pack. To do this, he had only to abstain from spreading the five or six last cards of the pack, which he kept together, so that no one could see what they were.
He then took the top card of the pack. "Now, gentlemen," he said, "for the four aces. I won't bring them into my hand, but here on the table; the effect will be more surprising."

While so speaking, and gesticulating accordingly, he intentionally exhibited the card which he held in his hand, and which, as will be remembered, was not an ace, then dexterously "changed" it for the uppermost ace.

"I will place, therefore, this first card here--one!" Here he made a false shuffle so as to have the opportunity of transferring the indifferent card from top to middle of the pack. He then placed on the table a second ace, saying "Two!" then another, "Three!" but instead of then at once taking the fourth ace, he "changed" it for the card next following, and showing it, observed--"You see, gentlemen, the cards which I take from the pack are not aces" (here he again "changed" the card for the last ace), "but by shaking them a little, like this, they turn into aces."

He showed the card as such, then turned up the other three cards to show the four aces together; and when the spectator looked beneath his own hand, he found that the four aces had departed, and that other cards had taken their place.

This is a very ingeniously devised trick, and the sequel which Conus appended to it, though rather free-and-easy, is nevertheless decidedly effective. I proceed to describe it as exactly as possible.

When the trick as above described was concluded, the performer replaced the aces on the top of the pack, and, while indulging in a little chaff at the expense of his victim, transferred them by the pass to the middle.

"I see, sir, that you have a considerable talent for conjuring; and when you have acquired the manual dexterity, the mental agility, and the general acuteness which are indispensably necessary to the art, I shouldn't wonder if, some day or other, you made a really very fair conjuror. But, stop a bit, I can prove to you at once that you are already more of a conjuror than you imagine."

During the delivery of this "patter," the hand which held the pack, sinking naturally down, had got hold of a tolerable-sized pack consisting of aces only, hidden behind the performer's table; then, in order to conceal the increased bulk of the pack, Conus covered it with the whole width of the other hand, as though merely to square up the cards.

It should here be mentioned, that in adding these aces to the rest of the pack, he had placed them face to face with the other cards. "Now, sir, be kind enough to say at what number you would like these aces, which are now on the top, to appear-fourth? sixth? twelfth?--just when you like--say 'Now.'"

He then threw a few of the cards rapidly on the table, repeating "Whenever you like."

"Now I should like them," says the person.
"How many would you like? I will give you as many as you please." So saying, he "turned over" the pack in such manner that the added aces should be on the top; and so that no one should notice the quantity of the cards he held, he kept his hand continually in motion in an up-and-down direction.

"Twelve," says the spectator.

"Twelve! You can't mean it. Why you know very well that there are only four in the pack. But it's all the same, if you really want twelve, I'm not particular to a few aces more or less. Here they are, you see." He threw twelve aces in succession on the table.

"Will you have any more? There are plenty to come." He threw down a considerable number. "The supply is inexhaustible, you see and, indeed, even if I hadn't any more, I should know very well where to find some." And in order to prove his assertion, separating the parcel of aces from the pack proper, he threw the latter on the table, and with great dexterity thrust the aces inside either the coat or the waistcoat of the victim, afterwards producing them from thence one by one to the very last. Conus had a special talent, moreover, for making this exhibition last as long as possible, and very often, by the time he had produced fifty aces in this manner, the general impression was that he had brought out a couple of hundred or so.

By way of a comical termination to the scene,--when the unfortunate victim at last made an effort to escape from this avalanche of cards, and to get back to his place among the spectators, Conus caught hold of his coat-tails and shook out aces even from thence. These were merely cards which he had gathered from the table and let fall simultaneously with the shaking of the skirts of the coat.
XVI.

THE CARD IN THE POCKET-BOOK

To have a Card freely Chosen from a Piquet Pack; Marked with a Pencil and Replaced in the Pack; to Hand the Cards to be Shuffled, and while the Spectator is still Shuffling, to take a Pocket-book out of one's own Coat Pocket, and Show that the Marked Card has already passed into such Pocket-book.

This is a little trick which I used to perform pretty frequently, and which has a very surprising effect. Its execution is extremely easy.

1. Have a card drawn from the pack.

2. Hand the spectator a pencil, and request him secretly to mark the card in a manner he can recognise.

3. Have the card replaced in the middle of the pack, transfer it by the pass to the top, palm it and offer the pack to be shuffled.

4. While the spectator is shuffling, you thrust your hand into your breast-pocket, and placing the card flat against the pocket-book, bring them out both together, taking care that the card shall be masked by the pocket-book, of which the opening is turned towards yourself.

5. "You need not take so much trouble, sir, in shuffling the cards, for yours is no longer there. The moment you put it back in the pack, it passed of its own accord into my pocket-book, and in proof of the fact, here it is!" Here you open the pocket-book, and the opening as it spreads hides your fingers, which appear to dip into the interior pockets in order to take out the card, though they in reality merely take it from one side.

The trick thus performed produces a complete illusion.

N.B.-When you desire to perform this trick, you must take care to so place the pocket-book that its opening shall be turned inwards, towards your own body.
XVII.

NOW!

To have Three Cards drawn by Three different Persons, and Replaced in the Pack. Then to Cause these Cards to Appear at such Numbers as may be Chosen.

For the performance of this trick a pack composed of three given cards is requisite; say ten kings of hearts, ten knaves of spades, and ten tens of diamonds. The first of each set of ten cards is a shade wider than the others, so that the performer may be able readily to find each particular group. Lastly, in order to hoodwink the spectators, you place above and below the pack an indifferent card of any sort, which we will suppose to be the eight of spades and the ace of clubs.

1. Advance to one of the spectators, and opening the pack fanwise at the first group of cards, force upon him one of the kings of hearts.

2. Proceeding in the same way, have a card drawn from the second, and one from the third group.

3. When the three cards have been drawn, have them replaced, each in its proper group.

4. Make a false shuffle after the method described under the title "The Fan Shuffle," which leaves the cards in their original order.

5. Then taking the top card, which is the eight of spades, "Now, sir," you say, "I am going to take the cards one by one from the pack, and place them very slowly upon this table. You are at liberty to stop me whenever you please, by saying 'Now!' and the card which I shall have in my hand at that moment will infallibly be the card you drew."

You stand a little away (say a yard or so) from the table, so that the passage of the card from the left hand to the table being rather prolonged, the spectator may have plenty of time to stop you. Besides which, as I have already mentioned, you take care to move the hand very slowly.

6. While you are making the above announcement, you have the eight of spades in your hand, and all can see what is. Now, the person whom you address, and who is the individual who drew the king, may endeavour to put you in a fix by saying "Now!" at this first card, which he knows to be the eight of spades.

But, in anticipation of a trap of this kind, you have already "changed" this eight for the card next following, which is a king, and so are fully prepared to fulfil your undertaking.* However, in order to get the utmost possible credit for your skill, you say, "Really, sir, it's hardly fair to stop me at the very first card,
because you have seen what it is, and you fancy you can put me in a dilemma; nevertheless, I will change this very card, whatever it may be, into the card which you selected. Be good enough to say what it was."

*This change should be by the second method, so as to leave the eight of spades at the bottom. If the first method were used, the eight would be left on the top, and might create a difficulty-ED.

"The king of hearts."

7. You show triumphantly the king of hearts, and so get the laugh completely on your side.

(If you distrust your ability to execute the "change," you simply refrain from putting the in-different card on the top.)

If the spectator, on the other hand, allows several cards to pass before stopping you, the trick will still be just as easy.

8. The "wide card" which commences the "knave of spades" group will enable you to divide the pack at that point, and to transfer (by means of the pass) the remaining kings, which you no longer need, to the bottom of the pack. You proceed with these cards as with the king of hearts, omitting only the preliminary feint with the first card.

9. Follow the same method in order to produce the ten of diamonds at the required number.

I must again lay stress upon the importance of proceeding slowly in transferring the cards from the pack to the table, in order to occupy sufficient time, and so to prevent any one from causing you to draw more than the ten cards of any one kind, which would place you in an awkward position.
XVIII.
THE FLYING ACES AND KINGS

The Four Kings having been Placed under a Hat, to Make them Come from thence into your Hand, while you Send in their Place Four Aces which you have just Shown to the Company.

For the performance of this trick, you must have four cards prepared as follows:-

Paint the four aces on the backs of four kings,* so that you only have to turn the cards over in order to transform them from the one to the other. By way of preparation for the trick, you place the four genuine kings on the top, while the four genuine aces and the ace-backed kings are distributed in different parts of the pack.

*Better: split four aces and four kings (this is easily done by splitting one corner with a sharp penknife and pulling the card apart), and paste the faces of the cards, thus reduced, back to back. ED.

To execute the trick:-

1. Turn the pack face upwards, and pick out first the prepared kings, and then the four genuine aces, which you place one after another on the table, face upwards.

2. Divide the pack into two portions, and by means of the pass transfer to the bottom the portion in which are the genuine kings; in so doing, turning over this portion so that the two halves of the pack are face to face.

When you have done this, the four genuine kings will be the first cards of the undermost half, which is upside down.

3. Pick up from the table the four genuine aces, and place them openly one after another on the top of the pack.

4. Place the pack, thus arranged, upon the table.

5. Ask some one to lend you a hat. Place it on a table or guéridon at some little distance, and taking the four prepared kings, which you had placed on the table, say:-

"I am about to confine these four kings in this dark dungeon" (here you place the cards underneath the hat, and in so doing secretly turn them over); "but I must frankly admit that I shall not keep their majesties prisoners for very long; indeed, I shall this very instant restore them to liberty."

The cards having been, as we have already stated, turned over in placing them under the hat, will now appear to be aces.
6. Take the pack in your hand--"Here," you say, exhibiting them "are four aces on the top of the pack, while the four kings are under the hat. I propose to cause an extraordinary transposition; but in order to increase the difficulty, I will first go still farther away from the hat."

Your movement for this purpose gives you an opportunity to turn over the pack, so that the kings, which have been hitherto underneath, now take the place of the aces, and vice versa.

"Kings, come to me!" you exclaim, "and aces, vanish!"

You first show that the kings have arrived at the top of the pack, after which you advance to the hat; but, in so doing, you again turn over the pack, which you place, so turned, on the table, when it will be in proper order for the next stage of the trick. You proceed to lift the hat, and show that the kings have departed, and that the aces have taken their place.

You cover the aces once more with the hat, turning them over as before, so that they now represent kings. "The kings," you say, "have been so quickly freed from bondage, that they will now have no hesitation in going of their own accord under the hat, and sending me in their place the four aces, which I have just shown you. "Attention! Go!" You show that the aces have come back to the pack, and that the kings have returned to the hat.
XIX.
THE PROTEAN PACK OF CARDS

Three Cards having been Drawn by Three different Persons and Replaced in the Pack, to cause the Pack to Change again and again into Thirty-two Cards of the same kind as those which were Drawn.

This trick produces a brilliant stage effect. For its performance a special pack is required, prepared as follows:-

Take thirty double-headed kings of spades,* and with a penknife make a sloping cut, from corner to corner, half through the thickness of the card, and split the card, beginning from this cut, so as to remove one of the two heads, then paste in place of the head removed the half of a queen of hearts treated in the same way.

*To make a pack of this description it is not necessary, as above suggested, to sacrifice fifty cards of each kind. Remove one-half of the face of fifteen kings, as above directed, and the like with fifteen queens. The part removed from the queens will then go to supply the void left in the faces of the kings, and vice versà. The diagonal line should not be directly from corner to corner, but from a point half an inch below the top corner to another point half an inch above the opposite corner. Cards prepared with the diagonal direct from corner to corner are very apt, when spread fanwise, to show a little of the wrong half of the card.---ED.

Also, paint on the back of each of these double cards an ace of diamonds.

These cards will therefore represent, (according as they are shown from above, from below, or hind part before), kings of spades, queens of hearts, or aces of diamonds.

Have the pack, thus prepared, in your right pochette. If you are unprovided with pochettes, you may conceal the pack either on your servante in such manner that you can get at it readily, or on a table behind some larger object.

1. Offer to three different spectators an unprepared pack of cards, and "force" upon them the king of spades, the queen of hearts, and the ace of diamonds.
2. Invite a fourth spectator to satisfy himself that there are no two cards alike in the pack.
3. This gives you the opportunity to get from your pochette, and palm, the prepared pack.
4. When the pack is returned to you, you, it in the left hand, place upon it the prepared pack, and, moving to a little distance, palm off the under-most pack, and place it in your left pochette.
5. You ask the person who holds the king of spades to return it to you, and you say to him, "Now, sir, you are about to witness a very extraordinary phenomenon. I have only to put this card underneath the pack, and immediately the whole pack will change to similar cards-namely, kings of spades."

6. This card partially concealing the "double" card which next follows it, you can, by spreading the pack fanwise, show all the cards as kings of spades.

7. While advancing to take the queen of hearts you turn the pack the other end upwards, and when you place this card under the pack and spread it fanwise, you show nothing but queens of hearts, the "king" portions being hidden by the lower parts of the queens of hearts.

8. Finally, in advancing to take the ace of diamonds you turn over the pack, and, placing this card with the rest and spreading them fanwise, show that they are all aces of diamonds.

9. While expatiating on the extraordinary character of the phenomenon you have exhibited, you take from your left pochette the pack which you deposited there, and again change it for the prepared pack. You may then offer the pack for examination a second time.

To the above tolerably long list of card tricks I might have added some examples of hands at card games, so contrived as infallibly to get the better of your adversary; but I should be repeating myself, inasmuch as I have already described in a special work, entitled Les Tricheries des Grecs* all the dodges, sleights, and subtleties of those who make it a trade to win at cards. At the end of the work in question, I placed, for the benefit of conjurors, a considerable number of "hands" arranged in the form of amusing tricks, with the object of proving the danger of playing with persons whose honesty is not absolutely certain.

*An English translation of this book, under the title of The Sharper Detected and Exposed, is published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall.-ED.

I might also have here inserted some of those card tricks which depend upon mathematical principles, and for the performance of which no sleight-of-hand is necessary. My reason for abstaining is, that as I have a good deal to say upon the matters I have in hand, I fear that I should lack space to do justice to the description of the tricks of sleight-of-hand and personal dexterity which form the special subject of this book.

I shall postpone to my second volume the description of these very pretty methods of amusing, and I propose to add thereto a considerable number of tricks of the Parlour Magic order, by the aid of which any one of social tastes may readily acquire the reputation of a wizard.*

* The death of the author prevented his carrying this intention into effect.-ED.
CHAPTER III.

SUNDRY EXPEDIENTS USED IN CONJURING, AND TRICKS OF VARIOUS DESCRIPTIONS

TO PALM CORKS, LUMPS OF SUGAR, AND OTHER OBJECTS OF SMALL SIZE

A DIGESTIVE DESSERT.—TO EAT CORKS

SUNDRY METHODS OF VANISHING ARTICLES FOR WHICH THE ASSISTANCE OF A TABLE IS NECESSARY

First Method.—To Vanish an Article in the act of Picking it up

Second Method.—To Vanish an Article in the act of Throwing it into the Air

Third Method.—To Vanish an Article in the act of Throwing

Fourth Method.—To Vanish an Article by Rolling it away

Fifth Method.—Substitution of one Article for Another by means of the Second Method

Sixth Method.—To Vanish a Pack of Cards

Seventh Method.—To Change a Pack of Cards into a Bird

Eighth Method.—To Introduce a Cannon-Ball into a Hat

THE CHINESE RINGS.—To Make Solid Metal Rings Link one into Another, and to Form therewith Chains of various kinds.

THE CRYSTAL BALLS.—Mysteriously to Produce certain Crystal Balls, to Cut them in half with the Hand, to Change their Colour, and to make them Pass one into another.

THE CANNON-BALL TRICK.—To Produce one or more Cannon-Balls from a Hat lent by one of the Spectators.

THE PLUMES AND SHOWER OF SWEETS.—After having Produced from a Silk Handkerchief a considerable number of Military Plumes, to Produce therefrom also a quantity of Bonbons, which are Distributed among the Spectators.
CHAPTER III.

SUNDRY EXPEDIENTS USED IN CONJURING, AND TRICKS OF VARIOUS DESCRIPTIONS

SECTION I.

To Palm Corks, Lumps of Sugar, and other Objects of small size

We have already explained (under title "Palming," ) how it is possible to hold a coin concealed in the hand. The same method is also applicable to other articles of small weight, so long as such articles possess sufficient angularity to afford a hold to the two muscular portions of the hand known as the thenar and hypothenar.

An ordinary cork is one of the easiest articles to vanish by this method.

To palm a cork, you proceed as with a coin, save that you use a slightly different method of placing it in the palm. In showing the cork to the spectators you hold it between the first and fourth fingers,* as in Fig. 49; and when you move it towards the left hand, as though to place it therein, you fold it into the hollow of the right hand, where it remains fixed--as in Fig. 50.

*The text says: "entre le petit doigt et l'annulaire," but this is clearly a slip.-ED.
The second and third fingers, which are behind the cork, serve to press it into the palm.

If, instead of a cork, you take a lump of sugar or any other article of like dimensions, you will obtain the same result. See Fig. 51.

Articles of this description are very much more easily palmed than coins. After a little practice you will be quite astonished at the results you will obtain.

Some conjurors manage to palm balls of wood, of cork, and even of brass, but this cannot be done unless the performer possesses a hand naturally moist with perspiration.* The advantage gained in this particular is more than neutralised by the inconvenience which this unfortunate constitutional peculiarity causes in other illusions.

*This is not strictly the case. If the performer has a moderately fleshy palm and soft skin, he should be able to palm brass, or even glass balls without the slightest difficulty. Robert-Houdin was himself of singularly spare make, and had in all probability a hard, dry palm, a peculiarity which greatly increases the difficulty of palming.--ED.

Previous | Next | Section Contents | Main Contents
A DIGESTIVE DESSERT
To Eat Corks

This is a trick of a comic character, which may be appropriately introduced when at

table with a party of friends.

Towards the close of the meal, you remark, addressing yourself to your host, "Excuse
me, sir, but I have a little confession to make. Some people wouldn't consider they had
properly finished off their dinner unless they took a bit of cheese. It is said to be an aid
to digestion. Will you allow me to mention that I have a special idiosyncrasy in point
of diet? I never fancy that I have made a proper dinner unless I finish with a few corks.
You mustn't imagine, by the way, that it is a mere fancy of mine; I have taken to the
practice because I find that cork tends to make the other eatables lighter, and so to
facilitate digestion.

"Will you allow me to put the finishing touch to the capital dinner which you have
given us?"

You have beforehand privately handed to your host's servant a score or so of new
corks, which, at your request, he now brings you. This delicacy is served in a small
soup-tureen or deep dish.

"Upon my word," you say, "this dish of corks looks very tempting." (You stir the corks
about with the hand in order to draw attention to them.) "There being no gravy, I may
venture to eat with my fingers."

You take a cork in manner indicated above (Fig. 49), and make believe to put it in the
left hand, though you really palm it in the right.

The left hand closes, but remains puffed out as though it held the cork, which you
pretend to put in your mouth.

In order to complete the illusion, you puff out one of your cheeks by forcing the tongue
against it, and after having pretended to chew the cork for a moment or two, you
ultimately make believe to swallow it.

"Ah," you say, smacking your lips, "that's good! The cook has forgotten to put any salt
to it, but the flavour is so delicate that it may very well do as it is."

You dip the right hand into the tureen to take a second cork, and in so doing lay down
the one you have just palmed upon the others; then take another, and proceed as before,
continuing for some minutes.

The soup-basin serves to conceal the working of the trick, but when you have attained
tolerable skill you may have the corks served up on an ordinary plate. With a score or so of corks it is impossible to see whether the number is lessened or remains as at first.

This amusing little practical joke will serve as an introduction to other "dinner-table" tricks.

Previous | Next | Section Contents | Main Contents
SECTION II.

Sundry Methods of Vanishing Articles for which the Assistance of a Table is Necessary

As the "vanishes" we are now about to describe necessitate the use of a special table, we will avail ourselves of this opportunity to give, with reference to this subject, a few particulars which we purposely omitted in a preceding section. We shall at a future period complete our explanations by giving a description of the "traps" and "pedals" with which the tables employed for stage performances are generally furnished.

Fig. 52 represents a back view of a conjuror's table, fitted with a servante and gibecière. The servante is, as already explained, a shelf on which are placed the articles destined to be produced in the course of the performance. The gibecière, or "drop-box," is a little box made of some kind of cloth, padded with wadding, and quilted so as to give it a certain degree of stiffness. Its use is to receive noiselessly any articles dropped therein, in order to get them out of sight of the spectators. The gibecière, not being fastened to the servante, may be pushed inside the table when it is not in actual use. Before I had invented the box above mentioned, the servante itself, with a cushion laid thereon, was known as the gibecière. The different modes of "vanishing" which I am about to describe must by no means be considered as themselves constituting tricks. They are merely methods or expedients to be used for the production of the effects introduced in the course of the tricks which follow.

FIRST METHOD
To Vanish an Article in the act of Picking it Up

Place (say) an orange near the edge of your table, just above the gibecière. When, in
the course of your "patter" you say "I take this orange," you encircle it with both hands as though to pick it up, but before letting the hands close on it, you give it a slight push with those fingers of the one hand which are masked by the other hand, and make believe to pick up the fruit, whereas it really falls into the *gibecière*.

You must take special care that those fingers which are hidden alone move, without the hand in the slightest degree participating in the movement.

**SECOND METHOD**

**To Vanish an Article in the act of Throwing it up into the Air**

You throw up (say) a ball, a little distance, as though to exhibit it to the spectators, and you catch it again in your hand. The hand sinks a little under the pressure of its weight, and in so doing dexterously drops the ball into the *gibecière*, while you instantly bring the hands together as though to hold it tight.

You must be careful, when you let fall the ball, to avoid any movement save what is the natural accompaniment of the action which you are imitating--namely, the pretended catching of the ball with the two hands.

**THIRD METHOD**

**To Vanish an Article in the act of Throwing**

Holding (say) an egg in your right hand and a lemon in your left, you announce that you are about to pass the egg into the lemon. So saying, you bring the two articles close together, as though to show what it is you are about to do. You then quickly draw back the egg from the lemon, and, as in so doing your hand passes over the *gibecière*, you let it fall therein, which however does not prevent the hand from continuing its backward movement, and from then throwing towards the lemon its imaginary contents.

It should be noted that the eggs used for conjuring purposes are "blown," for fear of accidents.

**FOURTH METHOD**

**To Vanish an Article by Rolling it away**

This method was employed by Bosco to vanish three large muscades.* He took them with the fingers of the right hand, and made a great show of rolling them round and round on the table, in circles. In so doing, he gradually worked nearer and nearer to the edge of the table, and let the muscades fall into the *gibecière*, but kept on for another round or two as though they were still beneath his hand. A moment later he opened the hand and showed that the friction had rubbed them quite away.

*The small cork balls used in the working of the jeu des gobeletes or cups and balls.-ED.*
At the distance at which the spectators are usually placed, it is quite impossible for them to judge whether the hand of the performer travels beyond the edge of the table.

FIFTH METHOD
Substitution of one Article for Another by means of the Second Method

Let us suppose that you desire to substitute a small ball for a large one, or (say) a little orange for a larger one.

Take the orange with the tips of the fingers of the right hand, and show it to the spectators. While so doing, drop the left hand and secretly take the small orange from the *servante*. Then, as described above, when (having thrown the orange up in the air and let it fall into the *gibecière*) you bring your hands together, the small orange is found therein in place of the other.

SIXTH METHOD
To Vanish a Pack of Cards

1. Place the pack towards your right hand and near the front corner of your table. Spread it out in an arc of a circle, as described previously, directing the curve towards the hinder edge of the table, near the *gibecière*.

2. The cards being thus spread out, place the fingers of the right hand under those most remote from you, and gather them rapidly together, following the curve taken by the pack as above describe!.

3. When the cards are thus all gathered up, the hand which holds them being just over, and in close proximity to the *gibecière*, let them fall therein, after which you make believe to throw them into the air or towards any given spot.

This "vanish" may be performed so instantaneously that it is impossible not to be completely deceived thereby.

SEVENTH METHOD
To Change a Pack of Cards into a Bird

You have, placed at the left-hand side of your *servante*, a little oblong box, in which is a bird, prevented from escaping by a slip of thin paper, which keeps it in place.

You spread the pack upon the table, as above described, and as you place the fingers of the right hand under the cards, in order to gather them up, with the left hand you break the paper which covers the box, get hold of the bird, and at the same moment that, having gathered together the pack, you drop it into the *gibecière*, you bring the two hands together with a quick upward movement, and let fly the bird towards the spectators, who naturally expect to receive the pack of cards.

This change has a particularly pretty effect.
EIGHT METHOD
To introduce a Cannon-Ball into a Hat

The cannon-balls used in this trick are of hard wood, stained black; they are five inches or thereabouts in diameter, and have a hole bored from the circumference to the centre, to receive the middle finger of the right hand.

The cannon-ball is hidden behind the table at the right-hand side of the *servante*, the bore pointing slightly upwards, so that the hand may not have to plunge down in order to reach it. (See Fig. 52.)

In order to introduce the ball into a hat--

1. Take the hat in the right hand with four fingers only, the middle finger remaining free for the purpose of the trick.
2. Go behind your table, and while delivering your patter, and making appropriate gestures with the same hand that holds the hat, so arrange as to bring the latter mouth downwards a little over the cannon-ball.
3. Such being the condition of things, you advance the left arm to take, under one pretence or another, some article which is placed towards the front of the table. As a natural consequence of this movement, the body is bent forward a little, the right hand sinks gently down to the level of the table, and the middle finger forthwith finds its way into the ball, lifts it up, and introduces it into the hat.

The whole movement should not last more than a second.

The spectators, suspecting nothing, have been looking at the article you picked up from the table, and not at the hat.

The ball once fairly in, you keep it in position with the middle finger, and continue to wave about the hat, taking care to keep it mouth downwards.

When, in course of preparation for a performance, you place the cannon-ball on the *servante*, you should actually take a hat, and ascertain the precise direction which the hole should take, so as to lie right for the middle finger. The trick should, moreover, be thoroughly well practiced before it is exhibited in public, for it is not a matter which will bear indifferent execution. The student should specially note that the ball is to be "shot flying," so to speak, and without any pause whatever.

A second cannon-ball is frequently introduced into the hat after the production of the first. This second ball is placed at the left-hand side of the *servante*, and is introduced after the manner already described.
THE CHINESE RINGS

To Make Solid Metal Rings Link one into another, and to Form therewith Chains of various kinds.

Nothing can be more marvellous and more incomprehensible than the trick we are about to describe.

How indeed is it possible to conceive that metal rings, which to all appearance have no break or opening, can be linked one into another, forming the most complex patterns, and be afterwards disengaged again, with the same facility as though they were composed of some impalpable material?

And yet this marvellous effect depends upon an artifice of the simplest possible character. All that is necessary is that one of the rings should have an opening to allow of the passage of the others. The manner in which the performer interweaves them gives them an appearance of entanglement which is only partly real.

The rings used for the performance of this trick are made either of brass or of polished iron. Iron is preferable to brass, inasmuch as it does not, like brass soil the hands, or impart to them an unpleasant odour.

The size of the rings is a matter of fancy; it should, however, be made proportionate to
the distance at which they are exhibited. Upon a large stage, rings of about eight inches in diameter are generally used; but six inches is quite large enough for rings intended for use before small audiences.

The thickness of the larger rings is about five-sixteenths of an inch; that of the smaller about a quarter of an inch.

The complete set of rings is composed of twelve,* namely--

1. Five rings, known as "singles," with the wire of which they are composed soldered at the ends like in Fig. 53.

2. Two rings called "keys," the ends of which are not soldered together, and can readily be pulled apart, as A and B in Fig. 53.

3. Three rings, known as the "set of three," linked one into the other, and with their ends soldered, as F in Fig. 53.

4. Two rings, known as the "set of two," linked together like those last described.

*The ordinary set sold at most conjuring depots consists of eight rings only--namely, a group of three, a group of two, one "key" ring, and two single rings. This smaller set is easier to manage, but does not admit of so much variety in effect. See Modern Magic, p. 402.--ED.

As we have already mentioned, the rings called the "keys" are open. This opening is made in two different ways. For performances where the trick is exhibited at a considerable distance, the opening of the "key" ring may be wide enough to allow the thickness of the other rings to pass freely through. (See A, Fig. 53.)

When, on the other hand, the trick is performed before a small circle, where one is, so to speak, under the very eyes of the spectators, the two ends of the key should touch one another, and may even be actually joined by means of a little point sinking into a conical depression in the opposite end, after the fashion sometimes adopted for earrings. (See B, b, b', Fig. 53.)

This arrangement is a little more troublesome to manage than the other, but with a little practice the difficulty is readily got over. For greater facility in working, the key is in
this case so arranged, that when its ends are once disengaged, they stand apart one from the other, and in the relative position shown by \( b \) in the figure. The performer can, when necessary, re-insert the little point into its hole with one hand, thereby joining the ends of the ring.

Letter c, in Fig. 53, shows another form of opening, cut aslant, which some conjurors prefer as less perceptible to the eye.

**The "Passes" with the Rings.**

The "passes" used with the rings may be varied *ad infinitum*, every performer having one or more peculiar to himself. However, there are certain standard combinations sanctioned by custom, and which will be a guide to the student in the formation of new figures.

The series next following has a very good effect. We will, by way of illustration, give it as actually performed.

**Examination of the Rings.**

On coming forward upon the stage, you have the rings strung upon your left arm, and arranged in the following order-namely, the five singles, one of the keys, the set of two, the set of three, and the remaining key.*

\*The order above indicated is reckoned from the wrist towards the shoulder.--ED.

You advance to the company, and hand, one after another, the five single rings to different spectators, begging them to make certain that they are solid throughout; and in order to give the impression that you distribute a still larger number, you take back these rings from those who hold them, lay them for a moment on the others, and shell hand them to some one else to be examined.

When all the five rings are returned to you, you lay the whole set near you on a small table, and begin the trick as follows:--

**Pass with two Rings.**

1. Take the "set of two"--i.e., the two rings permanently linked one into the other--and hold them close together, so that the audience may not be able to perceive that they are linked together.

2. Let go one of the two rings, which falls naturally into the other, and as the audience believed them to be separate, they will now imagine that they have linked themselves together.

These rings being "solid," you can allow the spectators to examine for themselves the perfect manner in which they are joined together.
Pass with three Rings.

1. These two rings (the set of two) being returned to you after being examined, you join with them a "key," into which you artfully link them, thus forming a chain of three. (See c, Fig. 54.)

2. Form the figure H, by linking the lowermost ring into the key.

3. Form the figure known as the "stirrups." To do this, disengage the rings so as to get them into a chain like G. Then, holding the key with the right hand, with the left catch hold of the lower part of the middle ring, turn it over towards the key, and so pass it through the opening, when you will have the figure 1.

Pass with four Rings.

1. Disengage the "key," and secretly link it into a "single."

2. Hold these two rings together in the same hand, and let them fall one into the other, as you did in the "pass with two rings" above described.

The spectators, having ascertained for themselves in the pass above mentioned, that the two rings were really solid, never dream that this present pass has been performed with the aid of a "key."

3. Taking in the left hand the chain of two rings which has been examined, and in the right that which you have just made, join them together by means of the "key," so as to form a chain of four, which you lay upon the table.

4. Take the set of three in the right hand, holding the rings together, and let them fall one by one, as you did
with the set of two. At the moment when the third falls down, link key No. 2 into the uppermost, and show a second chain of four (letter J, Fig. 55).

5. Link the lowest of these rings into the key, and by holding it suspended by one of the middle rings you form the figure K.

By grasping in one hand the top and bottom ring of the figure shown in letter k, you produce a sort of sphere. (See L)

**Pass with twelve Rings.**

1. Take the two chains of four, one in each hand, holding them by the "keys."

2. Link a single into each of the keys, and join the two chains by linking a third single in between the two keys, as shown in the figure at the head of this section. In order to complete the chain of twelve, take a single in each hand, and hold them one against each of the rings which terminate the chain at A and I,. To the spectators it appears as if these rings were linked with the rest.

To assist the reader in following the manner in which the above figure is combined, we proceed to analyse it. Commencing at the right hand of the performer, we have--1. A single (detached); 2. The set of three; 3. A key; 4. A single; 5. A key; 6. The set of two; 7. A single (detached); 8. The two rings which hang down from the rest are two singles linked into the two keys.

**Inextricable Chains**

1. Gather up into your hands sundry rings of the chain, so as to cause an appearance of hopeless entanglement.

2. While in the act of shaking and mixing together the rings, which appear to be in a mere disorderly tangle, disengage the keys and singles one by one, and hand for examination, taking care, however, to keep back the key. In order to wind up with a brilliant effect, when the audience hand you back the set of three, which they have naturally been unable to separate, you take them, and gathering them together with your right hand, transfer them to the left, in which you have already two singles, which you have linked together by means of a "key." If you again pass these six rings back into the right hand, the set of three will be innermost, and the two singles connected by the key outermost. Then, showing this last chain of three rings, which the audience take to be that which they have just examined, you say--

"You have satisfied yourselves, gentlemen, that these rings are solidly linked together? Well, you will see with what ease I can separate them. I have only to blow upon them." As you blow, you silently disengage the rings, and show that they are separate.
There is a special feint which may be used in disengaging the rings with very good effect. Thus, in certain cases, although a ring is already detached from the chain, you continue to hold it against it, and the rings still appear linked together. Then, by slowly drawing away the disengaged ring, it appears as though you made it pass through an impalpable chain.

Similarly, when you hold the chain of four (letter J, in Fig. 55) suspended by the key, you secretly disengage this latter, and hold it for a moment flat against the second ring, with which it appears to be still linked. Then, by letting it sink gently down to the bottom of the chain, still holding it against the rings, it appears to have passed through them all before getting free.

This experiment appears most mysterious when executed in perfect silence on the part of the performer. It may, however, have a light and airy musical accompaniment.

I must repeat that the passes above given are intended merely by way of example, and to assist the conjuror in arranging others still more elaborate.*

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*For a brilliant concluding pass, see Modern Magic; P 405.--ED.
THE CRYSTAL BALLS

Mysteriously to Produce certain Crystal Balls, to Cut them in half with the Hand, to Change their Colour, and to make them Pass one into another.

The appliances necessary for the performance of this trick are--

1. A wand, prepared as hereafter described.
2. Two balls of plain glass, about an inch and three-eighths in diameter.
3. Two balls of ruby-coloured glass, of the same size.
4. A little ball of plain glass of about three quarters of an inch in diameter.*

*There seems to be here an error in the text, the author stating that three of the large plain glass balls, and two of the small, are necessary; but in the actual description of the trick he only mentions two large and one small ball. The second red ball only comes into use in a subsequent trick (see "The Vase for the Cannonball")--ED.

5. A bottle or decanter of plain glass, at the bottom of which is a hollow space capable of containing one of the glass balls, as shown in Fig. 56.

Preliminary Preparations for the Trick.

1. You half fill the bottle with red wine, and introduce under the hollow one of the red glass balls.

(See Fig. 56.) The bottle, thus arranged, is placed near the edge of the table, so as to be readily got hold of.

2. You place in your right pochette one of the plain glass balls.

3. You place in your left pochette a second plain glass ball, and the smaller ball.

4. You place the wand in your left sleeve, where it lies between the elbow joint and the palm of the hand, which you hold half closed and turned inwards towards your body. The wand is specially prepared after a manner which should be here mentioned. At one of its ends is a very minute metal ring, to which is fastened a piece of black cotton thread; the other end of this thread, which is of the same length as the wand, is fixed inside the sleeve, in such manner that when the wand comes out of the sleeve, the thread, being drawn out to its full length, shall so hold it that the hand can get hold of its inner end.
The reader will probably inquire how I managed thus to provide myself with the glass balls and wand without the knowledge of the spectators. Nothing however, can be more simple. I always arranged my programme in such manner, that each trick should last about ten minutes, thus making a total of twelve for a two hours' performance.

At the conclusion of each trick, whether at a public or private performance, I used to retire and remain absent about a couple of minutes. This short interval allowed the spectators time to exchange notes of their impressions, and gave them a temporary repose after the close attention which the trick they had just seen had involved. To myself these two minutes of interval were even more valuable. I first took a few seconds' rest, then I ascertained whether all was in order for the next item of the programme, and provided myself with whatever was necessary for the purpose of that trick.

The scene, however, was never left "cold." At the concluding phrase of each illusion, the orchestra or piano recommenced, and did not cease until I again came forward.

PASS 1.
The Production of the Wand

On coming forward on the stage, you place a small round table in front of you, and pretty near to the spectators; then you pretend to be in search of something, looking hither and thither in all directions. "I find, gentlemen," you remark, "that I have forgotten my wand, and as you are aware, I can do nothing without it. It would be beneath my dignity to go and fetch it, so I must make it come at command; that will be the simplest arrangement. You will yourselves see it come, either on one side" (you extend your right arm towards the right) "or on the other." (Here you stretch out the left hand, in which the wand instantly appears.) "Ah! here it is!"

Explanation:--The swing of the arm towards the right is intended to draw the eyes of the spectators towards that quarter; and it is in the act of stretching the left arm in the opposite direction, and saying, "or on this side," that you make the wand protrude, and catch it in the hand. By the time the spectators are looking in this direction, the trick is done.

As soon as the wand is fairly in your hand, you break the thread.

PASS II.
To Cause the Appearance of a Crystal Ball.

"You are aware, gentlemen, of the power of this magic wand. I have only to give a gentle tap with it wherever you please, in order to produce any given article from thence; but in order to produce this effect, the object must be mentally named at the same time that the blow is given. Come, for example, suppose we try to make it produce a crystal ball, not here" (you tap the small table with the wand), "but here" (you give a tap on your own hand). "Here it is, you see. Nothing easier!" (A glass ball
Explanation. -- The tap given by the wand on the table is designed to draw the eyes of
the spectators in that direction. Meanwhile, as the body bends forward to strike, the
right hand* naturally falls close to the right pochette, and by a gentle pressure squeezes
out from thence a ball, which you forthwith produce during the act of raising the hand
to meet the wand.

*It must be remembered that the wand has been held throughout in the left hand--ED.

In order to enhance the mystery of this production, it
should be executed as follows:-

During the upward movement of the arm, the ball hidden
in the hand should, partly by means of the impetus
thereby created, and partly by force of a pressure exerted
by the fingers, appear on the top of the hand, after the
manner of an egg laid by a hen and in the position shown
in Fig. 57.

PASS III.
To Divide a Crystal Ball into Two Portions.

You show the ball, exhibiting it in the right hand. "This ball," you remark, "is of
rock-crystal, very heavy and very hard; but, hard though it is, I hope to succeed in
dividing it into two portions." Here you toss it in the air two or three times, catching it
again in the hand. You then take it between the tips of the fingers of the left hand, and
make believe to cut straight down with the right, immediately showing two balls in the
hollow of the hand. You then make believe to round off the supposed cut portions by
rolling them between the hands.

Explanation. -- When you toss the ball in the air, it is, again, in order to attract the
attention of the spectators; indeed, the eyes perforce follow the ball in its ascent.
During the favourable moment (temps) thus gained, the left hand takes a second ball
from the pochette and holds it concealed, the half-closed position of the hand being
plausibly accounted for by the placing of the other ball at the tips of the fingers of the
same hand. When you afterwards "cut" the visible ball with the right hand, you open
the left, and the two balls appear as if one were really cut off the other.

PASS IV.
To Produce a Little Ball from a Large one.

"If I have cut the ball fairly in half, these two parts should be of exactly the same size.
Let us see whether they are so." You compare them one with the other, and finally
place them on the small table in order to judge them more accurately, beginning with
the one which is in the left hand. While the right hand lays down the ball in its turn, the
left, which is disengaged, and which by the inclination of the body is brought close to
the pochette, presses thereon with a slight upward movement, and thereby brings the
smaller ball into the hand, where it is held concealed.

"I fancy," you say, indicating one of the two balls with the right hand--"I fancy that this one is the larger." (The supposed difference is wholly imaginary, but the audience cannot distinguish this at the distance at which they are placed.) "What say you, gentlemen? If the one is larger than the other, I cannot have divided the ball equally. This, however, will not occasion any difficulty. I will at once correct the mistake by taking away a little of the crystal from the larger of the two."

You take the crystal ball with the tips of the fingers of the left hand, in which, as will be remembered, is the small ball, and making believe, as before, to cut a little off the ball, you open the left hand and produce the little ball as though it came out of the other.

PASS V.
To Pass a Little Ball into a Large one.

At the close of the preceding pass, you replace the two balls on the table in order to judge whether they are both of the same size. You pretend to compare them attentively.
"If I am not mistaken," you say, "this ball is still a little the larger. Probably I haven't taken away quite enough from it. If so, instead of still further diminishing this larger one, I will add this little bit to the other." You take with the tips of the fingers of the left hand the ball which is supposed to be the smaller, and then, holding the very small ball with the right hand, you make believe to strike it once or twice on the other in order to make it pass therein; but after one or two taps you artfully let fall the little ball behind the larger into the hollow of the left hand, and so cause it to disappear.

You now replace the larger ball beside the other on the table, which gives you an opportunity to get rid of the little one by dropping it into the pochette.

"Now we have the two balls exactly equal you see there is no difficulty about the matter."

PASS VI.
To Make one Ball Pass into the Other.

"I was obliged to get these two balls exactly alike in size, so as to be the better able to pass the one into the other, for you see, gentlemen, if they were not of the same size, when they were made one the larger would project, and we should in all probability have a ball which was not round. However, we have now nothing to fear in that particular."

While speaking as above, you have drawn near to the table which has the gibecière. You place both balls on this table.

"Now then," you say, again taking one in each hand, "which ball shall we choose to swallow up the other? It is quite indifferent to me."
So saying, you raise the left hand to a level with the eye, and sharply draw the other hand away in a horizontal direction, at the same time lowering it a little; you then bring the hands together again, in order to pass the one ball into the other. "It has gone in. Now I have only to give it a rub with the hand just to polish it and smooth off the corners."

*Explanation:*-When the right hand sinks down a little, as above mentioned, it is just above the *gibecière*, and at the moment when the hand makes the movement of bringing back the ball in order to pass it into the other, you surreptitiously drop it into the *gibecière*, and continue the make-believe operation as though you still had the ball in your hand.

The pass being completed, you replace the single ball on the table, and show, in a careless manner, that your hands are empty.

It is useless to attempt to describe this pass more minutely; the performer must work it out, so to speak, for himself. It is, however, very closely related to the *third method of causing the disappearance of an article*, described previously.

**PASS VII.**

*To Stain a Crystal Ball Red*

"I shall now, ladies, show you a very curious process for staining glass, making use of this ball to illustrate the effect.

"The process I allude to is extremely simple, as you will be able to judge for yourselves. All that is necessary in order to stain this ball a splendid ruby red is to plunge it for an instant into a little wine, to shake it about well, and the deed is done. You don't believe me? I will perform the experiment before your own eyes.

"Here is a bottle which will just do for the purpose. Look! I uncork it. What shall I do with the cork? I will send it to take its walks abroad, until I want it again." (Here you place it, or rather pretend to place it, in the left hand, and, palming it by the method described previously, ultimately get rid of it into the *gibecière*.)

You take the ball in the right hand, but seem struck by a sudden thought. "Stay, now I come to think of it, here is a difficulty I had not anticipated. How shall I manage to get the ball into the bottle? It's true, I might employ a very simple method--namely, to give the bottle a knock and break it." Here you strike the bottle once or twice, in order by the sound thereby made to cover that which the ball beneath makes in its hiding-place as you lift the bottle with the left hand and slip the little finger underneath to sustain the ball. You hold the bottle sloping a little towards the spectators, so that the position of the little finger is not noticed.

"However, that method would be rather too much in the style of Christopher Columbus with the egg, or Alexander with the Gordian knot. Those great men, who cut or smashed a difficulty without solving it, would have made very poor conjurors. Mine is a more ingenious method, and decidedly much more magical--namely, to compel the
ball to pass down the neck of the bottle, although, as you see, as a question of comparison, the ball is considerably the larger." (At the concluding words of your sentence you poise the ball on the mouth of the bottle, but by tilting the latter a little you make the ball fall into the right hand, which is at this moment immediately over the *gibecière*, and slily drop the ball therein, though keeping the hand still puffed out, so as to induce the belief that the ball is still therein.) "It is difficult, it is true, but by no means impossible. I have only to squeeze the ball in my hand so as to make it smaller" (here you advance a little towards the spectators), "and when it is small enough you make it pass like this." (Here you open your hand to show that it is empty, and at the same time, by slightly relaxing the pressure of the little finger, you give the concealed ball comparative liberty, and by shaking the bottle cause it to rattle.)

"You hear it, gentlemen? That will show you that it has really passed into the bottle."

**PASS VIII.**

To Get the Ball out of the Bottle again.

"The ball has passed into the bottle; I have shaken it about well, and by this time it should have taken the colour. It is a curious feature of this experiment, that by contact with the liquid the ball regains its original size. I will proceed to show it you, and to get it out I shall make use of atmospheric pressure. I shall strike my hand against the mouth of the bottle, the enclosed air will be compressed, and will in consequence force out the ball through the bottom. You understand me, gentlemen? Let us try the experiment. One! Two! Three!"

At each number named you strike a blow with the hand on the mouth of the bottle, and the third time, the right hand, after striking the blow as before, comes sharply down below the bottle to catch the ball, which the little finger at the same moment releases. The effect, to the spectators, is as if the ball came through the bottom of the bottle.

This series of passes, neatly executed, has a very pretty effect, and causes the audience to form a high opinion of the operator's dexterity.

The trick may be brought to a brilliant conclusion as follows.
THE CANNON-BALL TRICK

To Produce one or more Cannon-Balls from a Hat lent by one of the Spectators.

In continuation of the experiment last described, you remark, "You feel surprised, I daresay, gentlemen, that this crystal ball could pass through the decanter and come into my hand. The explanation is that the ball, from the manipulations it has received, has acquired the property of passing through material substances.

"In order to enable you to fully understand the experiment, I will show it to you over again in another shape. Will some one oblige me, for that purpose, with a hat?"

When the hat is handed to you, you draw near to your table, and, in so doing, take a glance into the interior, and read aloud the maker's name, or, if such is the case, remark to the owner that it bears no maker's name. This produces a general belief (in this instance well-founded) that the hat is empty. Where, on the other hand, a hat is already "loaded," you may still induce the belief that it is empty by making believe to read the address, which you have in reality noted a few moments earlier.

You pass behind your table, holding the hat, mouth downwards, in your right hand, and while in the act of taking with the left hand the crystal ball which you had left a moment before on the table, you quickly slip the middle finger of the right hand into the hole of the cannon-ball, and "load" it into the hat, after the manner described previously.

As soon as the ball is fairly in the hat (still keeping the middle finger in place so as to sustain it and prevent its crushing the hat), you draw near the audience, the crystal ball in one hand and the hat in the other.

"Here is a hat," you say, "about which you cannot possibly suppose any preparation. I will endeavour to pass the ball through this.

"But, by the way, sir, I forget to ask you a very important question. You have not left anything in your hat which can interfere with the passage of the ball? No? well now, that's curious! My reason for asking the question is that your hat seems to me very heavy for an empty hat, in fact my arm is quite tired with holding it."

Here you relieve yourself of the crystal ball, by placing it on the table.

"Let us see now!" You shake the hat, holding its mouth downwards with both hands, one of them, however, keeping back the cannon-ball so that it may appear to come out
with difficulty, and at last let it fall on the floor.

During the shout of laughter which this little scene invariably provokes, you draw back to your table, and still talking of what has taken place, you pass behind it, holding the hat in the proper position for the introduction of the second cannon-ball.

"What puzzles me, sir, is how you could possibly get your hat on your head with a cannon-ball of such a size in it." Meanwhile, with the left hand, you pick up the crystal ball, which you took care so to place on the table that, as you move towards it, the hat shall be just over the left-hand cannon-ball. Then, by means of the middle finger, you lightly carry off this second cannon-ball, just as you did its predecessor.

"Now that we are quite sure that there is nothing in the hat, we can try our experiment with full confidence as to our success."

Again you draw near to the spectators. "Now then!" You give a rap with the crystal ball on the crown of the hat, saying, "One!... Dear me, it's curious how very heavy this her still seems." You weigh it in the hand, and make believe that the arm bends a little under its weight. "Upon my word, why here is another!" You turn over the hat, and produce as before, with pretended difficulty, a second cannon-ball.

"Really, I can't understand this. I see, sir, I must give up the idea of using your hat, for I should soon have no room upon my stage for the cannon-balls which would come out of it." You return the hat to the owner, remarking, "I won't give you back your cannon-balls now, as they would be a trouble to you. I will return them to you after the performance. There they are, you see." You point them out on a shelf or table at the back of your stage, where your assistant has meanwhile placed them.

The trick might very well end here; but, in my own performances, I thought it desirable to still further increase its effect by appending to it a sequel, in which two or three feats of dexterity were introduced. I proceed to describe the trick in question, to which I gave the name of The Vase for the Cannon-Ball.

**The Vase for the Cannon-Ball.**

The vase for the cannon-ball consists of two hemi-spherical portions, made of wood, and of such a size as to contain a cannon-ball similar to those which came out of the hat. This vase is mounted on a bronze foot.

The cannon-ball belonging to the vase is hollow, and, like the vase, is formed of two thin shells, which when joined together by a rebate round their respective edges, form but one, and have all the appearance of a solid ball. If you place this sham ball in the vase, and close this latter, two little iron points, placed respectively inside the upper and lower portions of the vase, hook themselves into corresponding holes made at top and bottom of the ball, in such manner that, when the vase is again opened, the two hollow portions of the ball part company, and remain attached to, and apparently forming part of, the upper and lower portions of the vase. The cannon-ball thus appears to have vanished.
When preparing for the trick, you place beforehand in the hollow cannon-ball a silk handkerchief, a pack of cards, and a ruby glass ball. Then close the cannon-ball.

For the better comprehension of what follows, it should be stated that when the assistant picks up the cannon-ball first produced, he places it on the before-mentioned shelf at the back of the stage, and there, covering the operation with his own body, changes it for the hollow cannon-ball prepared as above described.

Let us now suppose that we are continuing the trick just described. You say--

"As I have not succeeded in passing the ball through a hat, I will try the experiment in another form, with the addition of two or three rather curious effects.

"Just bring me," you say to your servant, "one of those cannon-balls which came out of the hat." He brings you the hollow cannon-ball, which is naturally taken for the genuine one. "Now give me some-thing to put it in." He brings you the cannon-ball vase. "Very good. This vase will be just the thing. Let us see, though, whether the ball will go inside it." You place the ball inside and put the lid on. "Capital! One would almost think it was made on purpose.

"Here we have the cannon-ball in close captivity. Well, gentlemen, I shall now proceed to make it pass invisibly away from the vase. To produce that result I shall pass a few articles into the vase, when they will squeeze the ball so severely, that it will have no choice but to leave it; and the articles that I pass in will be found in its place.

"I will take anything that comes to hand—for instance, here is a pack of cards. I spread it on the table to show you that it has the full complement of thirty-two. I pick it up... so... and I pass it into the vase."

(You use for this pass the method described previously.)

"This handkerchief,* which I find lying here, ought to pass in just as easily." (The duplicate handkerchief and pack of cards should be left ready to hand, without apparent design, from some previous trick or tricks.--Editor.) You rapidly roll it into a ball, its outer corner being tucked into the folds. You toss it, so arranged, in the air, and let it fall into the gibecière, as described previously, then make believe to throw it into the closed vase, saying, "Pass!"

*The duplicate handkerchief and pack of cards should be left ready to hand, without apparent design, from some previous trick or tricks.--ED.

"This crystal ball will pass in like the other articles, but this time I will proceed more slowly, so that you may be able to see exactly what I do." Here you take the crystal ball in the left hand, as directed for the tourniquet, and make believe to take it with the right, really letting it fall into the hollow of the left hand. The right hand, with its supposed contents, is lifted, as though to fling the ball, while the left, sinking down a little, is enabled to drop the ball into the gibecière, and at the moment when you make the movement of throwing the ball and say "Pass!" you open both hands and show them empty. "If our experiment has succeeded," you continue, "the three articles which
I have passed into the vase should have driven out the cannon-ball, which will have vanished. Let us see." You open the vase, the cannon-ball has disappeared, and in its place are found the handkerchief, unfolded, the cards, and the crystal ball.

This series of feats of dexterity, culminating in the disappearance of a cannon-ball, used always to produce a great effect at my performances.
After having Produced from a Silk Handkerchief a considerable number of Military Plumes, to Produce therefrom also a quantity of Bonbons, which are Distributed among the Spectators.

The "plume" trick not occupying sufficient time to admit of being performed alone, is here used by way of introduction to that of the bonbons. They are both pretty tricks, and may be very well worked in together.

Preparation for the Plume Trick.

You have four military plumes of about sixteen or seventeen inches in length, mounted on flexible whalebone stems. These stems are left bare for about a couple of inches from their lover ends

You place two of these plumes in each coat-sleeve, arranging them in such manner that the ends of the whalebone may be close to the cuff of the sleeve, so as to be readily got hold of. In order to facilitate the pulling out of the plumes when required, I used to make at the end of the whalebone a little knob of black thread twisted round the stem, and fixed with glue. This gave the fingers a firm grip.

"Here I have, ladies," you remark, "a silk handkerchief. It has nothing in it, as you may readily see for yourselves." You exhibit it first on one side, and then on the other,
shake it about, and squeeze it, drawing it ropewise through the thumb and forefinger of the left hand.

"Now you will perhaps be rather surprised when I tell you, gentlemen, that you are one and all under a complete delusion, for this handkerchief contains something very bulky indeed. I will prove it to you. Attention! All I have to do is to take the handkerchief by the middle."

You pass the left hand underneath the handkerchief, which you forthwith nip with the right hand on the outside at the point named, at the same time getting hold, through the silk, of the end of one of the plumes in the left sleeve. Then, drawing away the left arm from underneath the handkerchief, you leave the plume inside.

"I promised, ladies, to show you what was in the handkerchief. There is no difficulty about the matter. Now that I have hold of the handkerchief by the middle, I have only to do so." You turn the hand upwards; the plume is thereby brought into an upright position, and the corners of the handkerchief falling down, leave it exposed, and at the same time cover the right arm, and so make an opportunity to draw out a plume from thence, for in taking hold of the visible plume by its lower extremity with the left hand, you nip at the same time through the handkerchief, the end of one of the plumes from the right arm, which is forthwith drawn away, leaving that plume under the handkerchief. You throw aside the first plume, and; turning over the handkerchief as before, so as to let fall the corners over the left arm, exhibit the second plume.

It will be readily understood that for the production and exhibition of the two remaining plumes, you proceed as just described—that is to say, you cover each arm in turn, the withdrawal of the plumes being thereby rendered a very easy matter.

If the performer is not too stout, he may conceal about his person, as I myself used to do, a dozen of rather smaller plumes, tied together with a piece of thread, which may readily be broken. These plumes are laid against the chest and spread over the abdomen, without materially increasing the performer's bulk.

Holding the handkerchief spread out against your chest, under presence of looking over it in order to see that it contains nothing more, you draw out the bundle of plumes with two of the fingers of the right hand, the corner of the handkerchief being held by the remaining fingers. When the plumes are once fairly out of their hiding-place and within the handkerchief, you break the thread and produce them one after another, the effect being very striking.

If you find it impracticable to produce the twelve smaller plumes, the appearance of the four first will be a sufficient introduction to the trick of the "Shower of Sweets," which we are about to describe.

THE SHOWER OF SWEETS.
For the performance of this trick, it is necessary to have a little bag of some soft material, and of the shape shown in Fig. 58. This you fill with bonbons, and close it by slipping the little ring A over the hook B, as shown in Fig. 59.

The bag, prepared as above, is placed upright in the *gibecière*, in such manner that the hook B may be quite close to the edge of the table, though not so as to be visible to the spectators. These preparations are made before the commencement of the performance.

"Now," you say, in continuation of the preceding trick--" now that there is nothing left in the handkerchief" (here you shake it well), "I shall once more pass something into it, and I shall take the opportunity, ladies, of giving you a lesson in legerdemain, a lesson which you will comprehend and get by heart without the least difficulty. I refer to a process for bringing sweetmeats into a handkerchief with the greatest possible ease. When you have seen me do it once, you will all be just as clever as your teacher. Now please follow me closely.

"I place this salver here on the table; I show you that there is nothing in the handkerchief; I throw it over the salver so as to cover it completely. You follow me, ladies, I hope? Up to this point nothing can be more simple. Let us proceed." The handkerchief being spread over the salver as above mentioned, you take hold of its centre with the right hand in order to lift it up; then with the left hand you take hold of each of the corners an inch or two away from its outer edge, so as to bring them against the middle in the right hand, forming thereby a sort of bunch, at the same time remarking "I take the handkerchief by the middle, I gather up the four corners so as to bring it into a smaller compass, and I place the whole on this salver."

Here you hold the salver under the handkerchief and advance towards the spectators ostensibly to finish the trick.

"Good, so far! Now, ladies, let us try whether we cannot cause a few bonbons to appear upon this tray."

Here, however, occurs a little piece of comedy; you have advanced very near to the
audience, but at the moment of pronouncing the last words of the preceding sentence, you draw back with a start from the foremost of the spectators.

"Oh, sir!" you say, in a tone of good-humoured reproach, "you mustn't peep under the handkerchief! As I was saying, ladies What, again, sir!" (The gentleman has not looked at the handkerchief, and has made no remark, but he is pretty sure to laugh, which induces the belief that he has peeped and that he has seen something or other.)

"Let me assure you that there is really nothing in the handkerchief But as you seem to doubt me, I have no alternative but to show you that you are mistaken." (You spread out the handkerchief, and show it on both sides.)

This little scene forms quite a comic interlude, everything having been said in the best possible temper, and everybody laughing, some for one reason, some for another.

"By the way, ladies," you continue, "that reminds me that I have forgotten to ask you one thing which is essential to the success of my experiment. You must have the kindness, when I come to the critical moment for passing the sweets into the handkerchief to look the other way just for half a minute, and then I can promise you a complete illusion. Is that understood? Then I will begin again." (You return to your table.) "I place the salver on the table, just as I did before; I spread the handkerchief over it, I take hold of first the middle, and then the corners; I put the salver underneath it again, and I come forward again in order to produce the bonbons.

Ah, but ladies! you are none of you following the directions I gave you; on the contrary, instead of looking away, you are all watching me with extra sharpness. However, it doesn't matter much, the main point is that you have thoroughly understood the process up to this point" (of course nobody has really understood anything), "and if you watch me now, you will understand better still.

"Now the problem is, to bring a quantity of bonbons into the handkerchief, and to cause them suddenly to appear from thence. To produce that effect, pay special attention ladies, to the way in which I shake the handkerchief, and especially to the accentuation of the mystic word which I am about to pronounce." You shake the bag (which unhooks itself), and at the same time say "Pass!" when the bonbons fall into the salver.

"Here, ladies, are some capital bonbons, of which I have the pleasure to beg your acceptance. These bonbons, in addition to their delicate flavour, have a special virtue of their own--namely, that they cause all who taste them to retain a pleasing recollection of this experiment."

Explanation.--The salver used for the purpose of the trick is either of silver or of cut glass, and about the size of a dinner plate.

We stated, at the outset of this article, that you had placed the bag of bonbons on the servante, so arranged as to be readily got hold of. In order to get it into the handkerchief without the knowledge of the audience, you proceed as follows: - The handkerchief being spread over the salver, one of its corners lies to your right, one to
your left, one towards the front, and the fourth falls just over the hook of the bag, whose outline is just visible through the handkerchief. When you have taken the handkerchief by the middle, you next pick up the front corner, which you bring up to the middle told, then, in picking up the hinder corner, you catch hold, through the stuff, of the hook of the bag, which you place behind the two folds already made; and finally pick up the two side corners, which you bring up to the others.

When you spread out the handkerchief for the first time, you go through all these movements without picking up the bag of sweets. But the second time, after having picked up the bag, you slope the hook a little, and so let fall the bonbons on to the salver.
CHAPTER IV.

THE CUPS AND BALLS

THE CUPS AND BALLS

APPLIANCES AND ACCESSORIES NECESSARY FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF THE TRICK OF THE CUPS AND BALLS

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

FEINTS

BURLESQUE INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

OLD METHOD OF WORKING THE CUPS AND BALLS

CONUS’ METHOD

BOSCO’S METHOD
CHAPTER IV.

THE CUPS AND BALLS

The trick of the Cups and Balls, though one of the oldest known to the magic art, still remains one of the most interesting, by reason of the very slight preparation needed for its marvels, and the simplicity of its mode of performance.

Many of our conjurors have excelled in the performance of this trick. The most skilful within the memory of the present generation, were Conus and Bosco. These two artists, disregarding the older modes of working, manipulated the balls by methods peculiar to themselves, by the aid of which they were enabled to baffle the acuteness even of their professional brethren.

The methods adopted by them, with that previously in use, together constitute three distinct modes of working, which we proceed to explain.

APPLIANCES AND ACCESSORIES NECESSARY FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF THE TRICK OF THE CUPS AND BALLS--Old Method

The trick of the Cups and Balls only requires apparatus of the greatest possible simplicity--viz.:

1. Three cups.
2. A wand, known as "Jacob's staff"
3. Six small balls or muscades.
4. Six large balls.
5. Either a gibecière, or else a shelf placed behind the table.

The "cups" are of polished tin; in form they are truncated cones with a double rim or moulding, round the base; the top is concave, so as to afford a resting-place for at least three muscades.

The "Jacob's staff" is a little ebony rod of about thirteen inches in length, and tipped with ivory at each end.*

*The wand ordinarily in use by the performer will of course now be employed for this purpose. Among the conjurors of the olden time the wand appears to have been a special appendage of this particular trick. - ED,
The functions of this wand are: 1. To simulate a cabalistic power. 2. To facilitate the secret manipulation of the *muscades* by affording a pretext for closing the hand which conceals them. 3. To furnish the performer with employment for his hands.

The *muscades* are small cork balls which have been blackened by burning them a little in the flame of a candle. They are about half an inch (or a little more) in diameter.

The large balls are made of horsehair, and covered with leather or woollen cloth. This covering is made of various colours, according to the particular "passes" which the performer intends to exhibit. Some balls also are made parti-coloured, two of the segments being of one colour and two of another.

The *gibecière* is a bag made of more or less costly material, but tolerably thick, and is tied round the waist by strings; it has a wide-mouthed opening, allowing the hands to take freely therefrom the various articles necessary for the performance of the trick.

It should be mentioned that the *gibecière* here referred to is only used in the older method. The *gibecière* attached to the table, has now superseded this bag, which was formerly known as the *sac à la malice*.

**GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

The sleight-of-hand necessary for the manipulation of the Cups and Balls consists of the following elements-viz.:

1. To conjure away a small ball, or, in other words, to conceal it surreptitiously in the right hand:

2. To produce the ball, when required, at the tips of the fingers.

3. To secretly introduce a small ball under a cup, or between two cups.

4. To cause a small ball placed between two cups to disappear.

5. To introduce a large ball under a cup.

6. To execute sundry "feints" to be hereafter described.

**I.**

*To Conjure away a Small Ball.*—To conjure away a small ball, such ball must be brought from the tips of the fingers to the inside of the hand, at the base of the middle and ring fingers, where it is held between the fleshy portions of these two fingers. In order to bring it to this position you proceed as follows:-
Holding the ball between the thumb and first finger, as though to show it (Fig. 61), close the hand quickly, leaving the thumb still outstretched. The ball is by this means made to roll to the second joint of the forefinger, nothing is then easier than to continue to roll the ball with the thumb as far as the junction of the two fingers before mentioned, which you open slightly in order to facilitate the introduction of the ball. (Fig. 60.)

These two movements form in reality one only, and should be executed with extreme rapidity

II.

To Produce a Small Ball.--To produce or re-produce a small ball at the tips of the fingers, you employ the reverse movement to that last described, that is to say, you roll back the ball with the thumb to the tips of the fingers.

To produce the ball, as well as to vanish it, the two movements employed should form but one, and should be so rapidly executed as to be invisible.

III.

To Secretly Introduce a Small Ball under a Cup.--The ball being hidden in the hand in the manner shown in Fig. 60, you take hold of the cup between the two projecting mouldings and lift it, either in order (ostensibly) to show that there is nothing beneath it, or on any other pretext; and in replacing it on the table you let go of the ball, which by reason of its position naturally falls underneath the cup, by which it is instantly covered.

If the performer finds any difficulty in releasing the ball, he may facilitate the doing so by a quick contraction of the ring-finger.

IV.

To Pass a Small Ball between Two Cups.--In the act of releasing the ball as just
described, you must give it an upward jerk towards the upper part of the inside of the cup which you hold in your hand, and quickly slip this cup over that on which you desire the ball to be found.

V.

To Cause the Disappearance of a Small Ball placed between Two Cups. -- When you have placed a ball on the top of one cup and covered this latter with another cup, you proceed, in order to cause the disappearance of such ball, as follows: - You take the two cups in your left hand, putting the fingers of that hand inside the lower cup, and giving a slight upward jerk as though to impel the ball towards the top of the upper cup, you quickly withdraw the lower cup, at the same time lowering the upper cup, and so covering and concealing the ball.

VI.

To Cause the Appearance of a Large Ball under a Cup. -- This effect, which generally produces special astonishment, is produced by the simplest possible means. In the act of lifting a cup* to show some article that it covers, and taking advantage of the moment when the eyes of the spectators are attracted to the object just disclosed, you bring the cup just over the hinder edge of the table, and introduce into it with the left hand a large ball, which you immediately bring to the middle of the table, keeping it in position with the little finger of the right hand.

*With the right hand.--Editor.

In some cases, in putting the ball into the cup, you squeeze it well in order to make it stick in the bottom. The elasticity of the ball readily admits of this. When you desire to produce the ball, you have only to bring down the cup with a smartish rap on the table.

Whether you procure the large balls from a bag (as described previously), or from the servante of the table, when you wish to introduce them under the cup, you should have them beforehand quite ready in the left hand, which hand should make as little movement as possible.*

*For a fuller explanation of this branch of sleight-of-hand, see Modern Magic.--ED.

FEINTS

A feint is the counterfeit presentment of some action, designed to facilitate the appearance or disappearance of one or more balls. Thus--

1. **You "feign" to Transfer a ball to the left Hand.** -- Holding the ball with the tips of the fingers of the right hand (Fig. 61), you move this hand towards the left as though to place the ball therein. In transit, however, you palm it, as previously described, and the two fingers which held the ball reach the left hand empty, that hand closing as though receiving the ball.

2. **You "feign" to Place a Ball under a Cup.** -- The feint last described is introductory to this one, or, in other words, this second feint is its natural sequel.
You are supposed to have a ball in the left hand; you take a cup in the right, and place it over the left hand (which you at the same moment open), and thence slide it on to the table, as though carrying the ball with it.

3. You "feign" to Place a Ball directly under the Cup.--You raise the cup a little with the left hand and make believe to place the ball beneath it with the right hand-in reality palming it in transit.

4. You "feign" to Pass the Ball through the Cup; to Send or Pass it to any given Place.-- in reality palming it.

5. You "feign" to Produce or Reproduce a Ball from the end of your Jacob's Staff; or elsewhere--really bringing back to the tips of your fingers the ball which is hidden in your hand.

6. You "feign" to Cause the Disappearance of Balls placed between Two Cups.--For this feint you use a method called "galloping post" (courir la poste).*

*From a supposed resemblance of the sound made by the cups in its execution to that caused by the hoofs of a galloping horse.-ED.

It is executed as follows:-

Place the little balls on the top of the cup farthest to the left, and cover this with the second and third cups. The three cups being thus one within another, take them in your left hand and hold them slightly inclining towards the right. To facilitate this inclined position, slip the four fingers inside the under-most cup, the thumb remaining outside.

Remove the uppermost cup and place it by itself on the table. Then rapidly lift the second cup off the third in order to place it on the first, but in so doing give the balls a little upward jerk, which keeps them still within the second cup, and enables them to be placed on the top of the first without being seen.

Again take the three cups in the left hand, and place, as before, the first (i.e., uppermost) upon the table, the second, with the balls, upon this first cup, and the third upon the second.*

*These movements are repeated over and over again for perhaps a minute with great rapidity, the effect to the spectator being that the balls have left the cups altogether.-ED.

7. You "feign" to Pass one Cup through another.--To do this you proceed as follows:-Take two cups, one in the right hand, the other in the left. (Mouth upwards.-Editor) Throw, or, in other words, let fall with some little impetus, the first cup into the second. The shock thus communicated to this cup causes it to fall from the fingers, which release it, catching however the first cup, which takes its place in the most natural manner.

The cup which you let fall naturally drops on the floor. Some conjurors, however, are so expert as to intercept it in its fall, by bringing the right hand rapidly below the other.

These seven feints are the main elements employed in working the cups and balls, the
only variation of the effect being in the particular arrangement of the passes.

The "passes" of the Cups and Balls may be varied *ad infinitum*. Every conjuror arranges a series to suit his own taste. It must, however, be admitted that there is but little substantial difference between the passes. The effect is always one or more balls made to appear in one place, the spectators believing that they were in another. It follows that these passes, however varied they may be in point of form, should be exhibited with moderation, so as not to weary the audience by the too great uniformity of the effects produced.

The interest of the performance is greatly enhanced by the addition of a lively "patter."

The space allotted to the Cups and Balls in the present work will by no means admit of my describing all the passes which have been used in the performance of this trick; indeed, a whole volume would scarcely suffice for that purpose. Moreover, it is very easy to get ample information from works treating specially of this subject. We find, for instance, a large number of cup-and-ball passes excellently described in the works of Ozanam, Guyot, and Decremps, or better still in the *Diccionaire Encyclopedique des Amusements des Sciences Mathématiques et Physiques*, 1762, which gives all the passes of the three authors above mentioned.

We will, however, describe, by way of example, an introductory pass, which will enable lovers of the art to invent others for themselves; after which we propose to explain the special methods employed in this trick by Conus and Bosco.

The passes next following are executed after the old-fashioned method, with the aid of the bag, and of a table whose surface is level with the pit of the stomach.

Partly to facilitate the reader's comprehension of the passes, and partly to assist amateurs in the composition of new ones, it will be well to establish a little vocabulary, whereby the reader may be enabled to comprehend when real and when pretended acts are referred to.

1. *To Cover a Cup*, is to secretly introduce a small ball between two cups in the act of placing them one upon the other.
2. *To Throw, Send, or Pass the Ball*, is to imitate either of these actions--really palming the ball.
3. *To Lift the Cups*, is really to lift them, in order to show either that there is no ball underneath, or that the ball has just found its way there.
4. *To Put the Ball under the Cup*, is to make believe to place it there--really palming it.
5. *To Remove the Ball*, is really to remove it openly before the spectators.
6. *To Place the Ball*, is really to place it in the spot indicated.
7. *To Take the Ball*, is to take it with the thumb and finger of the right hand in order to exhibit it.
8. *To Cover over a Cup*, is to cover it with a second cup, without introducing anything between.
9. **To Produce or Draw out a Ball from any given place**, is to cause it to appear at the tips of the fingers. (Feint No. 5)

While you are arranging your cups, balls, and wand in due order on the table, you may deliver a little discourse to the following effect:-

**BURLESQUE INTRODUCTION TO THE CUPS AND BALLS**

"Ladies and Gentlemen,--

"In an age so enlightened as our own, both in a real and a figurative sense, is it not surprising to see how popular delusions spring up from day to day, and become firmly rooted in the public mind as unchangeable laws of Nature?

"Among these fallacies there is one which I propose to point out to you, and which I flatter myself I shall on this occasion very easily dispose of. Many people, and, among others, the celebrated Erasmus of Rotterdam, have asserted that a material object can only be in one place at one time. Now I maintain, on the contrary, that any object may be in several places at the same moment, and that it is equally possible that it may be nowhere at all.

"Here are certain little pieces of apparatus called cups, or goblets, of which I shall make use for this important correction of the human intellect.

"Each of these appliances, like every object with which the universe is furnished, has a name.

"The first of these cups is called **Branca Ferro**.

The second, or, to use the expression of the eloquent Cicero, the "middle" goblet, is called **Passa per tutto**. The third or last cup, or, for your better comprehension, the first beginning from this end, is called **Piu presto che il vento**. *

*Passa per tutto and Piu presto che il vento are Italian phrases, signifying respectively, "Pass through all obstacles," and "Swifter than the wind." We are not aware that Branca Ferro is a part of any language, but it was possibly intended by its inventor (whoever he may have been) as an Italian equivalent for "iron grip"--ED.

"I must beg you further to observe, that I have nothing in my hands except my fingers; and that between my fingers there is nothing save a few atoms of that mysterious fluid which we call the atmosphere, and through whose waves this beautiful planet sails along.

"But we must leave the commonplace regions of astronomy, and return to the deeper mysteries of hermetic science.

"The metal of which these cups are composed is an amalgam of costly minerals, unknown even to the most illustrious philosophers. This mysterious composition,
which may be likened to silver in respect of its solidity, colour, and the clearness of its ring, has this great advantage over silver, that it is as permeable as the very air; indeed solid bodies pass through these cups as easily as they would through empty space.

"I will give you a curious illustration of this, by making these cups pass through one another." (Here you execute Feint 7, described previously, after which you replace the cups in due order.)

**PASS I.**

**To Place a Ball under each Cup, and to Draw it out again without lifting the Cups.**

"You are aware, gentlemen, that this little wand goes by the name of Jacob's Staff. Why so. I really don't know, but I do know that this rod has the power of supplying me with as many little balls as I may desire." (During this little preamble, you have secretly taken up a little ball, which you keep hidden in the right hand.) "See, for instance, I produce* from it this little ball." (You show it and place it on the table.)

*For the real acts of the performer, indicated by the words in italics, see the Vocabulary of technical terms.

"Observe, gentlemen, that there is nothing under any of the cups," (you show their interior,) "and that I have not any ball in my hand." (Here you show your hands.)

"I take this little ball, I put it under this first cup. I produce a second ball from my wand, and I place it under this second cup.

"I must ask you to take notice, gentlemen, that very often, in working the cups, the performer only makes believe to put the balls under them; but I really do place them there." (Here you lift the cup, and taking up the ball, show it to the company.) "I put it once more under the cup. I produce this third ball from my wand, and I put it in like manner under this last cup.

"Up to this point, gentlemen, nothing can be more simple than what I have done, but now I fancy I shall cause you some surprise, by taking the balls out again through the cups." (Here you give a tap with your wand on the top of the first cup.) "I draw out the first ball, I put it in my hand, and I send it to bathe in the Mississippi." (You open the left hand and show it empty.)

"I draw out this second ball, and I send it to Egypt, to the top of Cheops, the highest of the Pyramids." (You open the hand as before.)

"I draw out this third ball, and place it on the table. Observe, gentlemen, that there is no longer anything under either of the cups."

As we have already remarked, the passes used for the cups and balls, with their accompanying patter, would require too much space to admit of our giving them in this book. Amateurs must either arrange them for themselves, which is a very easy matter, or borrow them from the treatises referred to previously. We give, however, just the headings of a few more passes, as an aid to the invention of new combinations.
1. The Cups being some distance apart, to cause a Ball to Pass from one to another.

2. A Ball being placed under a Cup, and the two other Cups placed upon this, to make the Ball Pass successively upon the top of the first and second Cups, finally Travelling down again, and being found under one of the Cups.

3. A Ball being placed under each of the Cups, to cause all three to be found under the middle Cup.

4. Multiplication of the Balls ad infinitum.--This being one of the prettiest of the cup-and-ball passes, I will here describe it.

A ball having been placed under each of the cups, and a fourth being hidden in the hand, you borrow a hat, which you hold under your left arm.

You pick up the first cup and place it by the side of the ball which you thereby disclose; but in placing it on the table you secretly introduce the ball which you had hidden in your hand. You take the ball which was beneath the cup, and put it in the hat--i.e., you palm it away.

You lift up the second cup, which you place in like manner beside the ball which you thereby uncover, and in so doing introduce that which you just before palmed while pretending to put it in the hat.

You proceed in like manner with the third cup, and then begin the same operation over again with the first cup, keeping up the process as long as you think fit. To increase the illusion, each time that you make believe to put a ball into the hat, you give with your forefinger a little tap inside it, to simulate the sound of the falling ball.

The pass is brought to a conclusion as follows:-

"I have just put a large quantity of balls," you remark, "into this hat. Well, ladies, would you believe it, all these balls will at my command become invisible, and melt away into the air, whence I shall gather them again presently for another experiment." You shake the hat, which you turn mouth down-wards as though to pour out the balls, and show that they have entirely disappeared.

The multiplication pass may also be performed with large balls stuffed with horsehair and covered with leather or cloth. As in the last case, it is in the act of lifting the cup to show the company what is beneath, that you introduce the balk but the balls are, in this instance, taken from the gibecière, and being too large to be palmed like the little balls, are left lying on the table as they are produced.
Conus Method of Working the Cups and Balls

Conus was the first performer who dispensed with the undignified *gibecière* of the older conjurors. He supplied its place as follows:-

He threw a cloth over the table, and with a couple of pins fastened up the two corners which hung over on his own side so as to form a *gibecière*, after the manner shown in Fig. 62.

![Fig. 62](image)

Instead of palming the ball between the fingers, according to the old-fashioned method, he held it palmed, whether large or small, in the hollow of the hand, just as is done with a five franc piece. This mode of proceeding, which is much more difficult than the other, requires that the hand shall be habitually moist, in order to facilitate the adhesion of the ball.*

*This is not strictly the case. If the performer has a moderately fleshy palm and soft skin, he should be able to palm brass, or even glass balls without the slightest difficulty. Robert-Houdin was himself of singularly spare make, and had in all probability a hard, dry palm, a peculiarity which greatly increases the difficulty of palming.--ED.*

The passes adopted by Conus, though they do not differ in any marked degree from those of his brethren, were executed with an originality which lent them a special charm. I will give, by way of sample, his opening pass with its appropriate patter.

His three cups being placed in a row upon the table, he began as follows:-

"You must know, gentlemen, that in order to be a good conjuror, you must be a good liar. Yes, gentlemen, the conjuror deceives you but you must not blame him on that
account. His profession requires it, in fact, that is just what you pay him for.

"The conjuror tells you, for instance, that he has no gibeière; but if he has not one attached to his waist, he may still fasten one behind his table. Now everybody knows that I really have not one, for I make use of the first table that comes to hand." (It will be observed that Conus had the fault I have mentioned previously--i.e., he revealed the secrets of the tricks of others in order to magnify his own.)

At this point he placed three balls on the table.

"The conjuror tells you, again, that he uses only three balls, while in reality he has a fourth, which he keeps hidden between his fingers."

(Here he took one of the three balls with the left hand, and placed it between the fingers of the right.)

"He conceals it by lowering his hand" (here he lowered his own hand), "or by taking hold of a wand, which is called Jacob's Staff" (he took his own wand in the right hand) "and the hand naturally closes, and there is nothing to be seen" (he laid down the wand again on the table), "but all the while he holds the ball like this."

(He held up his hand and showed the ball between the fingers.)

"Then he takes a cup like this, and slips the ball beneath" (he did so accordingly in a very unmistakable manner), "and then he says, 'Depart! Obey!' He makes believe to pass it under the table."

(At this point, suitting the action to the word, Conus passed his own hand under the table, and in so doing secretly got hold of a ball, which he took from the fold formed by the cloth.)

"He picks up the cup, and tells you that the ball has passed beneath it. But you see, gentlemen, that he deceives you, for the ball was there already. Now I, who scorn to deceive anybody--But we had better not say very much about that! Perhaps I do pretty much as the others; but at any rate I give you fair warning beforehand... However, you all know now what the conjurors do in order to cheat your eyes. Now see how I set to work to effect the same result."

He took one of the three balls with the tips of the fingers of the right hand, and laid it on the left hand, which he kept open, and perfectly flat.

"I place this ball in the centre of my hand, and the very moment the hand is closed, it will pass under the middle cup. Now watch me closely."

Here he lifted up the middle cup to show that there was nothing underneath it, and in so doing, secretly introduced the ball which he had taken from the fold of the table-cover and palmed in his right hand. Meanwhile, he sloped the left hand a little, and let fall on the table the ball which was therein. He picked it up again, (With the right hand.-ED.) and in the act of (apparently) placing it in the left hand, which he instantly closed, palmed it in the right.
"Go!" said he, indicating with his forefinger the cup beneath which the ball was to pass, and while he opened the left hand to show that it was empty, he at the same time drew back the right a little towards the fold of the cloth, and let fall therein the ball he had last palmed. He then exhibited the inside of both hands, after which he lifted up the cup and showed that the ball had reached its destination. The cup he placed beside the ball.

He then took one of the balls which were on the table, made believe to put it in the left hand, really keeping it in the right, and in the act of covering the ball which he had left exposed, introduced this ball also under the cup.

"Fly!" he said, "go back to your companions." He opened the left hand, and picked up the cup. "That makes two."

He really placed the third ball in the left hand. "I will now pass this one also in the same manner. No, sir!" (pretending that one of the spectators had expressed a belief that it was already gone). "No, sir, it is not yet there, and I have made no movement whatever which can lead you to suppose that it is no longer in my hand. Here it is." (He laid it on the table.) "If I were to put my hand under the table, now, you might imagine that it was in order to get rid of it." (He passed the right hand, by way of illustration, under the table, and in so doing took a ball from the fold of the cloth. "But as long as you see it here, it cannot be under the cup."

Here he again covered over the two balls, and introduced with them the one he had just taken into his possession.

"I take this ball once more. I put it in my hand, and I order it to pass under the cup along with the two others."

In the act of (apparently) transferring the ball to the left hand, he retained it in the right, and as on the former occasion, dropped it into the cloth while showing that the other hand was empty.

This pass is very ingeniously arranged I have given it in detail by way of sample of the character of those which follow in Conus' collection, and which I am unable to give here by reason of the lengthy explanations which they would involve.

Conus used also to work the cups with brass balls, a method involving great difficulty in preventing any rattling of the metal ball against the cups. Conus met this difficulty by means of a special sleight, consisting of a little "check" given to the ball in the act of introducing it under the cup, which made it stop dead. This feat of dexterity gave no additional effect to the trick save that of a difficulty overcome, and this could only be understood by persons who knew how the balls were introduced under the cups. The difficulty therefore could only be appreciated by Conus' professional brethren.
Bosco is, beyond all question, the conjuror who has achieved the greatest success with the cups and balls. He gave special prominence to this trick, and performed it with all the gravity which he would have displayed over a piece of genuine magic. I wish the reader could have seen him, at the commencement of his performance, rubbing his wand with a linen cloth, as though to revive its dormant power, and with this same wand striking a large brass ball hung above his table. This important ceremony finished, Bosco raised his eyes to heaven, and in a tone of profound gravity, pronounced this diabolic evocation—"Spiriti miei infernali, obiedite."* After which he proceeded to work the cups and balls.

*"Infernal spirits, attend my bidding."

As Bosco generally performed upon stages of large extent, he was compelled to increase the size of his balls, and, as a necessary consequence, to vary the method of palming them. The balls used by him were nearly an inch in diameter, and, in order to hide them in the hand, instead of placing them between the second and third fingers, according to the
old-fashioned method, he used to roll them with the thumb from the end of the forefinger to the root of the little finger, which was slightly curved in order to hold them. (Fig. 63.)

His mode of presenting the ball at the tips of the fingers also differed from the old-fashioned method; he held it between the ball of the thumb and the second joint of the forefinger, which placed it in a more favourable position to be palmed by his peculiar method. (See Fig. 64.)

This mode of palming is beyond doubt the most simple, and is further extremely favourable to the introduction of the balls under the cups. Whoever has once made trial of this method, will not afterwards use any other.

In order to disguise the rather cramped position of the little finger in holding the ball, you take the wand in the same hand. But in truth, where one is accustomed to this mode of palming, the contraction of the little finger is a mere nothing, and is quite imperceptible to the spectators.

The sketch at the head of this article represents the form and arrangement of the cups, balls (large and small), and table which Bosco was in the habit of using.

Of the five cups placed on the table, three have no special preparation, but the other two are arranged, the one to let fall or cause the appearance of three muscades, the other to take them away. The right-hand cup is fitted internally with a considerable number of needles placed vertically, and so adapted to stick into and carry away the balls, when they are covered with this particular cup. At the bottom of the other cup is a chamber of such a size as to hold three muscades. On touching a little projecting stud on the outside, a flap closing this compartment drops and lets fall the muscades.

**BOSCO’S FIRST PASS**

_Three Balls Pass one after another under the Middle Cup._

1. A ball is secretly taken from the gibecière and in the act of showing that there is nothing under the middle cup, is introduced beneath it.

2. The performer takes one of the balls which are on the table, and pretends to place it in the right hand, and thence to make it pass under the middle cup.

3. In the act of lifting the cup to show that the ball has reached its destination, the performer introduces the one which he has just palmed, and proceeds in like manner to apparently pass the two other balls beneath the cups.

4. After he has shown that all three have arrived, he removes them, and secretly introduces, for the purpose of the next pass, the ball still held by the little finger.

**SECOND PASS**
A ball remains, at the close of the preceding pass, under the middle cup.

1. You take one of the three balls, pretend to place it under the right-hand cup, and order it to pass under the middle cup.

2. You lift up the right-hand cup to show that there is no longer anything beneath it, and introduce therein the ball you have just palmed.

3. You raise the middle cup to show that the ball teas arrived; you pick up this ball, make believe to replace it under the same cup, and retain it in the bend of the little finger.

4. You lift up the left-hand cup to show that there is nothing underneath, and introduce therein the ball so retained.

5. You order the ball to pass from the middle to the right-hand cup, and meanwhile, you take another ball from the gibecièrè.

6. You lift up the middle cup to show that the ball has departed, and secretly introduce therein the ball which you have hidden in your hand.

7. You take a third ball from the gibecièrè, and while lifting the left-hand cup to take out the ball which is beneath it, you introduce therein this other ball.

**THIRD PASS**

The two preceding passes are specially designed to lead up to this one, which is admirably calculated to excite the spectator’s wonderment. For this pass the use of all five cups is necessary.

At the close of the preceding pass there remained one ball under each of the cups,* and there are three others on the table.

The existence of these three balls is, of course, unknown to the spectators.--ED.

1. You place these last three balls in your pocket; you lift the cup with the secret compartment in order to show that there is nothing under It; and in replacing it on the table, you press the little stud, and the three concealed muscades fall down within the cup.

2. You command the balls to quit the pocket and pass under the cup last mentioned. You turn the pocket inside out to show that they are no longer there. This pocket is made double.*

*There are really two pockets, accessible through the same opening.-ED.

3. You show the balls.* You then take them and place them under the cup with the needles. In replacing this cup on the table, you press a little, so as to transfix the balls with the needles, and command them to leave this cup, and pass one under each of the three original cups, which is by no means difficult, inasmuch as three balls were in fact left there at the close of the preceding pass.

By lifting the cup last mentioned.-ED.

4. You take these three balls and make believe to transfer them to the left hand, but in passing over the gibecièrè you let them fall therein after the manner described
previously.

5. The hand being thereby left really empty, you make believe to throw the balls in the air in order that they may return to the pocket, and you produce them from thence.

The other passes used by Bosco are very much like those of his predecessors. It is always a ball leaving one cup to pass under another, the performance invariably concluding with the appearance and the multiplication of larger balls of different sizes.
CHAPTER V.

THE BIRTH OF FLOWERS; or, Magical Vegetation

THE MIRACULOUS FISHERY; or, The Bowls of Gold Fish

THE MARVELLOUS EQUILIBRIUM
CHAPTER V.

THE BIRTH OF FLOWERS;
OR, MAGICAL VEGETATION

You come forward, holding a little box in one hand, and your wand in the other.

"Ladies," you say, "I am about to show you a charming process for instantaneously producing the sweetest flowers, the seeds of which are preserved with care in this little box."

"Before proceeding to the actual experiment, and in order that you may appreciate it the better, I will give you at first a mere specimen of the effect." (Here you open the box.) "Let us see whether we can find a rose-seed. I don't see one. Oh, yes! here is one. I will take it so." (You have in reality taken nothing at all.) "Now I shall adorn the button-hole of my coat by making a flower grow therein. I apply the seed to the button-hole, and then, in order to cause the flower to burst instantly into blossom, I have only to pronounce a very simple spell.... Watch me carefully. I wave my wand towards three of the cardinal points--to the right, to the front, and to the left, saying, One, Two, Three!" A rose instantaneously appears in the button-hole of the coat.

"You see, ladies, there is no difficulty whatever about the experiment. Our first attempt has succeeded remarkably well we will try now whether we can produce the same effect on a rather larger scale. For that purpose will you, gentlemen, oblige me with the loan of a hat?" (Your assistant advances to receive the hat and brings it to you.)

When the hat has been handed to you, you go towards your table. "Here," you remark, handing for examination a glass goblet, "is an article which will serve as a flower-pot, while this hat will act as a forcing-glass. You can see for yourselves that both these articles are empty.

"I shall now, by the aid of a special method, endeavour to produce, in this glass vase, a bouquet of flowers of various kinds. To do so, I will take haphazard a pinch of the seed, and place it in this glass.

"You will understand, gentlemen, the necessity for using this hat, when I tell you that the slightest draught of air would prevent the success of the experiment; I am, therefore, obliged to cover the glass during the whole period of germination." (Here you cover the glass with the hat, though without placing it on the table.)

"I should tell you, by the way, gentlemen, speaking in all seriousness, and without the least intention of a pun, that the more 'hot-headed' the person to whom the hat belongs, the more quickly the experiment will succeed.
"Let us see how our vegetation is getting on." (You uncover the glass and disclose the bouquet.)

"Bravo! our success is complete. Thanks to the hat, I have gained a charming bouquet." (Then, turning towards some lady to whom you are disposed to pay a compliment, and as though in answer to a request on her part, though of course she has made none).

"With pleasure, madam, I will hand it to you at once. Permit me, however, to produce a larger quantity of flowers, so that I may be able to offer some to these other ladies also.

"This time nothing can be more simple." (You spread out the handkerchief on the table, and make believe to scatter thereon the imaginary contents of the box.) "I place the rest of the seeds in this silk handkerchief, so as to impregnate it, so to speak, with them, and I come quite close to you, ladies, so that you may be the better able to see the phenomenon of vegetation which is about to take place."

You show both sides of the handkerchief, spread it out before you, and immediately a basket of flowers shows its outline under the silken fabric.

You hand the large bouquet to the lady to whom it was promised, and distribute the smaller bouquets among the other ladies, the orchestra or piano accompanying the distribution with some graceful waltz.

_Preparations for the Trick._—You beforehand place the bouquet which is to appear in the glass, on the left-hand side of the _servante_, as shown in Fig. 52.

The rose which is to appear in the button-hole is arranged as follows:—Through the centre of an artificial rose, without stalk, you pass a piece of black silk, with a knot at the end to prevent it slipping through altogether. This silk passes through the top left-hand button-hole of the coat, and through the cloth beneath it (an eyelet-hole being made to allow of its passage), and is attached to a piece of elastic whose other end is fastened to a button placed near the trouser-pocket.

The natural tendency of the elastic is to pull the rose, if left free, against the button-hole.

Before coming on the stage, you draw the rose away from the button-hole, and place it under the left armpit, almost behind the left shoulder, where it is held fast.

As to the basket, the necessary preparation is a little more complicated. The basket itself is of wicker-work, and of the shape shown in Fig. 65. You fill it with flowers, or better still with little bouquets, which you place side by side, keeping them as closely packed as possible, and each attached by means of a piece of cotton to the sides of the basket, so as to prevent their falling when the
basket hangs suspended.

To the rim of the basket is attached, on each side, a piece of silk thread. The one (the shorter of the two) should be pretty strong; the other should break readily with a pull. At the outer end of the latter is a button, B; and at the end of the other a little brass ring, A. By the aid of these two threads the basket is suspended behind the performer, and subsequently made to appear under the handkerchief.

For the execution of this trick, the performer should be provided with an appliance, to which gave the name of the cuirasse, and which I made use of in sundry tricks at my performances, for the purpose of suspending behind me various objects of considerable size, and sometimes of considerable weight. (See Fig. 66.) The flat plate shown in the figure is of tin, and should be adapted to the shape of the back. Along the lower edge is a stout copper band, on which is fixed a projecting staple, the use of which will be seen hereafter. Below this staple the band forms a fork, through which is passed a little pin, which may be pulled out by means of the thread to which it is attached.

The cuirasse is pierced all round its outer edge with little holes, by means of which it may be stitched on to a waistcoat of strong canvas, made very open in front, and which is worn underneath the ordinary dress waistcoat.

After the foregoing explanation, and an inspection of Fig. 66, it will be readily understood how the basket is suspended, and how it may, at any given moment, be brought round in front of the performer. The pin is made to pass through the little fork above mentioned. A button, at the other end of the thread attached to this pin, is slipped into a button-hole made in the waistband of the trouser, near the right hip, in such manner that the thread may be readily got at and pulled. The other button, attached to the longer thread of the basket, is placed in a button-hole made in the waistband of the trouser, directly above the left knee.

Execution of the trick.--The rose being placed as above directed, to cause its appearance in the button-hole, you take the wand in the left hand (that being the side on which the rose is hidden). You wave it towards the right, saying "One!" directly to the front, saying "Two!" At the word "Three!" you give a wave to the left, and in so doing, the arm being naturally raised, releases the rose, which by the strain of the elastic is instantly brought against the button-hole of the coat.*

*It has always appeared to me (if it is permissible to differ from so eminent an authority), that the holding of the wand in the left hand, as above directed, has an awkward and inartistic effect. In the present instance it can readily be avoided, as follows:--Holding the wand in the right hand, give a quick wave to the left, another to
the right, and then, with a third wave, bring the w and smartly against the button-hole, at the same time making a quarter turn to the left, and throwing up the left arm,-a motion which, under the circumstances, will appear perfectly natural.-ED.

To get the bouquet into the glass and under the hat, you proceed as follows:-At the moment when you place the seeds in the glass, which you do with the right hand, the left hand holding the hat (mouth downwards) with the thumb and third and fourth fingers only, the first and second fingers of the same hand clip between them the stem of the bouquet, and introduce it into the hat. When you cover the glass with the hat, the bouquet naturally places itself therein.

If there is sufficient space unoccupied at the right-hand side of the servante, it is easier to take the bouquet from that side.

I subsequently made a further improvement in this trick, designed to enable me to take up the bouquet more lightly still. I made the bouquet in this case of artificial flowers, and so arranged it, that from behind it presented an open tube of pasteboard, into which I slipped my finger, and lifted it precisely after the manner of the cannon-ball, as explained previously. This bouquet I did not give away.

The production of the basket is effected in the simplest possible manner. In the act of spreading the handkerchief in front of you, under presence of submitting it to inspection, the three last fingers of the right hand, which are unemployed, pass beneath the silk and draw it taut, thus withdrawing the pin from the fork. The basket consequently falls, and hanging by the left-hand thread, swings round in front of the left knee, where it stops, and is thus naturally brought under the handkerchief.

In order to omit nothing with reference to the Birth of Flowers, I should also mention a trick under this title, in which Comte obtained very great success. That daring performer used to come forward with a large bouquet concealed under the breast of his coat, which he kept buttoned. He first produced a few flowers by means of a little tripod stand with a false bottom, and while distributing these he skilfully brought out the large bundle of flowers, remarking "See, ladies, how the flowers multiply in my hands."
I have recorded in my Memoirs that the gold-fish trick had been introduced into France by certain Chinese performers, and that the conjuror Philippe, having become acquainted with the secret, had assumed the conventional costume of a magician, in order to have, like his Celestial brethren, a flowing robe wherewith to hide the famous bowl.

When I opened my theatre in the Palais-Royal, this marvellous gold-fish trick was still the latest topic of the day, indeed, it seemed as if a conjuring performance could hardly be complete without this mysterious apparition. I myself had a strong desire to exhibit this trick on my own stage, but where and how could I conceal about my person an object so bulky as the bowl in question, with no other aid than a mere dress-coat? By dint of much mental exertion, however, I at last managed to solve the difficulty, and even to produce a bowl larger than those of my predecessors.

Before proceeding to explain the working of the trick, I will first describe the dramatic setting which I arranged for its exhibition.

The performer comes forward with a large shawl in his hands. "I come here, gentlemen," he says, "to do some of you a service. Among those who, in the summer season, seek the pure country air, there are but few who do not enjoy the pleasures of fishing. Two modes of fishing offer themselves to the admirers of the sport, the rod and
the net. Now the rod may be fascinating and afford plenty of excitement, but it is rarely very productive; the net, in this particular, having always the advantage.

"Unfortunately, this latter mode of fishing is known but to very few persons, and even those who do know it, do not always practice it according to the correct rules of the art."

"Will you permit me, gentlemen, to give you a little information as to the method which is now recognised as the best for net-fishing.

"In order to fish, however, we should require a piece of water, and we have none here, which would be rather an obstacle in the way of my explanations were it not that, in this experiment, we shall only go through the process figuratively--save only as to the result.

"Let us suppose, therefore, that this little round table is a fish-pond, a supposition which I must own will require some little effort of the imagination. Here we have also a table-cover, which will represent a net." (You unfold it, and hold it spread out perpendicularly in front of you.)

"For many reasons it will be as well, I think, that I should show you that there is nothing in this cloth, either on the one side or the other." (Here you turn it round and shake it well) "Now, gentlemen, the demonstration is about to begin; be kind enough to lend me your best attention."

You gather together in each of your hands, with the aid of the tips of the fingers, about a third of the cloth, in such manner as to form a kind of roll, which will afterwards serve to keep the cloth from slipping off the shoulder.

"The regular thing is to throw the net over the left shoulder, but according to my method you must throw it over the right."

Here you throw over the shoulder the rolled-up portion of the cloth, the rest, one end of which you still hold in the left hand, falling down in front of your body.

"Pray don't imagine, gentlemen, that this movement is intended to hide anything under the cloth or under my arm." (You lift the cloth and show the right arm bent and the hand resting on the hip.) "You can also see for yourselves that nobody comes near me during the experiment." (You again drop the cloth in front of you, and the right hand, which from its position is close to the bowl,--which is placed behind the back as will be explained hereafter,--seizes it and holds it beneath the cloth.)

"When I desire to fish, I creep silently up to the pool. I fling my net thus," (you throw the cloth over the small table, and in the act of so doing, place the bowl upon the latter), "I instantly remove it again, and show a bowl filled with water to the brim, and fully supplied with splendid fish."

And accordingly at this moment a bowl of fish appears upon the table.

*Explanation.*--You have a glass bowl of the form represented in the sketch at the head of this article, and about nine inches in extreme diameter.
The bowl being filled with water and fish, you cover it over with a piece of tanned sheepskin, wetted, and tied tightly round with a piece of thread. Thus prepared, the bowl is placed in a pocket suspended from the waist and concealed under the tails of the coat. You take care, when you come forward on the stage, to keep always facing the spectators. It is a great advantage to a conjuror in performing this trick, not to be too liberally endowed in point of personal plumpness. I have known conjurors with whom the bowl supplied the place of an absent fleshy portion in the most life-like manner, and who were not under the least apprehension as to turning their backs on the company.

I have indicated in the preceding description the particular moment when the bowl is seized and placed on the guéridon. When it is once there, in the act of lifting off the cloth, you nip the cover of the bowl close to its edge, and so remove it.

At a later period, I was enabled to make an improvement in the trick. I found that when I took off the cloth, there was a momentary pause required to uncover the bowl, and that this slight interval was prejudicial to the effect of the illusion. The imitation of net-fishing was not exact, and moreover the getting of the bowl out of the pocket was not always as easy as it should be. These difficulties I got over in the following manner:–

Instead of the sheepskin, I took a piece of water-proof cloth, to which I fitted a certain mechanical arrangement in order to securely close the bowl. Fig. 67 represents the arrangement in question.

All round the edge of the cover are attached little brass hooks. A piece of catgut, with a ring at each end, passes through all these hooks and is attached to two points placed one on each side of a little brass cylinder. It will readily be understood that by turning this cylinder with a key, you wind up the cord, and thereby draw the cover tightly over the bowl. A ratchet wheel forming part of the cylinder turns with it, and serves to retain it at any given point, by the aid of the hook whereby the apparatus is suspended, the lower extremity of which acts as the "stop" to the wheel.

The bowl thus arranged is simply hooked to the cuirasse (Fig. 65), in the staple which is placed at the lower part on the copper band.

When you desire to place the bowl on the small table, you take it by the hook. So long as the bowl hangs down, the cover cannot possibly come off, but as soon as it is placed on the table the hook is brought into a vertical position,* and the ratchet wheel being thereby released, completely loosens the cord. The cover then comes off the bowl and is removed with the hook.
At right angles to the ratchet wheel.-ED.

Under these conditions, the execution of the trick is instantaneous.

Many conjurors have imagined that they enhanced the effect of the trick by producing several bowls, two being placed under the coat-tails, and two others one on each side of the breast. To render this practicable, they were obliged to use smaller bowls. This so-called improvement really produced less effect, for two reasons. First. The bowls could not be concealed effectually enough to prevent the spectators detecting where they were placed. Secondly. The movements necessary for bringing out the bowls being the same for each successive production, the spectators had a clue given them to the solution of the problem. The first impulse of surprise was destroyed, and the bowls were, so to speak, reckoned up beforehand, and the production of each anticipated in due order.

Surely it is preferable to produce, instantly and without fumbling, a single large bowl, whose appearance, coming without any warning, leaves the spectator utterly at fault as to the solution of the mystery.

I must, however, here mention a very ingenious expedient (for which I am indebted to the English conjuror, Dr. Lynn), for the evolution of a large bowl of fish, after producing two or three others by the methods I have just described.

Upon the stage, and not far from the performer, was a stool, the cushion of which was a make-believe; it in fact formed a kind of box of such capacity as to contain a large bowl, filled with water and fish, without cover. One of the four sides of this stool was open, and the bowl was introduced, and could be withdrawn, through such opening.

At each production of a bowl, the performer took a fresh shawl, and when the turn of the last arrived, his assistant handed him a shawl which was specially prepared. In the middle of this shawl was hidden, between two thicknesses of the material, a disc of pasteboard of the same diameter as the bowl to be produced.

Lynn draped himself, as he had before done, with this shawl, and passing his hand underneath the pasteboard, lifted it up, producing beneath the fabric a very good imitation of the outline of the edges of a bowl. The illusion was the more natural inasmuch as the genuine bowls had appeared in a precisely similar manner. "I will place this one," remarked Lynn, "on this stool before I uncover it" As he drew near the stool with the pretended bowl, he drew out the genuine one, under cover of the folds of the shawl, from its hiding-place, and placed it under the disc of pasteboard. "No," he continued, "I had better show it first." And removing the shawl and the pasteboard disc, he exhibited the bowl of fish, supported on his hand.

My "fish trick," like those of my predecessors, had one fault--namely, that it lasted too short a time, and was executed immediately on coming forward from the "wing," a state of things which might possibly suggest only too correct conclusions.
The idea struck me of prolonging this little scene, and of working, by way of introduction, some other trick, which would give the public time to forget the performer’s previous absence behind the scenes. And in order to give the principal illusion an air of novelty, I changed the mise en scène and considerably enhanced its difficulties.

The improved trick with the addition thereto received the title of The Marvellous Equilibrium.

Fig. 68, will assist in making my explanation clear. On coming forward, I exhibited to the spectators a malacca cane with an ivory knob. This cane had, according to custom, near the handle a hole to carry a tassel, which hole in the present instance was used to suspend it by. To that intent, I passed through the hole a sharp iron wire attached to an upright resting on a foot. The cane was thus maintained in a condition of extreme mobility.

I next showed the company, with a request to examine them, a few boxwood and ebony draughtsmen. The inspection being completed, I balanced one of these draughtsmen on the knob of the cane; upon this I placed another, then another, till at last I had a pile of half a dozen. On this tottering structure I delicately placed an ordinary wine-glass brimful of wine, the complete arrangement being faithfully represented in Fig. 68.

By rocking the cane a little, I showed that the slightest movement would destroy the general equilibrium. And yet, notwithstanding, taking a flat iron rule and directing my stroke by means of the horizontal guide which formed the top of the support, I gave a smart cut through the column from the right of the second draughtsman. This latter was thereby removed without the symmetrical arrangement of the pile being disturbed, the only change being that the third draughtsman took the place of the second, and those above descended vertically to the extent of the space thereby left vacant. I continued the removal of the men, striking always in the same place, to the very last one, when one draughtsman only was left on the cane to support the glass.

This trick produced an extraordinary effect. I must admit, however, that whenever I performed it, certain though I was of success, I felt always desperately nervous until it was well over.

Now a few words of explanation as to the solution of this pretty little problem.

The supposed walking-stick was of iron, painted in imitation of malacca cane. The draughtsman which I placed next upon the ivory knob, and which had not been examined by the public, had in its centre a little cylindrical cavity. From the top of the ivory knob, unknown to the spectators, I pushed out, by means of a sliding stud, a little
iron point exactly fitting the hole in the draughtsman, thus forming a solid foundation for the remaining draughtmen to rest upon.

With this introduction, the reader will readily comprehend what follows. The draughtsman is driven out by the iron rule with such rapidity that it produces no effect whatever on those above it, thanks to the *vis inertiae* caused by the weight of the glass. The supposed cane itself, by reason of its real weight, also resists the shock from similar causes.

(There is a pretty little drawing-room trick which depends on the same principle: you hold the thumb upright, balance a card horizontally upon it, and upon this place a tolerably heavy coin. You give a sharp fillip to the card in a horizontal direction, when the card flies off, leaving the coin undisturbed.)

During the whole of the performance above described I had concealed about my person my great bowl of fish, which I then exhibited as follows:-Instead of a complete *guéridon*, my assistant brought me merely the foot and pillar of one, having at its upper extremity an iron point. I threw the shawl over this point, and when I again removed it, the bowl of fish, filled with water to the brim, was seen balanced upon it, as shown in the illustration at the head of this article.

To facilitate, or rather to simulate, this mysterious equilibrium, the point was made to fit into a hole bored in a stout circlet of brass, which was fixed in the middle of the under side of the bowl. This metallic portion, which projected into the interior of the bowl, was concealed from notice by the thickness of the glass, aided by the water and the fish.

In this form of the trick the bowl was covered with the simple sheepskin, which was better adapted for getting the hole fairly on to the point.

**N.B.-** When I took the bowl in my own hands to exhibit it to the company. I never omitted to spill some of the water from it, as though it was quite impossible to move it without doing so. The question then naturally suggested itself, how could the bowl, filled to the brim as it was, possibly have been placed in such a position without spilling a single drop of water.
CONCLUSION

I have now reached the end of my task. I have completed my revelations so far as regards the subtleties, artifices, and sleights-of-hand which constitute the art of conjuring.

I had intended to terminate my disclosures at this point; but at the request of some of the adepts of the magic art, and further instigated by a sensation of pleasure which I experience in my own explanations, I have made up my mind to write a sequel to this volume. I propose at once to commence another work, treating of stage tricks and of the mysteries specially connected therewith. For this task I have an ample store, among which my readers will find many illusions of special interest, the secrets of which have up to this time never been revealed.*

*The death of the author prevented the complete performance of this promise; but during the passage of the present translation through the press, a further volume has been posthumously published under the title of *Magie et Physique Amusante* (Calmann Lévy, Paris, 1877). This work embraces all that Robert-Houdin lived to complete of his intended undertaking.-ED.

THE END.