

HELLER'S  
BOOK OF  
**MAGIC**

**Magic and its Mysteries  
Explained and Illustrated**

Electronic Edition  
2003 José Antonio González

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## Chapter I.

Brief but all-important Hints. – Conjuring Tables. – Conjuring Dress.  
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### **Brief but All-Important Hints.**

A GOOD temper and a cool head are absolutely necessary to anyone aspiring to be a master of the magic art. A person rendered nervous by one or two over-inquisitive spectators, or of a hasty disposition, will stand but little chance of rising to any degree of proficiency, or dexterity in conjuring.

A performer should always be ready; in any reasonable degree, to answer questions asked him by his audience, or to turn them off in some deft manner, so that any idea that they 'know how it is done,' which may be rising in their minds, is met, answered, and proved to be incorrect. Should, however, as will sometimes happen to be the case, a person (generally some rising young aspirant, who wishes to distinguish himself become particularly obnoxious, endeavour to make him appear foolish, so as to raise a laugh at his expense, and he will be quieted for the remainder of the performance. A gentleman will never allow his temper to get the better of his reason, however much he may be annoyed by his audience, neither would a gentleman act in the manner I have described. Fair criticism and an ordinary amount of speculation you must expect, however; and if your tricks are performed in a clumsy off-hand manner, so that the secret of their manipulation becomes palpable, ridicule will be your not undeserved reward. Always thoroughly study a trick and perform it several times in private first. By this means you will get thorough confidence in your ability to perform it. A very good plan is that adopted by a gentleman I know, who, before performing in public, gathers together a few very select friends for the express purpose of pointing out all the faults they can possibly find, and by this means he attains an unusual degree of excellence. Do not risk performing a trick if you are not certain you can work it with ease, as a failure will upset your equilibrium for the rest of the evening. Should a trick go wrong, bring it to as decent a conclusion as possible, letting your audience believe that it is just the thing you intended to do; but if this be not possible, put on a bland smile, attribute the disaster to some potent spell, which you neglected to charm, but do not own to a defeat.

Do not attempt to be a full-blown magician at the outset. Like everything else that is of real value, conjuring requires that its rudiments be first mastered and proficiency and skill attained by degrees. It will be well not to at once rush into costly apparatus or the highest

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sleight of hand, but commence with tricks easily mastered and yet which when properly performed will astonish many an audience, who, if they were possessed of the secret, would simply say, 'How ridiculously easy?'

In performing a trick, always act as if you yourself believed most fully in the magic influence which you assure your friends is at work to produce the various changes, as this will add very greatly to the effect. For instance, I will presume that you have placed a lady's ring inside a small cabinet, and that you have also, at a distance of say four yards from the cabinet, a gentleman holding a lady's purse, which has been shown perfectly empty. You are going to make the ring pass invisibly from the cabinet into the purse. To do this, you touch the cabinet with the tip of your wand, and then move your rod slowly and solemnly towards the purse. If you look intently at your wand, as if you yourself could see the mystic influence that was conveying the ring unseen from the one article to the other, the spectators will be far more impressed than if you just carelessly command the change to take place. In conjuring, effect is everything, and you should most fully appear to believe yourself in what you tell your audience. Remember, that what seems so simple to you, is a profound mystery to them. Often I show tricks to ladies and gentlemen, and they exclaim, 'How wonderful! how ever is it done!' and when it is explained to them, they innocently say, 'Oh, everyone must see it, it is so simple!' My reply is, 'Did you see how it was done while! was performing it?' 'Oh no.' 'Well, neither will people find out how it is done when you do it.' It is because you know the modus operandi yourself that makes you afraid that what is so clear to you must be palpable to others, whereas nothing is further from being the case. Believe in your own magic power and others will do so likewise; therefore never act in a careless way, or manner, but always study to produce your changes and combinations in the most finished style. Do not hurry over a trick, but set about it with perfect coolness, and take your time. You are far more likely to get flurried and confused by haste than by keeping steady; and besides this, your audience like to be able to follow you in what you are doing, and you will find abundance of opportunities to quietly possess yourself of the article you require, or make the necessary changes.

A performer should always be fluent of speech; if you are not so naturally, practise till you become a good speaker, as a very great deal depends upon being able to keep your audience agreeably entertained with your patter, and will also, to a large extent, keep them from following too closely your many movements. Always have your tricks arranged so that you can put your hands on to them without looking, if needs be. This particularly applies to articles that are concealed from sight of your company, and which you wish to procure possession of unseen. For instance, suppose you had a flower behind your table on a ledge that comes up nearly to a level with the top of the table, so that you can easily reach it in passing, but which flower cannot be seen at all from the front. Well, you simply walk across the stage or platform, and as you pass the table you are able, from knowing where the flower lies, by an almost imperceptible movement of the hand to take it up unnoticed, talking all the time to the company; whereas, if you have to look down to see where it is, your audience at once observe that you are about to take up something.

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It is a great point when you have an article to gain possession of surreptitiously, that you should be able to do so with your eyes looking at the company, and talking to them in a perfectly unconcerned manner.

## Conjuring Tables.

A real conjuring table is made with the top like a box – i.e., with a top and bottom; between the two is a hollow space about six inches deep.

This is left hollow for more reasons than one. The legs are made so as to unscrew, and when travelling are packed inside the hollow of the table, in which also many tricks may be disposed of as well. The back of the table is made generally to open down like a lid, but so that when open it is only on a level with the bottom of the table, and does not hang flat down; consequently this forms a ledge or shelf, on which may be placed various articles required to be out of sight of the company. The table is fitted with two or three traps, of which more anon. The inside is padded, so that any articles passed through the traps fall noiselessly inside. Where traps are used, the top of the table is always covered with a figured cloth, which is glued on and simply cut round where the traps are, to allow of their working. In front, the cloth hangs down just sufficient to cover the depth of the table, which is also higher than the ordinary height by six to seven inches.

Providing you are not disposed to purchase or make a special table, you may proceed as follows: Take an ordinary table that has a drawer to it, and have the drawer pulled out about six inches, to serve as a servante or shelf. Cover the table with any ordinary cloth (the thicker the better), letting it hang down a little in front, and at the back fall into the drawer so as to form a kind of cushion for various articles to rest on. Mount the table on four hassocks or small wood boxes, so as to make it the requisite height.

And now as to

## Conjuring Dress.

Very few amateurs go in for the special dress of professionals, but, as I shall describe some tricks in which it is necessary to have conjuring pockets, I will here give a short description.

Professionals always appear in evening dress, and in the tails of the coat are two pockets about five inches deep and six across, the openings being made slanting outwards to the sides from the centre. These are used for producing or 'vanishing' articles, and should be made so that the openings are just level with the fingers; so that by merely dropping the hand casually to the side, any article is obtained or disposed of without attracting the slightest attention. Also a large pocket in the breast of the coat, to contain fish-bowls, small animals, etc.

## **Conjuring Wands.**

These are made in lengths varying from ten to fourteen inches, according to taste, and are made of boxwood with ebony tips, ebony with an ivory knob, or according to fancy. Accustom yourself thoroughly to using a wand. Great mystic influence is supposed to be imparted to any article simply touched by its tip. It is very useful also in directing the attention of your audience to some article on the table, while you are with your other hand making some change which you do not wish observed.

It will also enable you to hold any small article in the same hand without attracting attention.

## **Palming.**

How to hold a coin in the palm of the hand by contracting the palm:

Take a florin, and place it precisely in the centre of the palm. Now, by partially closing the hand, the palm, being contracted, grips the coin and holds it securely. The inside of the palm must be always towards the performer, and held in a downward position.

## **The Pass.**

### **How to make the pass:**

The performer holds a coin between the fingers of his right hand, and pretends to take the coin with his left, closing his hand as if it contained the coin, but eventually showing it empty. This is what is termed 'making the pass,'

In reality the coin is held by the tips of the second and third fingers and the thumb, and at the instant the left hand apparently takes hold of the coin it is really brought down the side of the thumb and allowed to lie in the palm, which grips it, till it is passed secretly away elsewhere; the hand having very little the appearance of containing anything, and more particularly so if the wand is taken up off the table and held in the same hand, as can be easily done, and with even more effect to the trick, as the performer then touches the left hand, which is closed as if containing the coin, with the tip of the wand, then opens and shows it empty. Larger articles are 'vanished' in the same manner, except that, on account of their size, it is not necessary that they be grasped by the finger.

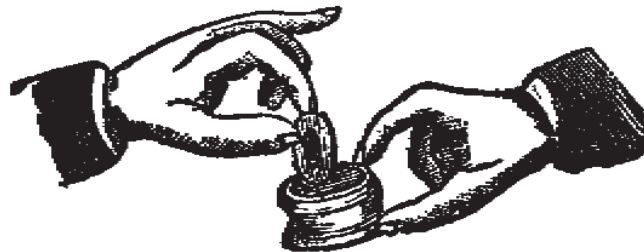
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The Magic Halfpenny Box. — The Magic Marble Pedestal. — The Mystic Money-Box. — The Magic Telegraph Box. — The Barber's Pole. — The Marvellous Shower of Sweets. — The Wizard's Egg and Mystic Bag. — The Great Nose and Twine Trick. — The Magic Funnel. — The Mysterious Glass of Ink.

### The Magic Halfpenny Box.

This is a little polished boxwood box, sufficiently large to hold a halfpenny loosely, but of only three-quarters of an inch in depth; consequently, once the coin is placed in, although it can be rattled freely, yet there is not room enough for it to turn over. The trick itself consists in placing an ordinary halfpenny in the box, and causing it to vanish at command. The bottom of the box is covered with a piece of coloured paper. A halfpenny is then filed down on the one side to make it smooth, and on this is glued a piece of paper of the same colour as the lining of the box.



The box is first shown empty to the audience, and the performer then takes the coin from his pocket, being careful to have the right side uppermost, and drops it into the box, letting it fall so that the papered side is at the top. The lid is now placed on, and the box rattled furiously to show that the coin is really there. The audience being perfectly satisfied that such is the case, the little box is touched with the wand, and the money commanded to vanish; the lid being then removed and the box shown perfectly empty, as the coin, in the position in which it lies, looks precisely like the bottom of the box itself. If the audience have any suspicion that there are two compartments, the box is carelessly turned over, and the coin allowed to slip unseen into the palm, when the box is passed round for a thorough inspection.

## The Magic Marble Pedestal.

This trick consists in causing a marble placed in a pedestal to vanish and appear elsewhere, and to return again to the pedestal at the will of the performer, it is performed by having two marbles exactly similar; the one is previously hid, say in a vase. The pedestal itself is of a conical shapes as shown in the illustration, and the top part is hollow, so that a marble jerked upwards will remain in the top unseen. You show the pedestal and the marble, calling attention to the fact that it is a real marble and not

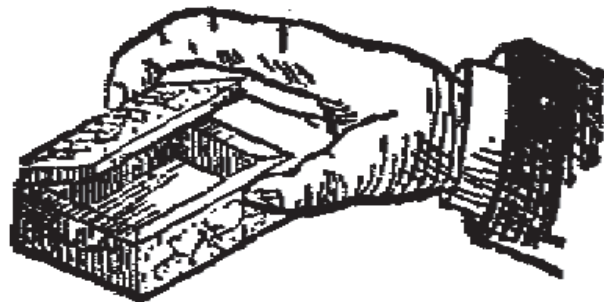
shell. Let one of the company place it in and close the box. You then take it in your hand, say 'Pass!' and slightly jerk the pedestal in the direction of the hidden marble. You will find the marble lodges in the top of the pedestal, which accordingly appears empty. After finding the other marble, say, 'I will show you how it is done. I take the empty pedestal and place it on the table' (if this is done sharply the marble will fall again), 'and command the marble to pass into it.' Pretend to pass it from one hand to the other, place the empty one under the table, and exclaiming 'Pass!' show the pedestal occupied and the hand empty.



## The Mystic Money Box.

To borrow a marked coin and place it in a small box, from which it is caused to disappear and to be found in the pocket of one of your audience.

The box is made to open at the top, and has a movable bottom which acts on a swivel. You ask one of your audience to lend you a coin, marking it first so that he can identify it and then placing it in the box. Hold the box in your right hand and press the bottom furthest from the swivel, when the result is that it gives way and the coin passes out into your hand. The audience being busily engaged seeing that you really close the box securely, do not notice what is taking place beneath. Having the marked coin in your right hand, next place the box upon the table; and contriving to put the coin into the pocket of one of your audience, the mystery will be complete when you ask him to produce it, as, the coin being marked, there cannot, of course, be any doubt as to its being the identical one.



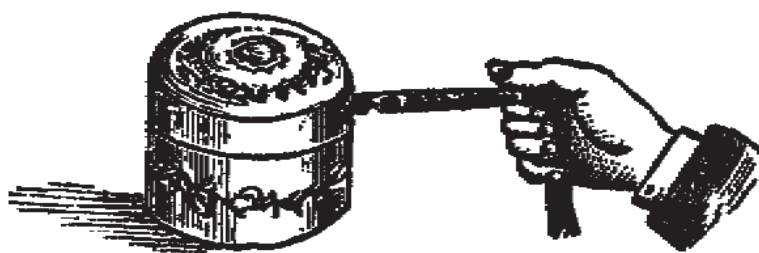


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## The Magic Telegraph Box.

To cause a marked coin to pass invisibly along the tape and be heard to fall into the box.

Under the lid of this box is a little tin bridge sufficiently wide to admit a shilling. Round this is stretched a piece of black tape, which is about a foot long, and comes out at a slit in the side of the box. By pushing the tape back a little through the bridge a shilling is placed there in such a position that directly the tape is pulled the coin falls to the bottom of the box. Two shillings are used for this trick, both of which must be marked alike. Before commencing, place one of the coins in the lid as described. Now show the box itself as



empty, and place on the lid. Take the other shilling in your right hand, with which also grasp the tape. Call attention to the mark on the shilling, by which it can be identified. (This mark should really be made at the time before your audience, you having previously marked the concealed shilling to match.) Then announce that you are about to cause the coin to pass invisibly by electricity along the tape, and to be heard to fall within the box. Slightly pull the tape, when the shilling will be dislodged and fall; and the one which you have in your hand is slipped up into the palm, and while the audience are looking inside the box, passed into your pocket.

## The Barber's Pole.

This is a trick not much in vogue amongst professionals, but still one that is always sure to give satisfaction. The performer, after eating a quantity of little odd pieces of coloured paper, brings them, joined together in long strips, from his mouth, and, as a finale, an enormous barber's pole, as it is called.

The apparatus consists merely of a plateful of odd pieces of coloured tissue paper, apparently, but at the bottom of the plate, beneath these shavings, are little rolls of paper, all different colours, and measuring about one inch in



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diameter, and one-third of an inch wide; also one larger roll of about the same diameter, but nearly three inches in length. Care should be taken to have the centre of these rolls projecting outwards, so that they can be easily caught hold of and drawn out. Coming before his audience, the performer intimates his intention of partaking of some light refreshment, and commences taking up the fragments of paper and making a pretence of eating them. Then, under cover of his hand, the small rolls are conveyed into the mouth, and drawn out in long continuous pieces, much to the astonishment of the company.

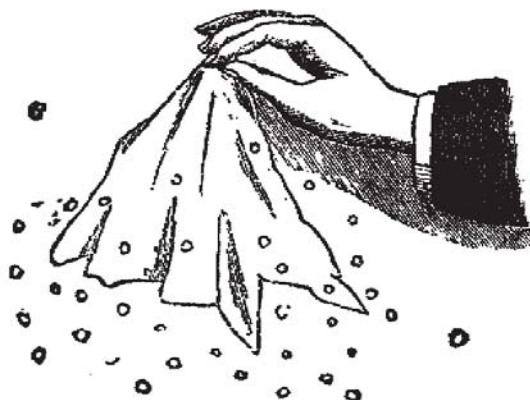
When this has been done, and the performer has the several papers hanging in great profusion from his mouth, he takes up the large roll and, under pretence of gathering up some of the papers, places this between his teeth, and draws it out in one enormous pole, two or three yards in length.

### The Marvellous Shower of Sweets.

In which a shower of sweets and nuts are produced from a borrowed handkerchief.

The apparatus for this trick is extremely simple, but the effects most pleasing, always calling forth cries of delight from the juvenile portion of the audience.

The performer borrows a handkerchief, and lays it down on his table. He then fetches a plate, and, lifting up the handkerchief, a shower of sweets and nuts fall from it on to the plate; and are handed round for the delectation of the audience. The apparatus consists of a little bag, made of linen, in the shape of a V inverted. Two pieces of whalebone run along, the bottom either side, the linen being turned in over these, which, lying naturally side by side, keep any articles placed in the bag from falling out; but directly the springs are pressed at both ends they bend outwards, and the mouth of the bag being thus open, the contents descend. At the top of the bag a bent pin is inserted, by means of which, the point being stuck into the edge of the back of the table, the bag hangs down behind, out of sight of the company. After borrowing the handkerchief, the performer spreads it out on the table in such a manner that half of it falls over the back edge, so that when taking it up again, which he does by simply grasping it by the centre, he catches hold also of the little bag by means of the pin, the handkerchief falls down on all sides, completely hiding it from observation. With the left hand he then apparently strokes the handkerchief downwards, but directly he feels his fingers come in contact with the whalebone he presses them open, and the sweets and nuts fall on the plate. The handkerchief is left on the table while the sweets are handed round, and when returning the cambric the performer suffers the bag to fall on to the servante unseen.



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## The Wizard's Egg and Mystic Bag.

An egg is taken by the performer, placed within the bag, and the audience allowed to assure themselves that it is really there, yet the bag is instantly crumpled up in the professor's hand, banged against the table, and then turned inside out and shown to be empty, but, on being returned, the egg is immediately produced from it.



This trick is performed as follows: A small bag is made (soft cretonne answers the purpose best), nine inches by seven, with an inside pocket extending right down the one side, with the mouth at the bottom of the bag. Thus, when an egg is placed in the bag, the performer has simply to place it so that when the bag is held upside down the egg runs up this inner pocket, and it cannot fall out, being also entirely concealed from view.

Either a solid or blown egg can be used, the latter most preferable, as should a breakage occur with a full egg the result would be rather unpleasant. To commence, the performer states that he is now about to bring before the notice of the company a surprising illusion, first introduced into this country by the jugglers of Japan. The egg is then placed inside the bag, after having been handed round for examination, the audience being allowed also to feel the bag with the egg inside. Holding the bag upside down, the performer runs his hand down it; the egg making its way up the pocket. The performer now grasps the bag, holding the corner just where the egg is in his hand, and violently banging the bag on the table. It is then turned inside out (the performer being careful to keep the pocket-side towards himself) and well shaken. The audience being thus fully convinced the egg has

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mysteriously disappeared, the bag is returned, and the conjurer produces the egg from it immediately. Any other small article can, of course, be 'vanished' and produced from it in a similar manner.

## The Great Nose and Twine Trick

In which the performer, calling a youth from the audience, bores a hole through his nose with a bradawl, then placing a wooden frame over it, proceeds to threadle the frame on to the person's nose with a piece of twine, the string going in at one side and being slowly drawn through on the other.

No difficulty will ever be experienced in inducing youngsters to assist you with your tricks, the real trouble being which to select out of the number that so freely offer their services, and the more horrible the deed the larger will be the number of aspirants to the honour; therefore you will in nowise limit the would-be assistants by stating that you, are about to perform an operation on the nasal organ, proving it possible to completely transfix the nose of the person who volunteers to two blocks of wood without extracting a single cry of pain.



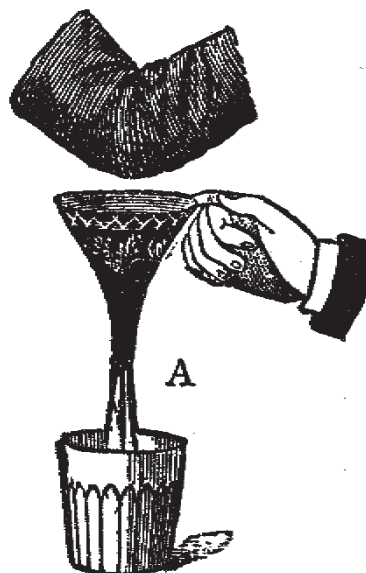
Having selected your victim, request him to be seated and to screw up his courage to the necessary pitch, as you will be obliged to perforate his nose to perform the operation in question. You then produce from your pocket a small bradawl, which is freely handed round for inspection. This is an ordinary instrument, but you have concealed in your pocket another, similar in appearance, but made with a spring in the handle, which is hollow, and you change instruments as you walk from your audience to the victim. As the awl is pressed against the nose it goes up the handle, but has all the appearance to the audience of really piercing the flesh. You now proceed to place on the little wooden frame, which, as may be seen from the engraving, is in the form of an inverted V. To explain this thoroughly before going further, there is a hole made on the one side which is carried right up the centre of the pillar, crosses over at the top, and down the other pillar, terminating with a small hole at the side, and it is through this little tunnel that the twine really travels, as will be readily supposed, and is already, passed through before commencing operations. The end piece of cord that is on the left-hand side must be kept concealed from the company by a finger being placed over it. The frame being now placed on the nose of the youth, the performer again drills the hole, this time through the wood, and makes a pretence of passing the string through; and catching hold of the end at the other side, draws it right through, and then backwards and forwards several times. It is astonishing the appearance which is produced of the twine actually passing through the nose. Some

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performers in country villages have a small piece of sponge dipped in red liquid which they squeeze over the face at the time of making the perforation, but this would not go down with a select audience.

## The Magic Funnel.

Having given a glass of wine or water to one of the audience to drink, it is said he has imbibed too much, and a portion of it is drawn off from his elbow. The funnel, which comprises all the necessary apparatus required in this performance, is made double, a space of about one-third of an inch intervening between the outer and inner side, and is joined in a slanting position at the top, so that it has merely the appearance of an ordinary funnel. By placing your finger over the bottom of the funnel at A, and filling it, the inner concealed part also becomes full. There is a small air-vent beneath the handle, and by covering this with the thumb, which can be easily done, and has a most natural appearance when the funnel is held by the handle, all the concealed liquid is kept intact, although that in the funnel proper runs out directly the finger is removed from the bottom.

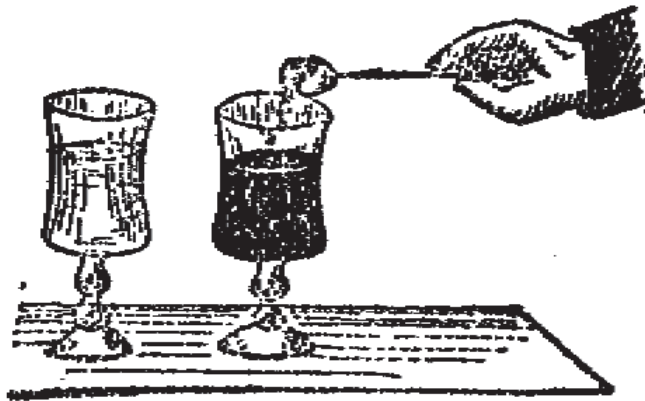


We will presume then that the performer has had the services of one of the juveniles of the company for some trick and is about to dismiss him, when suddenly, as if struck with an idea, he calls him to his side, and remarking, 'You have been very expert and willing in your endeavours to assist me, and you must allow me to offer you some refreshment before leaving,' he then either hands him a glass of liquor, or producing the funnel, holds it to the youngster's lips and tells him to drink half. He purposely allows him to take more than the allotted quantity, and then exclaims, 'Oh, this is scarcely fair, sir; you have taken more than the stipulated allowance, and have not left sufficient for me.'

He then, if using the funnel, allows the spare liquor to run into a glass and shows the funnel as being empty, or if using a glass, goes behind his screen and brings forward the funnel prepared. A second juvenile is now called up to assist, who is informed that the first young gentleman having drunk more than his allotted share, must be made to give back part, and this by means of the power of Magic is about to be accomplished. Assistant No. 2 is requested to take hold of the right arm of No. 1, and work it up and down like a pump. The professor then places the funnel to the elbow of the left arm, and holding a glass beneath the funnel, removes his thumb a little from the hole, when a few drops of liquor fall. Turning to No. 2, he says, 'You are not working hard enough, sir; pump away.' In response to which exhortation the youngster works like a fire-engine, and the hole being now entirely uncovered, a perfect little stream descends.

## The Mysterious Glass of Ink.

The performer introduces to the notice of the audience a glass or bowl of ink, which is covered over for an instant with a lady's handkerchief, when it changes to clear water. This trick can be performed with any size glass, from a miniature tumbler up to a large fish-globe, and therefore I shall describe the latter, as it differs from the smaller size only by real ink being produced and handed round, which is not possible if only a small tumbler is used.



There is made to fit inside the globe a lining of alpaca or black silk made without any bottom, and round the top of which runs a wire, and over this the alpaca is turned, which prevents it from falling down. The lining is made to fit the inside of the vase as closely as possible, and when water is poured in, which presses the alpaca out to the glass, it has exactly the appearance of being a vase full of ink.

This is exhibited to the audience, and, to prove the genuineness of the liquid, the performer takes a ladle, and, dipping it into the bowl, pours out some of the ink into a plate, which is sent round.

The ladle is made with a hollow handle, having a small hole at the bottom opening into the bowl of the ladle. Another small puncture is made within an inch of the top of the handle. Before commencing the trick, ink is poured in the bowl, which, when held on an angle, allows the liquid to run up the handle, but is prevented from flowing back again by a finger or thumb covering the small top hole. The ladle can therefore be held in any position without fear of the hidden liquid coming out, and when placed in the vase it is not allowed to really enter the water, but only lowered to its surface, the finger being at the same time removed from the aperture in the handle, when the ink flows down into the bowl of the spoon, and is then brought out of the globe, poured into a plate, and handed about to the audience.

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The performer next borrows a large handkerchief or shawl, with which the bowl is covered, and, touching the glass with his wand, commands the ink to vanish. On lifting up the covering, the vase is found full of clear water, with gold-fish swimming therein. Doubtless, as has been already surmised, on taking off the shawl the performer catches hold also of the wire ring, and draws out the black covering under cover of the shawl, and quietly drops it down on to the servante.

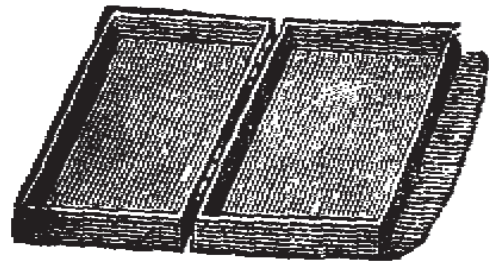
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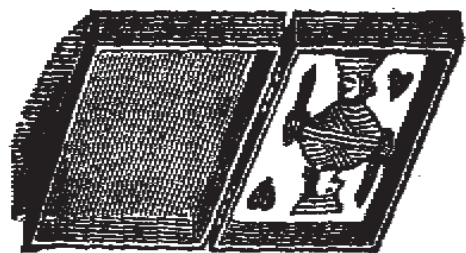
### The Changing and Burning Card-Box.

These are used in several ways, the two principal of which, however, are in pairs or single.

I will first describe their use in pairs, in which two cards are chosen by the audience — the one, say, a Queen of Hearts, and the other Jack of Spades. One card is placed in each box, and the boxes placed as far apart as the table will admit, when at command the cards change places, the Jack being found in the box where the Queen of Hearts had been placed, and vice versâ.



The explanation, which is exceedingly simple, is as follows: The boxes themselves are made one inch in depth, and open exactly in the centre, being similar in reality to two lids, each having exactly the same depth, and being finished off with the same pattern of inlaid wood top and bottom (if ornamented), so that whichever side is uppermost, no difference is observable. The box itself is just sufficiently large to admit of an ordinary playing-card. A piece of thin wood coloured the same as the lining of the box, and made to fit as closely as possible, without being at all tight, forms all the trickery apparatus required. A Queen of Hearts would be placed in the box destined to receive afterwards the Knave of Spades, and be covered over with the movable piece of wood, when the box will still preserve the appearance of being quite empty. The



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companion box is, of course, served in the same way, the only difference being that a Jack of Spades would be placed in this. You now force your two cards (see 'Forcing Pack of Cards' described later on in this book) on your audience, and place one in each box, closing the boxes and placing them on the table the reverse sides up, so that the movable pieces of wood fall down and cover the cards just placed therein. Now, when the boxes are again opened, the cards previously concealed will be revealed, and will thus give the appearance of having changed from the one box to the other.

The single box is used as follows: the company select a card, which is then taken by the performer and burnt entirely to ashes, which are placed in the apparently empty box, on which a lady is asked to gently breathe. The performer then remarks, 'By the magic of this lady's breath we shall find the ashes changed into the card complete;' and, opening the box, the card in its entirety is brought forth. In this case the preliminary proceedings are exactly similar; the piece of wood falling down and covering the ashes, and bringing in their place a card of the same suit.

### The Magic Bran Glass.

A glass of bran instantly changed into a glassful of sweets, or various other articles.

The performer brings forward a glass of bran, and to prove it to be such scatters some on to the floor. A cover, that has been examined, is then placed over the goblet; and on its being removed the bran is nowhere to be seen, the glass being full of sweets, nuts, etc., which are readily demolished by the youngsters, utterly regardless of the air of mystery which hangs about their magic appearance.

A hollow tin shape is made to fit inside the glass, which is generally a goblet, large or small, according to whether for drawing-room or stage use. The tin shape is open at the bottom only, and outside bran is glued on, so that when placed in the goblet it appears like a glass full of bran. The hollow of the tin shape is first filled with sweets, some borrowed article, etc., and then placed in the glass. A cover (generally made of brass) with the sides tapering outwards is made to go over the goblet, and when pressed down hard the rim of the bran shape becomes jammed, so that on the cover being raised the shape rises also, unseen, and the sweets or other articles are left in the glass. Some loose bran is always heaped on to the top of the tin shape when commencing, and blown on to the floor to disarm suspicion.



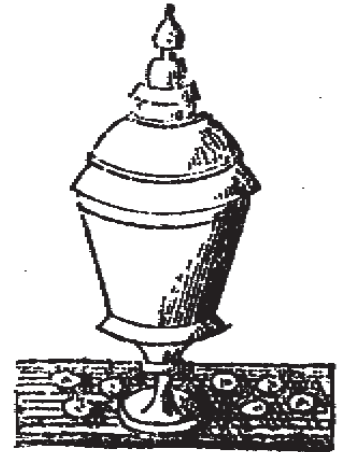


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## The Mysterious Counter Pedestal.

In which three counters are placed in a small vase, and immediately multiply into a dozen.

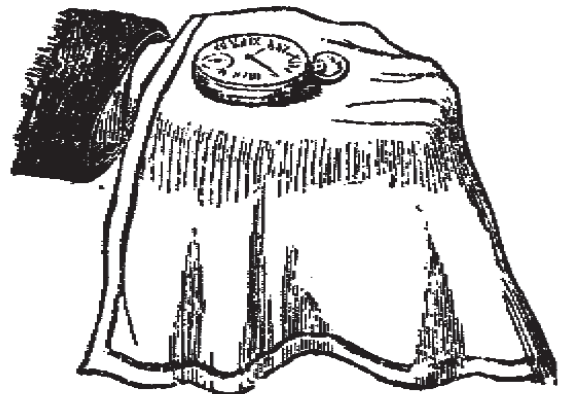
As will be seen by the engraving, the lid portion of the pedestal is somewhat considerable in depth; in fact, is sufficiently large to hold nine counters. Eight or these counters go loosely into the hollow cavity made for them, but the ninth is slightly large, so that it fits tightly into the hole and is flush with the bottom of the lid. A pressure is therefore required to dislodge this before it and the other eight will fall, and to effect this there is a spring knob at the top of the pedestal. Three counters are taken and placed in the vase by one of the audience, any of whom are allowed to see that there are only those three inside. The top part is now placed on by the performer, who, placing the pedestal on his table, commands the counters instantly to increase. At the moment of putting the vase down, the spring knob is pressed in with the palm of the hand, which, pressing the eight loose counters against the one that is wedged, causes all to fall down into the vase. The pedestal is then opened, and the counters exposed to view and thrown on to the table one by one.



## Mouchoir Du Diable, or the Demon Handkerchief.

Any number of small borrowed articles, such as watches, rings, locket, etc., placed beneath this handkerchief instantly disappear.

The performer has borrowed, let us suppose, a lady's watch, and requests a gentleman from the audience to take and place it on the table. He then remarks: 'Not having even so much as touched this watch myself, ladies and gentlemen, you will impute no nefarious designs to me, I trust; and I wish you to observe that it is not my intention in any way to come into personal contact with the timekeeper, and you must therefore hold the gentleman who has placed it on my table responsible for its safety, as he is the last person to whose charge it was entrusted. All I shall do is simply to cover it with a handkerchief—thus;' and, suiting the action to the word, he places a cambric handkerchief over the article in question. 'I now simply



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wave my wand over the place, and lift up the handkerchief, when you will observe the lady's watch has vanished.'

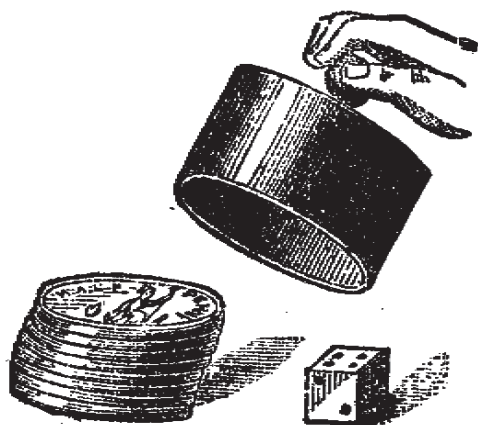
The handkerchief which is used for this performance is really a double one, being two handkerchiefs sewn together round the edges, with a slit about four inches long cut in the centre of one of them. In covering over the article placed on the table the performer takes care to push it just inside the slit, so that when he again takes up the handkerchief the watch or locket falls inside, leaving the table bare, while the handkerchief is gently shaken, to prove the article is not concealed in it. This is restored later on during the entertainment, and should be, if possible, produced from some other apparatus where it would be least expected.

### The Dissolving Pile of Halfpence.

Six halfpence are handed to the performer by the company, which he places under a small brass cover. On this being lifted up a little die is found in place of the coppers, which can nowhere be seen.

This trick consists of six halfpence riveted together at the edge, with the centre pierced out of all except the top one. In the hollow cavity thus made there is sufficient room to conceal a small die. The other part of the apparatus is a little brass cover, just sufficiently large to put over the six coins, and is made of thin metal, so that it bends and grips the money tightly when pressed.

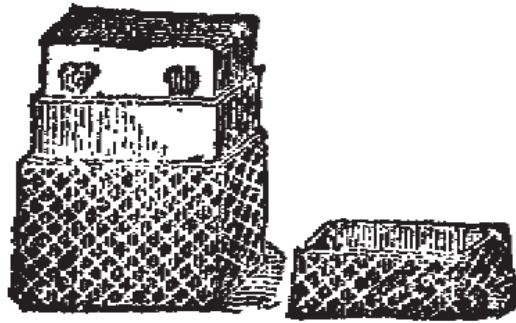
Going amongst the audience, the professor requests the loan of a little money, and, not wishing to do the confidence trick on a very large scale, asks only for halfpence to be entrusted to his care. Having collected the necessary number, he proceeds back to his table, and, during the passage, changes the borrowed coins for the riveted halfpence with the little die; these have been all along kept concealed in the palm of the hand which is holding the wand, and thus are not noticed. They are placed on the table, the die being easily kept from falling during transit by placing the little finger beneath the money. The brass cover is then placed over, having been previously examined by the spectators. The performer, in taking up the cap, pinches the sides slightly, when the coins rise with the cover, leaving only the little die in their place. By an adroit movement of the hand the cap is turned over, so that the halfpence fall into the palm, and can be easily dropped on to the servante, and the cover sent round once more to be inspected.



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## The Magic Dissolving Pack of Cards

A pack of playing-cards are shown to the audience, and then placed into a case just large enough to hold them. One of the audience instantly after this is done opens the case and finds it full of sweets and the cards vanished.



This is simply a little case made of cardboard, covered with any pretty pattern paper, and is only of sufficient size to admit an ordinary pack of cards. There can therefore be no doubt that a very marvellous magic influence must exist to cause a pack of cards to entirely disappear, there being no possibility, under the circumstances, of there being a double compartment or opening. Having drawn particular attention to the fact of how near the size of the box is to the pack of cards, and placing the cards therein, the lid being also put on, the performer requests any one of the audience to step forward and open the box, and, on this being done, a plentiful supply of sweets are emptied out, but the cards are nowhere to be seen.

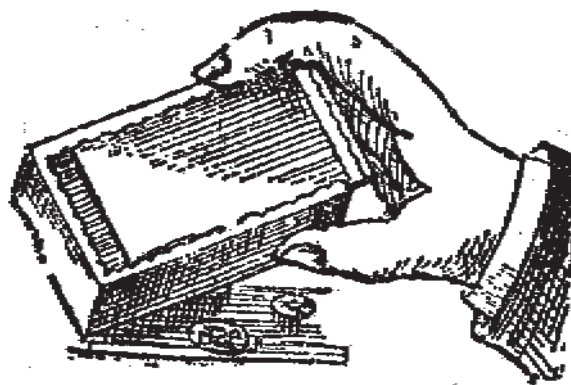
With the reader's present knowledge of conjuring he will have long ago surmised that the pack of cards shown to the audience are not the same as those placed within the case. The substitution takes place as the performer walks past his table, the prepared cards, which are on the servante, being taken up, and the others laid down in an instant. The prepared pack is really hollow, and consists of only two cards, a back and front card, with pieces of thin cardboard at the sides and bottom, the sides being finely pencilled down, thus giving the appearance of an ordinary pack. The inside is lined with a patterned paper corresponding to the lining of the case, and fitting very tightly inside this, no perceptible difference can be noticed when it is within. This hollow pack is filled beforehand with the small articles the performer is desirous of producing, and fitting, as before stated, very firmly inside the case, precludes the possibility of the cards falling out, even when held upside down, and the sweets, etc., brought forth.

## The Wonderful Rattle Box.

A coin marked secretly by one of the audience is placed in the box and the lid closed; The box is then shaken, when the coin is heard to rattle therein, yet on another apparatus being opened the identical money is found there, and the box in which it was placed is shown empty.

A conjurer is almost always a beggar in one sense of the word. That is, he is constantly borrowing various articles from his audience, which is, to a great extent, satisfactory to the company themselves. It disarms all suspicion, that the articles are specially prepared, whilst at the same time it gives additional zest and enjoyment to the parties witnessing the entertainment to know that it is their property which is being manipulated.

The present trick is no exception to the general rule. The performer asks some gentleman or lady to oblige him with a coin, and in order that it may be recognised, again, to make some secret mark on it unseen by him (the professor). The coin is then placed inside a little box, about three inches long, two and a quarter inches wide, and three-quarters to one inch deep. The performer instantly slides in the lid, and to preclude the possibility of a doubt that the coin is really within, he shaker the box vigorously, when a loud rattling is heard.



In this condition, firmly closed and corded even, if desired, the box is placed on the table in full view of the audience, a final shake being given and a final rattle heard as it is put down. Another box, vase, or any desired article is brought forward, and the coin commanded to pass into it, or to be found in a certain gentleman's pocket.

The performer touches the box with the tip of his wand, which he then slowly moves towards the place he has mentioned, as if really carrying the coin on the wand, and at the moment of reaching the article or pocket, the marked money is found therein and identified as the original coin by the person from whom it was borrowed.

All the secret naturally lies in the box itself; which is constructed as follows: Made of any hard well-seasoned wood; it has a double bottom, and between these two bottoms there is a hollow space of about a quarter of an inch in depth. In this is concealed a piece of tin or zinc, kept from rattling, except when required, by means of a spring; but by pressing the front part of the box at the real bottom, the spring is released, and then by shaking the box from side to side the piece of metal moves about and imitates very naturally the sound that would be made by a coin. The top compartment of the box is made with a well-polished smooth floor, so that a coin slides readily upon it. This top compartment is only about half the depth of the box itself, but otherwise nothing particular is noticeable.

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The lid is made to slide in, and the end is made with a ledge, which comes flush with the false bottom, so that till this is pushed right in there is an opening which admits of any coin falling out into the hand. The coin being placed in the box, the performer holds it in a slanting position as he pushes in the lid, when the money slips out unseen into his palm. Having thus obtained possession of the coin, the box is quite closed, and the metal inside made to rattle to assure the audience the money is still within. All that now remains for the performer to do is to suffer the coin to drop into the pocket of some quiet-looking old gentleman as he walks to his table, and then by his mystic influence to pretend to cause the coin to pass from the one locality to the other.

## The Mysterious Candle and Bewitched Handkerchief

A borrowed handkerchief is burnt to ashes in a candle, the candle is then placed in an empty case, from which it mysteriously disappears, and the handkerchief, restored, is found in its place.



Before commencing this trick, the performer has a fine piece of linen rolled up tightly. The other apparatus is a dummy candle made of cardboard, covered with white glazed paper, with merely a piece of candle stuck in the top, and is otherwise quite hollow and open at the bottom. Also a case sufficiently large to hold the candle, which case is covered with fancy gelatine paper, according to taste. It is made to open at both ends, either of which come out beyond the length of the candle.

The dummy handkerchief is kept just behind the screen, together with the imitation candle; the case, however, lies on the table.

The performer now proceeds to borrow a handkerchief, and, in the case of several being offered, selects one most resembling his dummy. This is rolled up in a similar

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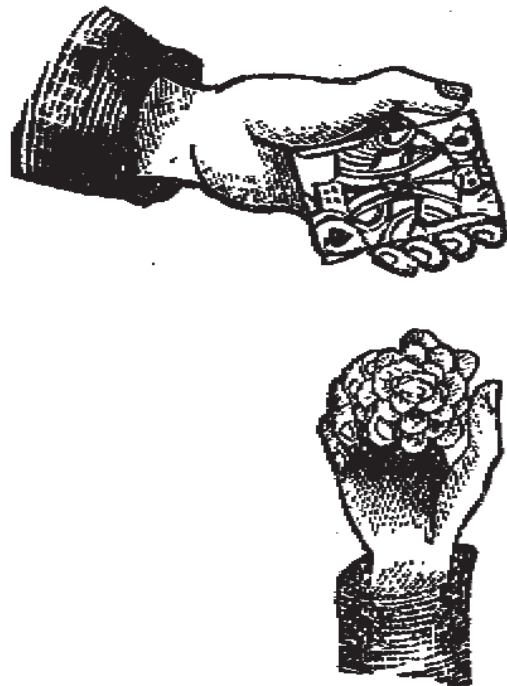
manner. The performer then remarks, 'I am about to cause this handkerchief to pass through the ordeal of fire; excuse me one instant while I procure a light.' Saying which, he vanishes behind the screen, secretes the handkerchief up the hollow of the candle, places the candle in a stick, takes up the dummy handkerchief, and reappears before the audience. The candle is lighted, and the prepared cambric burnt, after which, turning to the lender with a bright smile, the performer says, 'I trust you will pardon me; your handkerchief has failed to pass the ordeal successfully; if you will accept of its remains, and claim no compensation, you shall have them together with the candle. See, I will put them in this nice little case, and make you a present of the whole at the close of the entertainment.'

Saying this, he takes off one end of the case and places the candle inside, with a few of the ashes of the handkerchief, and closes it again; then proceeding with some other trick, until he has occasion to go amongst his audience, when, taking the candle and box with him, he presents it to the lady or gentleman, as the case may be, taking off the opposite end as he gives it, so that instead of the candle meeting the view of those around, the end of the handkerchief is seen protruding, and is brought forth restored. The real cause of the delay in not instantly making the restoration, is to divert the attention of the audience, as they might otherwise notice that it was not the same end which was originally removed. The candle inside is papered exactly to match the lining of the case, so it cannot be discerned at all when the bottom end of the case is removed.

### The Enchanted Card and Rose.

An ordinary playing card is held in the hand of the performer before the audience, and changes instantaneously to a beautiful rose, which he wears in his coat the remainder of the evening.

The card is selected from a pack (see forcing pack) by the audience, and is then handed to the performer, who, standing in full view of the company, and speaking of the various tricks and dodges made use of by sharpers, announces his intention of doing a little card playing on his own account. 'Now, ladies and gentlemen, I am not much of a swindler at cards, but I intend to win this game. I take this one card which you have kindly handed to me and simply touch the face of it thus,' and as he speaks the performer draws his hand gently over the front of the card, when instantly his hand is observed to contain a very beautiful rose, but nothing



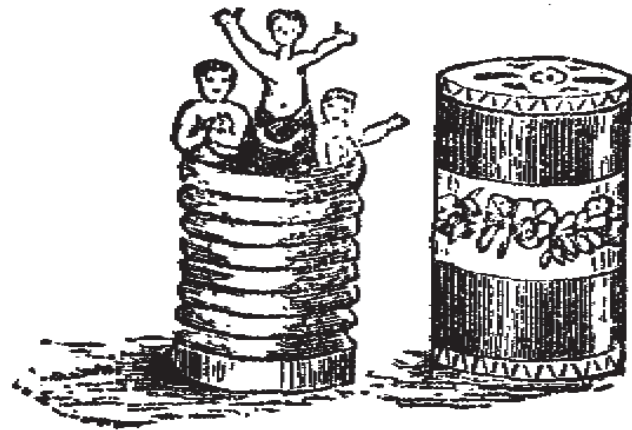
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whatever of the card is to be seen. The manipulation of the card is as follows: It is not the same card although of the same suit as that which the company gave up, being changed for the performing card by means of the servante. This card is jointed into three so as to fold up into one-third its proper size. Two bands of broad white elastic are glued on to the back from top to bottom, stretched rather tightly, and glued just at the top, bottom, and in the centre. On the top of this is glued another card (face downwards) jointed in a similar manner. It will thus be seen that this card, or rather double card, can be folded into three by pressure of the hand, but directly the pressure is removed the elastic causes it to fly open and return to its original position. On the centre of the back is cemented a large open rose, one that spreads out as much as possible over the surface of the card, but not much beyond, except it be a little of the stalk, which can be easily hid. If the back of the card be red, a red rose would be used, if yellow, a chrome colour, as then should any corner of the card be seen it is not noticed. The card is simply held by the sides with the face towards the audience. In passing the other hand over the card the top and bottom portions are doubled down, and the card transferred to the opposite hand, thus turning it round so that the rose faces the audience.

## The Mystic Family.

Three shillings are borrowed from the audience and placed in an empty boxwood vase. The cover is then placed on and is held by a lady, who, on removing the cover finds the coins entirely disappeared, and three lovely little babies in their place.

This is a little boxwood vase about three inches high and of a circular shape. Another vase is made which slips easily but closely into this one with an outer rim at the top, which rests flush with larger vase, thus making it about one quarter of an inch higher. Between the bottom of the inner and outer vase is a hollow space, capable of containing three coins. A little cardboard cover fancifully decorated is made to fit over the whole, and this, with the addition of three china babies, completes the apparatus. The inner



vase, in which are put the interesting infants, is placed on the servante, the vase being taken round for the purpose of collecting three shillings, the performer assuring his audience that if they will oblige him with this small sum he will guarantee them a fair return for their money. At the same time he carries with him the empty cover, carelessly twisting it about so that the spectators are certain to notice it and see that it is empty.

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Having made the collection, the backward journey to the table is taken, and as the performer stands behind it, he slips the cover over the inner vase, which is on the servante.

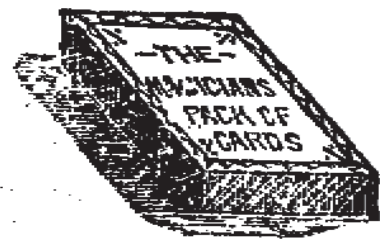
The attention of the audience is now called to the money in the pedestal, and over this is placed the (apparently) empty cover. Then begging a small cambric from one of the ladies and throwing it over all, the performer places it in the hands of the lady, and, after a pause, requests her to remove the handkerchief and lift off the cover, when the tiny juveniles are exposed to view. During the merriment that ensues the performer relieves the lady of the vase, and placing one finger tightly on the top to prevent the inner compartment from moving, he lifts out the china occupants one by one. Tilting the vase over, the audience see that the money is not there; but the three usurers to whom the performer promised full value for their money refuse the exchange that is offered, The babies are therefore again consigned to the vase, the cover put on, and, pinching the sides firmly, the inner compartment is lifted out beneath the cover and allowed to fall gently down on to the servante, the performer bringing his hand flush to the table for this purpose. He then approaches the audience, acting as if the infants were still in the vase, and insists that they must accept the contents; then turning the pedestal upside down in his hand, the three coins fall out, and both cover and vase are once more shown empty.

## Chapter IV.

Forcing Packs of Cards. — The Biseatté Pack of Cards. — Magic Spring Balls.  
Magic Spring Babies. — The Mystic Fruit-Knife. — The Magic Birth of Flowers.  
— The Magic Flowers and Mysterious Bottle. — The Magic Millet Bell and  
Bushel of Seed. — The Magic Hammer and Ball. — The Mystic Sweet Wand.  
The Mystic Money-Plate. — The Goblets and Hat Trick.

### Forcing Packs of Cards.

These are packs of cards specially prepared for causing the audience to choose any suit which you may desire, and are a necessary adjunct to every conjurer's repertoire. A conjuring pack consists of only thirty-six cards, and not fifty-two. A forcing pack contains only three suits in the entire pack, that is, there will be, say, twelve Jack of Hearts, twelve four of Clubs, and twelve seven of Spades. The twelve Jacks will be at the top, the Clubs in the centre, and Spades at the bottom. We will presume that you are going to produce three cards from a lyre-stand, jumping card-box, or some similar apparatus, of the same suits as in your forcing pack. You take up the pack of cards, holding them face downwards, so that what they are is not seen, and request one of the spectators to take a card, at the same time spreading them out in your hand like a fan, thus pushing the centre cards prominently forward. He naturally takes one of these, very possibly not the most prominent one, but



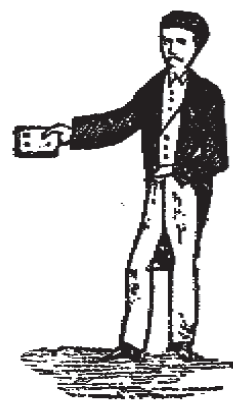


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this does not signify, as you know all the centre ones are Clubs. Should, however, the gentleman, thinking he will be extra cute, take a card from the right hand corner, it is of no consequence, as you simply offer the centre again to the next person; and to the third, spread them out so that the left hand cards are most inviting. Having thus forced your cards, and your audience noticing the suits they hold in their hands; the cards are put back into the pack, you supposing to have not the slightest knowledge of what suits they are. As you pass your servante where you have an ordinary pack of cards from which the Jack of Hearts, four of Clubs, and seven of Spades have been withdrawn, you lay down the forcing pack and take up these. Then, after your cards have been produced from the apparatus used, you take this pack and count them down, showing that the three chosen cards have really vanished from it. The same manner of forcing is used for one or two cards.

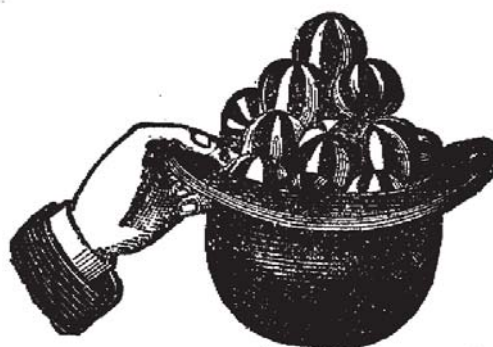
### The Biseauté Pack of Cards.

With this pack the performer can allow anyone to select a card, and yet tell them instantly what card they choose. You will notice, on close examination, that the cards are cut down more at the top than the bottom – in fact, that they are wider one end than the other. Offer the pack to any person with the widest parts towards them. They select a card. You say, 'You are sure you know what sort it is?' and, while they are examining it, turn the card casually round the other way. Then ask them to insert the card anywhere in the pack they like. You now thoroughly shuffle the cards, but by running your hand along the sides of the pack are able to instantly pick out their card, because it will be more prominent to the touch than the others, being wide where all the other cards are narrow.



### Magic Spring Balls, for Producing from an Empty Hat.

These are of the size of regulation tennisball% covered with red, yellow, and black cloth, giving them a very lively appearance. Inside, the balls are really hollow there being merely a spiral spring, which is covered with the cloth. Consequently a ball can be pressed down quite flat; and even when a dozen of these are served in this manner, with an elastic band or piece of twine to keep them together, they take up a position occupying only about two and a half inches. In this condition they are placed on the servante, and the performer, borrowing a hat, brushing it,



and talking to his audience, at last deposits it on the table, near the back edge. Then, taking hold of the bundle of balls, he again takes the hat by the rim (this is done so quickly and

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quietly that the hand is never observed to really leave go of the hat), and twists the balls up inside. A few remarks are then made about the gentleman who kindly lent the hat being a great favourite with children, etc., and the string being by this time slipped off the balls, they are produced one by one. Solid stuffed bails are also made to resemble these, and one or two slipped into the hat and handed round for inspection add greatly to the effect.

### **Magic Spring Babies.**

These are similar in construction to the spring balls, being skeleton frames of spiral springs covered with various cotton prints, and compress vertically to half an inch. They can be introduced into the hat in the same manner as the balls; but the better way is, after producing the balls, to walk towards your audience as if to deliver up the hat, which is held horizontally, so that the crown is towards the company, and then slip the babies into it from the breastpocket of the coat. Remarking that it seems the gentleman not only carries balls wherewith to amuse the youngsters, but also the happy children themselves, you place your hand in the hat and bring out the babies, which stand about seven inches high.



A large baby is also made, measuring eighteen inches high, with a little instrument inside, similar to the squeaking dolls, so that when patted it cries.

### **The Mystic Fruit-Knife.**

A marked coin, borrowed of one of the audience, and which has vanished mysteriously some little time previously, is found inside an orange or lemon cut open with this knife.

This trick consists of a knife resembling the ordinary dinner article, but on one side of the blade is fixed a little circular brass plate, with a handle of about one and a half inches in length. The round disc itself is kept pressed hard to the blade by means of a bent spring, so that a coin placed beneath it cannot fall till the handle is touched by the performer, which removes the pressure.



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We will suppose that you have obtained possession of a sixpence or shilling by means of the rattle-box, and wish to restore it in as mysterious a manner as it disappeared. You place the coin beneath the brass circular clip, and leave the knife ready to hand on your servante, using for inspection a knife similar in appearance, but with no appliances attached. Request the loan of an apple, orange, or lemon, which it is improbable any of your audience possess, but if some youngster has an orange, so much the better; if not, procure two or three from a magic drawer box (described later on). The audience are now reminded of the lost coin, and of your intention to cause it to appear in the fruit before them, requesting the spectators to select which one they would like it to be found in, handing round the fruit and knife for inspection. Then, changing your knife as you pass behind the table, place the fruit on a plate, and cut it open with the knife, and when in the centre press the spring, thus allowing the coin to fall, which is at once identified as his own by the person who marked it.

## The Magic Birth of Flowers.

An empty flower-pot is filled with moss and seed by the audience, and a cover placed over, which when removed reveals a beautiful vase of flowers, some of which are taken and presented to the company.

The cover used for this trick is of tin, prettily japanned. There is nothing peculiar about it, except that a close observer might notice a little slot forming the half of a square near the bottom. There is also the empty flower-pot, standing two and a half inches high, and a tin shape made to fit over this, with a tin bed-plate, which is sunk a quarter of an inch below the surface. On this is glued some moss and a small rose-tree, leaves, etc., or other flowers, as the case may be. On the outside of this shape, at the bottom, is a small piece of wire projecting a quarter of an inch, and which catches in the slot before mentioned, thus keeping the flowers concealed up the cover till the performer releases them.



The empty pot is now filled with moss and a few seeds sprinkled on the top, the cover placed on, and one or two of the audience breathe on it to force the vegetation. The performer then slips the catch on one side and raises the cover, when the rose tree is revealed to view. If one or two real rosebuds are placed in beforehand and passed round to the ladies, the trick is much enhanced in value. There is a much smaller size made without the catch, the cover being simply pinched with the fingers to keep the flowers there till the desired moment.

## The Magic Flowers and Mysterious Bottle.

Pouring several glasses of wine from a bottle, the performer eventually places an empty cover over it, when, on raising same, a pot of lovely flowers appear, the bottle having mysteriously vanished.

The bottle used here is made of tin, black japanned, and has two compartments, the top part, which ends an inch below the shoulder, containing the wine. The remainder portion is made to hold the flowers. The bottom of the bottle comes out and has fixed to it a round tinshape, japanned white in imitation of a china flower-pot. This stands two-and-a-half inches high, the top lid, so to speak, having an upright wire rod in the centre, round which to twine the flowers, moss being fastened on to the tin plate itself. This is supported by



a spiral spring, so that on being pressed it sinks clown with the flowers about two inches. By this means the flowers, when produced, tower nearly as high as the bottle itself. The pot with the bottom of the bottle is kept from slipping out by means of a little catch similar to that described in the birth of flowers. The flowers are not injured by being pressed against the tin compartment that divides the lower from the upper portion of the bottle, because it is the upright wire, which has a little knob at the top, that receives the pressure, and not the flowers themselves.

In the middle of the entertainment the conjuror states his intention of producing refreshment by magic, and brings forward an ordinary-looking black bottle and some wine glasses. Withdrawing the cork he proceeds to pour out some sherry, which is carried round by his attendant. One glass he reserves for himself, and fearing the audience might be tempted to ask for more, states he will just put the cover (made of cardboard) over the bottle to conceal it from view. His attendant comes back with the empty glasses, when the following little conversation takes place:

'I suppose you would like a glass yourself now?'

'Thank you; yes, sir'

'Very well, then, hold the glass.'

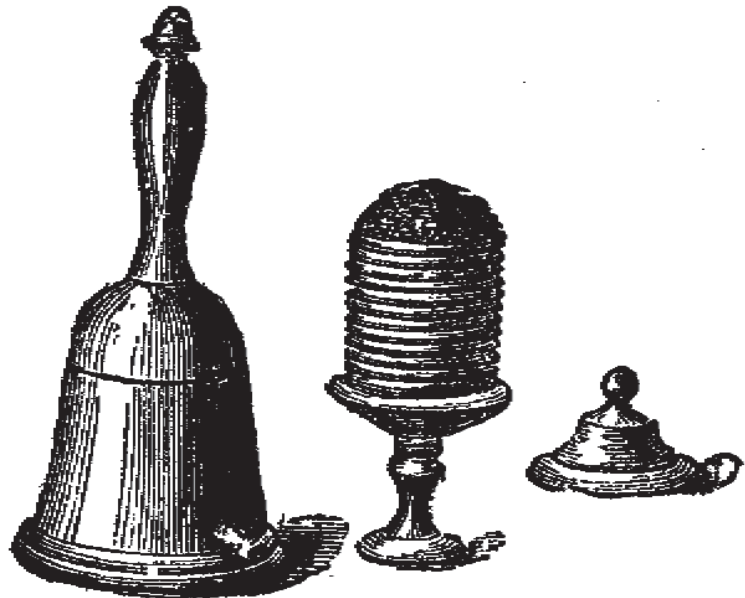
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The attendant, with a cheery smile, in anticipation of the wine, does so, when on lifting up the cover (pinching the sides slightly and releasing the catch) the performer starts back in assumed astonishment as a pot of lovely flowers appear. The attendant looks glum, but on being given the flowers as a substitute for the liquor disappears with a good grace.

## The Magic Millet, Bell, and Bushel of Seed.

The bushel is filled with seed from a bag by the performer and given to one of the company to hold. An empty bell is now placed on the table, and the seed commanded to leave the bushel and appear under the bell, which it instantly does, leaving a silver coin in the bushel.

The bell used here, though apparently empty, and of quite ordinary construction, is made with a small spiral spring running along the handle, which is hollow, and terminates against the knob at the top. At the bottom of the inside of the bell a portion of the centre is made movable and is fastened on to the one end of the spring, thus when the knob of the handle is pressed by the palm of the hand, any seed contained in the handle falls through. The bell is charged with millet seed before commencing to perform.



The bushel is a little upright pedestal, having two compartments, the one just below the other, besides a lid. The upper compartment is only a quarter of an inch deep, and has millet seed glued in it. The second compartment, which is only one rim lower down, is open to the bottom of the pedestal. The movable compartment is kept inside the bag containing millet seed. The bushel is shown to the audience as being quite empty, and the performer states his intention of filling it with seed from the little bag on the table. As he proceeds to put the bushel into the bag for this purpose, he slips into the compartment a ring or coin which has been previously borrowed, and makes an appearance of filling the vase; instead of which, however, the hidden part is slipped into the pedestal, and some loose seed heaped on to the top. When brought out it seems as if the little pot is as full as it can possibly be. The loose seed is brushed off, and the lid put on. The bell (shown empty) is now placed on the table, and the seed commanded to pass to it from the bushel. At the instant of placing the bell on the table the knob is pressed in, when the seed falls, the cloth

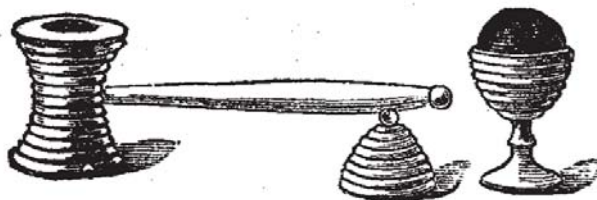
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preventing its descent being heard. A mesmeric pass is now made from the one article to the other, the bell lifted up and the seed found beneath it, and, on the bushel being opened (at the second compartment) the coin or ring is found inside.

### The Magic Hammer and Ball.

In which a ball is made to pass and repass through a solid wood table.

This trick consists of a hammer and a cup containing a black ball. The hammer is so constructed that one end can be detached, and on the inside of the rim is the half of a counterfeit ball. This, however, fits so closely that the hammer may be freely examined. When this has been done and returned to you, the last rim should be removed and concealed in your hand, the hammer being laid on the table, taking care to keep the now hollow part away from view of your audience. The cup containing the black ball is now uncovered, and as you take the top off you slip the counterfeit ball (which should be held



in your left hand) into it. With your right hand the solid ball should be now taken from the cup, which you ask your audience to observe is quite empty. The cover of the cup is now placed on, by which means you get the counterfeit ball into position. The right hand, containing the real ball, is now placed beneath the table, and, exclaiming 'Pass!' you lift off the cover, when the counterfeit is visible, the solid ball being concealed in the palm of the righthand. To cause the ball to repass through the table, take up the hammer and strike the counterfeit with the hollow end; when it will at once take it up, and you produce your other hand from beneath the table with the ball.

### The Mystic Sweet Wand.

For causing a shower of sweets to descend amongst the audience.

This is a wand of ten inches in length, and about three-quarters of an inch in diameter, surmounted at either end with an ebony tip. The wand is hollow throughout, with a thin wire rod running along its entire length, connected at one end with the centre of the



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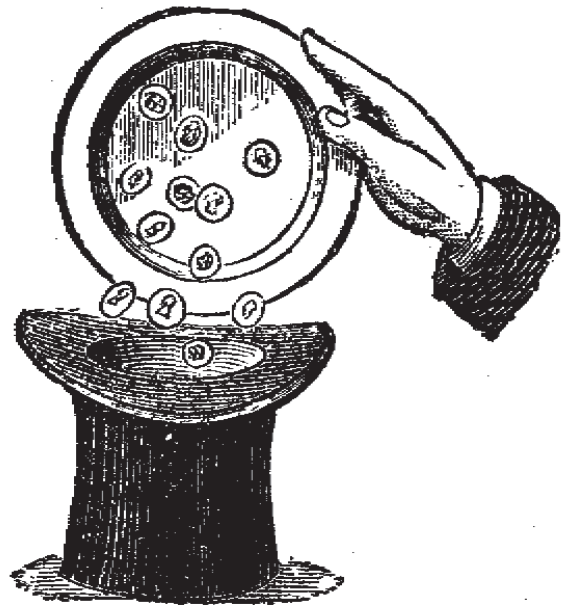
ebony tip, and at the other screwed into the ebony mount itself, which is made to move up and down the wand half an inch when pressed, but is kept at other times in its proper place by means of a spiral spring. The hollow of the wand is filled with small sweets, those designated by the name of 'hundreds and thousands' being best, as very small, and not liable to stick. When the performer wishes to produce a shower he simply walks near the juveniles, presses down the tip of the wand with his palm, and gently shakes it, when the sweets fall.

## The Mystic Money Plate.

Four coins are collected from the audience and placed on a plate. A gentleman then holds his hat, into which the plate is emptied, when the coins are found to have mysteriously doubled in number.

The plate most generally used is one of tin, prettily japanned in red and gold, and is seven inches in diameter. It has a double bottom (except round the rim), closed, so as not to be noticed, except in one place large enough to admit a shilling. This little orifice runs in a straight line right along the bottom, and will contain four shillings. It is made shallow so that it is impossible for two coins to get stuck, there being only just room for one coin deep.

With the plate loaded, the performer comes forward and requests the loan of a few coins-shillings will do. Having collected four, he walks round with the plate giving the company full opportunity to count them. Some gentleman kindly holds his hat, into which the money is shot; and on being asked to count the same, brings forth eight shillings.



The performer has to be careful that he knows precisely where the opening is, so as to tilt this part of the plate into the hat when the concealed coins fall into it with the others. Care has also to be taken by the novice that he does not, in walking, hold the plate on one side and let the money slip out, before he really begins.

Most professionals use an ordinary china plate as more natural. In this case the bottom rim of the plate has to be ground away, and a cardboard bottom made to glue on, with a hollow space left for the coins.

## The Goblets and Hat Trick.

Fifty or one hundred tin goblets produced from an empty hat. These goblets, which are about three inches high, are made of thin tin, so that they fit very closely one on the other, three or four dozen taking up only five inches room. These are kept on the servante, and introduced into a hat in the same manner as the spring-balls, and are then taken out one by



one and spread all over the table, or built up into a gigantic pyramid. Do not let any eager boy gather them up out of the way; as I knew a conjurer performing at the Agricultural Hall on a certain occasion who did so, and the lad began in the most innocent fashion to fit the goblets one into the other, thus exposing to the audience the small amount of room they really occupied, and showing them practically 'how it was done.'

## Chapter V.

The Mysterious Glass Casket. — The Magic Canister. — The Great Sack Trick.  
The Dissolving Flag and Candle. — The Dissolving Egg and Handkerchief  
The Mysterious Bran Bottle. — The Passe-Passe Bottle. — The Inexhaustible  
Bottle. — The Mysterious Ladle of Fire. — The Mysterious Watch Mortar.  
The Mysterious Card Table.

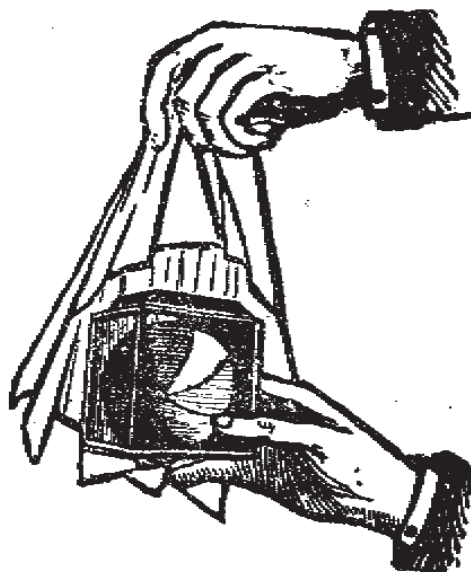
### The Mysterious Glass Casket.

A casket made entirely of glass, with the exception of the bottom and back, is shown in all positions to the audience, so that they can see it is really empty; yet covered for an instant with a lady's handkerchief, a large ball is found inside.



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The casket is made with a false bottom of tin, black japanned, which is made to fall up against the back, where it is held by a little wire catch which works from the outside of the casket. The ball used is one of the spring ones previously described, which is squeezed flat and placed behind the tin. Not a particle of it can now be seen, and the casket has every appearance of being perfectly empty, being held about in every position for the company to assure themselves that such is really the fact. A lady is now asked to kindly cover the casket with her handkerchief, and while she is doing so the performer slips the little catch on one side, when the spring of the ball instantly causes the tin flap to fall; and on the cambric being removed, much is the astonishment of the audience to see a large ball inside.



### The Magic Canister.

Into which a lady's handkerchief is placed, when it disappears, and a pair of gloves, borrowed at the beginning of the entertainment, are found in its place.

There cannot possibly be an easier trick than this to work; all that is required being quiet and steady movement. The canister stands six and a half inches high, and is made of metal, japanned in two or more colours. It is divided into two compartments, and both ends of the canister have a shoulder and top precisely similar. Outside there is another body, also of metal; the canister itself being made to slide freely up and down this. The outer body not only covers the inner, but also the shoulders and top of one end, thus giving it the appearance, as in the engraving, of quite an ordinary-looking canister; but when this is turned upside down and pushed, the present top and shoulders disappear, and the others come out at the opposite end.



The performer has got, say, possession of a pair of lady's gloves, 'vanished' from some other apparatus previously. These are placed in the top that is hidden from view. A lady's cambric is borrowed and placed in the part that is uppermost, and another one loaned from a gentleman with which to cover the apparatus. As he is doing this, the performer reverses the canister, and pressing the part containing the lady's handkerchief, it slides

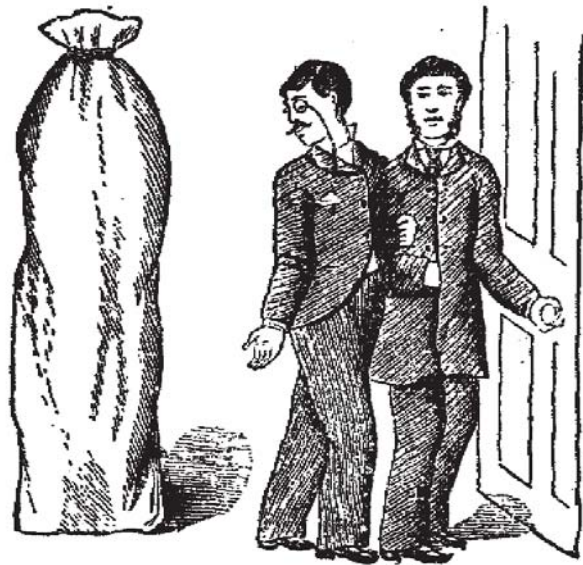
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along the outer body, and the opposite end comes out the other side; and on the canister being uncovered, the lid is taken off and the gloves produced.

### The Great Sack Trick.

A youth tied up in the sack, with the cord sealed, is led outside the room; but before his captors have fairly taken their seats, he returns with the sack over his arm and the string with the seals on it unbroken.

This is an apparatus that can be easily manufactured at home, but the conjuring depots selling it at a very low price (3s. 6d. generally), it is better to purchase it all ready made up. The sack itself has nothing particular about it, and is of ordinary size. The secret lies in a little bolster, which is made about six inches long and three inches diameter, stuffed tightly with straw and paper. This is kept concealed beneath the coat and vest of the prisoner, who, in this case, must be a confederate, and when he finds the string being tied round the mouth of the sack, he pushes up the bolster, so that the cord is tied round this as well.



The performer walks forward and announces the introduction of a mystery rivalling in effect that of any rope-tying trick yet invented. He invites any of the audience to step forward and to be securely tied up in a sack, which is to be corded at the top and the string sealed; yet by his magic power he will enable him to escape therefrom in less than two minutes. There are not many persons anxious to be tied up thus, as it is rather a laughable if not ignominious position, so it is generally only the confederate who steps out; but should any other do so, the performer would, after appearing for a few seconds to be in doubt which to select, think that his confrère is the better height and will fit the sack easier, or any other thought that will help him out of the small difficulty.

The confederate goes stumbling into the sack, which is drawn up round him by the conjurer, who gathers the voluminous folds over his head and requests some gentleman to step forward, tie up the sack, and seal the cord. The thick folds of the sack prevent the bolster from being observed. This being accomplished, the imprisoned victim is led staggering out of the room, accompanied by the gentleman as witness and the performer as guide, amidst the laughter of the audience. Immediately the passage is gained the two return and close the door. Directly the confederate hears the door shut, he pulls down the bolster, which enables him to put out his fingers, slip the string from off the mouth of the

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sack, and, with a smile of triumph, walk into the room, displaying, for examination, the sack and sealed string, which are eagerly scanned in the hopes of finding out the modus operandi.

## The Dissolving Flag and Candle.

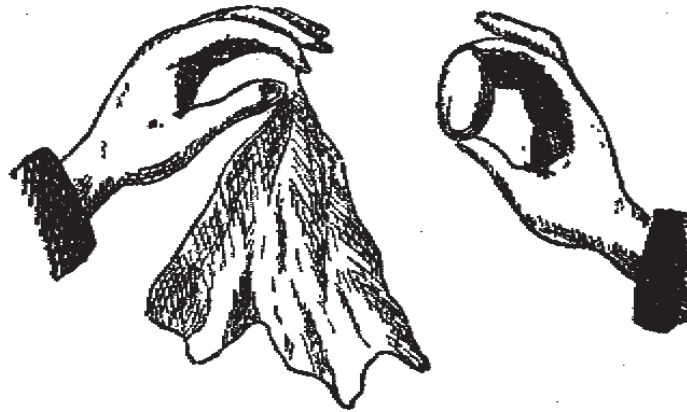
The performer introduces a silk flag, which can be minutely examined. This is then taken between his hands, from which it disappears when rubbed. A candle which is then burning on the table is wrapped up in paper when this also vanishes; but on the paper being unfolded, the flag is found inside.

The great secret of this illusion is that the candle is only a paper one, having a piece of candle top and bottom, a duplicate flag being in the hollow portion. There is also an ordinary brass ring one and a quarter inch diameter, to which is attached a piece of strong elastic. Previous to introducing the experiment, the performer fastens one end of the elastic to his brace just under the arm-pit, so that the ring rests in his sleeve until required. The candle is lit and placed on the table, the flag being sent round for inspection; and while this is being done, the performer pulls down the ring and slips it over his thumb, where it remains unseen. On the flag being returned, it is taken between the hands and waved to and fro, and then rolled up, the performer; under cover of one hand, commencing to twist it two or three times through the ring. When this is done, he rubs his hands hard, and, opening the palms inwards, the ring flies up his sleeve, carrying the flag with it, and shows his empty hands to the company, The candle is now taken and wrapped in a piece of paper which has, if possible, been borrowed from the audience, or else plainly shown to be only a thin piece of ordinary paper. The performer says, 'You would like, perhaps, to be once more sure that the candle is really in this paper; see, I will show you again;' He then tears the paper open, when the thin case of the candle is also torn, and the performer draws out the flag, rolls up the paper into a small ball (which can be easily done) to prove the candle has vanished, and throws it behind the scenes.



## The Dissolving Egg and Handkerchief.

A solid egg and handkerchief are taken and rubbed together, the handkerchief getting smaller by degrees and beautifully less, till there remains nothing of it to be seen. The performer then rolls the egg between his palms, raises his hands towards the ceiling, and shows them empty.



This is, as will be seen from the description, somewhat similar to the flag-and-candle illusion. Two eggs are used: the one hollow, with a hole in the one side one and a half inches long by one inch broad; and the other solid, or rather without any opening. These eggs are generally made of zinc, and japanned white; but wood has a somewhat better appearance, as it takes the white better than zinc.

The solid egg, together with the handkerchief, which is a foot square and of thin silk, is handed round, and, on being received back, is exchanged for the egg with the opening either by means of the servante or palming. The performer, when rubbing the egg and kerchief together, twists the latter into the hollow of the egg, working it in thus with the right fingers under cover of the left hand. The egg is then shown, care being taken to keep the open side away from the audience. The performer, turning to his audience, says, 'You will perceive, ladies and gentlemen, that even as the dripping water wears away the stone, so the constant friction of my hands has worn away the handkerchief. I will next try the egg, and see if the same effect can be produced, though it is much harder material to work up.' Again there ensues a vigorous action of the palms, when, holding them up in the air, they are the next instant spread out towards the audience empty.

The egg is palmed, or, if the performer is not up to this best of all modes of vanishing, a small hole can be bored through one end of the egg, and a piece of elastic passed through and made secure, the other end being stitched to the back of the waistcoat. If this latter means is used, the performer would catch hold of this egg while walking back to his table, and lay the examined one on the servante. Then, when the moment has arrived for 'vanishing' the egg, the palms are opened, when it flies beneath the coat unobserved. The elastic must be short, so that there is a good tension to it; otherwise it might not vanish wholly from sight, which would prove extremely awkward.

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## The Mysterious Bran Bottle.

From which several glasses of wine are poured, but, when covered for an instant, nothing remains but a heap of dry bran.

The performer comes forward, stating some very excellent old port has just been sent to him, and invites the audience to pronounce their opinion upon it. Calling for glasses, they are filled and borne round. The performer, having drawn the cork and carelessly thrown it away, places a cardboard cover over the bottle to keep the air from getting in while he searches for the cork. Finding it, he lifts up the cover to cork the bottle, when only a large heap of bran appears, the bottle having vanished.



The solution is easy, and hat doubtless been partially guessed by the acute reader already. The bottle has two compartments, the top containing the wine, and the lower half the bran. The bottom of the bottle is a separate piece, and fits on only loosely, and has to be held from falling by one of the fingers being placed beneath it. The cork is therefore only lightly fixed in, as otherwise, were both hands required in opening, the trick would be discovered. The cork is thrown purposely on one side to give the excuse for covering the bottle. When the cover is raised, the sides being slightly pinched, the bottle rises with it, and the bran, falling all round, completely covers the bottom, which is left on the table.

## The Passe-Passe Bottles.

In which bottles and glasses get strangely mixed and change places in a most mysterious manner.

The performer walks forward with two cardboard covers, a bottle and a small tumbler and commences somewhat as follows—

‘I wish to draw your attention, ladies and gentlemen, to this simple bottle and glass. To secure the safety of these I will proceed to cover them with these two covers. The bottle I

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place on my right hand and the tumbler on my left, covering them thus,' suiting the action to the word. 'Now to prevent any misunderstanding as to their relative positions you will kindly inform me under which cover the tumbler is.'

Several voices at once respond, 'The left,' on raising up which cover, however, the bottle is found to be there and the tumbler under the right, having by some strange process mysteriously changed places.



They are once more covered, and the performer says: 'Now you are perfectly sure that your eyes deceived you on the first occasion, and that the tumbler is really under the righthand cover. See, to prove it to you I will raise them once more.' This is done, and the articles seen in their right places; but on being again uncovered have once more been transformed, the bottle to the place occupied by the glass and vice versâ. This can be continued as long as it affords amusement, but should never be made tedious by over-working. Real wine can be poured from the bottle into other glasses.

The modus operandi is easily explained. There are two bottomless bottles, each divided into two compartments, the upper portion holding the wine. There are also two tumblers precisely alike, and the two covers already mentioned. In the lower portion of each bottle is a circular hole the size of a halfpenny, which is sufficiently large to admit of the thumb. The sides in which the holes are must always be kept towards the performer.

Under each cover is really a bottle and tumbler, and by pinching the cover the bottle is made to rise with it, thus leaving only the tumbler to view. When the bottle is wanted to be seen, only the cover is lifted, the bottle itself covering the small glass; and when the bottle is lifted from the table, the thumb is inserted in the hole and presses the tumbler against the side of the bottle, when it is raised with it. Thus it does not matter under which cover the audience say the glass or bottle is, you can always make it just the reverse.

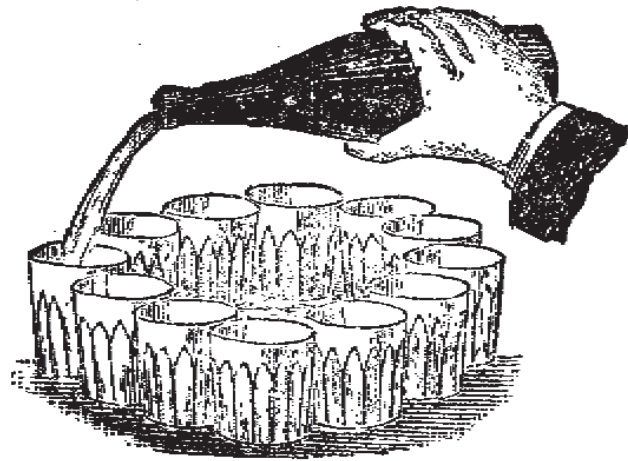
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## The Inexhaustible Bottle.

Four or five different wines produced from one bottle.

The performer asks the company what kind of wine they prefer, as he possesses a bottle which he trusts will meet their various requirements. First, however, they will permit him to rinse the bottle out with water to make sure it is quite clean. Water is now poured in and emptied out, the bottle being held upside down for this purpose.

Some call for sherry, others for port, and so on; and as each wine is asked for, it is poured out and handed round.



These bottles are made in various sizes, for two, three, four or five wines. A bottle for five wines is divided inside into five different compartments, each of which is connected with the outside of the bottle by means of a small hole.

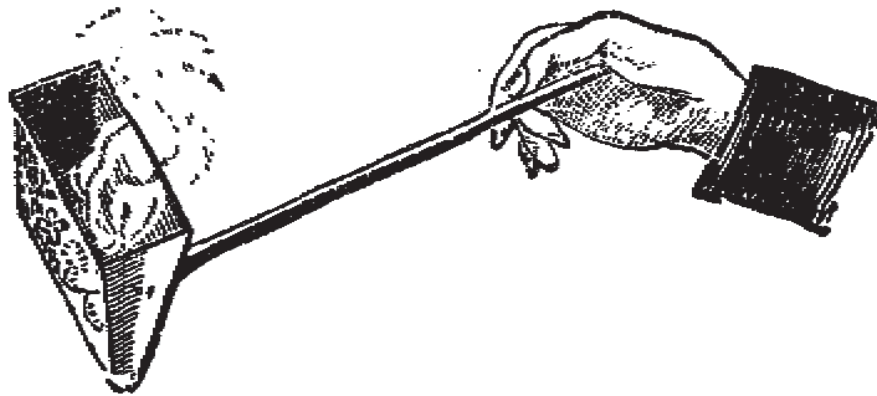
These compartments terminate at the shoulder of the bottle, with the exception of little tubes, which run to within an inch of the top. Down each of these tubes is poured a different kind of wine by means of a small funnel. So long as the fingers and thumb are placed over the air holes on the outside of the bottle, the wines cannot be poured out. The holes are so arranged that the hand grasps the bottle in the most ordinary manner possible. A great effect is produced by first cleansing the bottle with water. This may be poured into the top compartment, which is separate from the other five, and extends to the bottom of the shoulder; care, however, being taken that not any goes down the various tubes. The bottle is then held upside down, when all the water runs out, but not a drop of wine, as the air vents are closed. Now as each wine is called for, the finger is removed from that particular compartment, and the liquor produced. A little thought is required to remember which compartment contains the wine called for, as to pour out sherry for port would result in ignominious failure. Owing to the smallness of the tubes the wine cannot run out very quickly, therefore the glass should be held horizontally, as the fact of this is not then so noticeable.

## The Mysterious Ladle of Fire.

A seven of Clubs placed inside the ladle changes to a Queen of Hearts without being touched in any way, or any card or letter can be burnt and restored.

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The ladle itself, which is of the shape shown in the engraving, is two inches across at the top, but tapers down to little more than a quarter of an inch. Its depth and width are sufficient to hold with ease an ordinary playing-card. It is made entirely of tin, with the top edges turned inwards, and inside is a movable tinplate, which works backwards and forwards, being concealed when at either side by the edge of tin at the top, which is turned in for this express purpose. The tin plate works upon a small hinge at the bottom, and is connected with a thin wire rod, which goes the entire length of the handle and terminates in a brass cap at the top. This cap is made to slide down the handle by being pressed by the palm of the hand, and when this is done, the tin plate, which rests ordinarily against the handle side of the ladle, is pressed over to the opposite side, but directly the pressure is removed, flies back to its original position; this being accomplished by means of a spiral spring in the handle, which, acting upon the wire-rod, draws it back.



We will suppose that the performer wishes to change a card. He places beforehand a Queen of Hearts behind the movable tin plate. A card is then selected by the audience from a pack offered to them. The performer says: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I do not wish to touch this card in any way, so as to prove to you that there is no necessity for it to really come into contact with me to cause a radical change to be effected. I will extend this ladle to you, and the card shall be placed in it by yourselves. You will kindly particularly notice what the card is first. "Seven of Clubs;" yes, very well.' The ladle is stretched forth, and the card deposited therein; The performer steps back a little, and then hesitates. 'You are sure it was a seven of Clubs, sir? Will you kindly look once more, so that there shall be no mistake.' The card is taken out and found to be a Queen of Hearts, the change having been effected by pressing the knob during the step backwards, the tin flap moving forward, thus hiding the card just placed in and revealing the other. The Seven of Clubs is produced a minute or two later in some other apparatus. The ladle can be used for any purpose of a similar character, where a card is wished to be burnt and restored, changed, obtained possession of, etc.



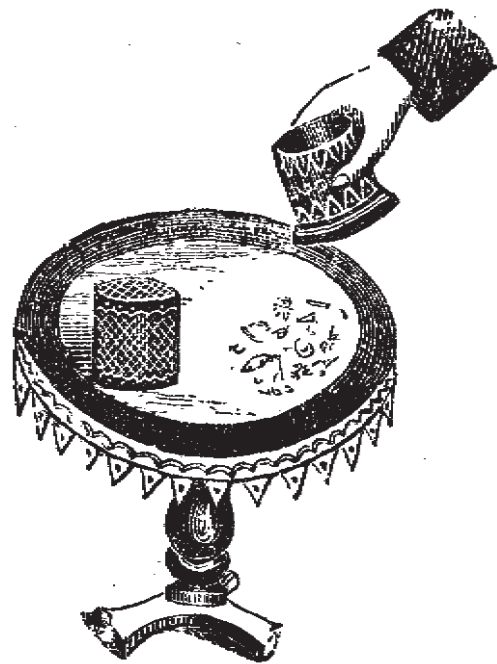
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## The Mysterious Watch Mortar.

A watch is borrowed, placed in a mortar, shown in fragments, and then ultimately restored entire. There are two different kinds of watch mortars in use at the present day, the one of which is generally used by drawing-room amateurs, and the other by professionals. I will first describe the former, terming it for distinction the

### Amateur Watch Mortar.

This is of the shape shown in the engraving, and stands five inches high, made of tin, and prettily japanned. The performer asks the loan of a watch, which being granted, he places in the mortar, covering it over for greater security. Instantly, however, a thought seems to strike him, for he removes the cover, saying, 'No, I will dispense with any covering; and see, to show you the watch is all right, I will place my wand in, so!' and with a sweet smile he brings the wand down with a crash into the mortar. A sound of broken glass is heard, at which the owner of the watch trembles. The conjurer apologises for having been so hasty, but still continues his work of demolition, saying he may as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb. He now empties out on to the table the fragments of the watch—glass, wheels, springs, etc., which, however, the gentleman refuses to take. The performer looks perplexed, but gathering up the pieces places them in a pistol, and requests the gentleman to fire at a loaf of bread; and on breaking open the loaf, the watch is found in a perfect condition in the centre. The explanation is as follows: Inside the watch mortar fits a tin body, the rim of which rests on the top of the mortar itself. Between the bottom of this tin body and the bottom of the mortar is a space of half an inch. In here is placed beforehand some parts of a broken watch, damaged parts being easily procured for a few pence from any watchmaker (the more knocked about they are the better). All this part the tin body covers, so that the mortar is held on one side to show it is empty when the watch is placed in. The change takes place on the cover being lifted off, when it is pressed slightly, and the movable tin body containing the watch rises with it. This is allowed to fall noiselessly on to the servante. The cover is then thrown down on the table so that it can be seen, it is empty; and now there remains the mystery of the pistol and loaf to solve. The pistol, which is used for a variety of tricks, is an ordinary cheap one, but to which is made a tin tube tapering outwards, so that whilst the one end fits tight on to the barrel near the nipple, the other end protruding over the barrel is about two inches in diameter. A little tin cup is made to fit closely inside this wider end, and it is into this that the parts of the watch



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are really placed, and not down the pistol at all. Then, as the performer walks towards his audience he allows the cup to fall out into the hollow of his hand, and palms it away. A little charge of powder has been previously put into the barrel and a cap placed on the nipple, and the gentleman requested to point the pistol in a straight line with the loaf held in the hand of the performer, and to fire. The loaf, which can be either procured from behind the scene or kept on the servante, and produced as if by magic, has had a slit made in one side into which the watch is slipped. When the pistol is discharged the performer, apparently with great difficulty, breaks open the loaf and produces the watch.

The other kind of mortar I will term the

### **Professional Watch Mortar.**

This is of wood, with the bottom made movable, acting on a swivel, so that he performer can cause the watch to fall on to the hand when required. A wood pestle with an extra thick end, is used, which end is hollow inside, and is made to unscrew, and let out the broken fragments of the watch contained therein. The pestle fits tightly into the bottom of the mortar, so that by giving it a turn or two between the blows it readily unscrews. A second pestle, innocent of any trickery, is kept for examination.

To produce this watch a target is sometimes used instead of a loaf, the pistol being fired at the target, in the centre of which is a little hook, and the instant the pistol is fired the watch is observed hanging on the hook. The target is quite ordinary in appearance, standing about fifteen inches high, made of metal and japanned in colours, having the bullseye in the centre, on which is fixed a little black hook.

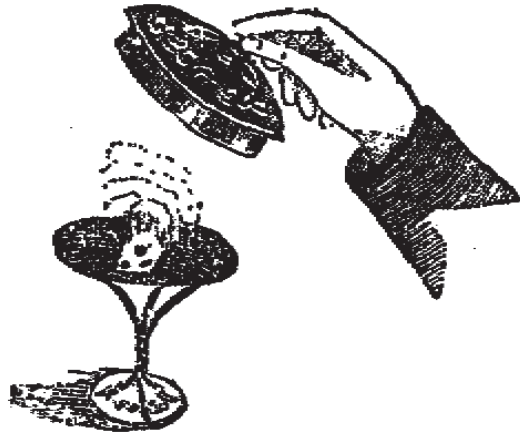
The bullseye is made movable, and can be caused to revolve at pleasure. This is effected by means of a very strong spiral spring at the back, which is fastened to the bottom pivot, on which the bullseye rests, and which, when the centre is turned half round tightens the spring considerably, so that it flies back to its normal position immediately it is released. It is kept however, from flying back by means of a wire, which travels down the interior of the pillar of the target and moves up and down. Consequently, when the bullseye is set the wire is pulled down, when a piece that is bent horizontally holds it firmly in this position. The centre is painted alike on each side, and both have a small hook to match. The watch is hung on the hook at the back, after the bullseye has been set, and at the moment the pistol is fired the performer (if holding the target in his hand) presses up the wire from the bottom, when, the catch being released, the bullseye swings half round, and the watch faces the audience. It is impossible for the bullseye to revolve more than half the circle, because of a projecting piece of metal at the back which stops it. The action is so quick that the audience cannot observe the movement, even were it not for the smoke from the pistol, which assists in obscuring a perfect vision. In tables fitted with traps the target is worked by means of a piston rod, so that on pulling a cord a steel rod issues through the table and pushes up the little metal disc that is at the bottom of the wire.

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## The Mysterious Card Table.

For burning a card to ashes, and then, instantly restoring it.

The performer requests the audience to select card. This is done, and the card then taken and burnt to ashes, which are placed on a small table. A metal cover, which may be examined, is placed over these, and a transformation demanded. Any one of the audience may then raise the cover, when no ashes whatever can be discovered, but the card in its original state is lying on the table.



The explanation is extremely simple. Over the table is fitted loosely, but so as not to shake, a slab in exact imitation of the table-top, with the exception naturally that it is a little larger. This lodges very tightly into the cover when the lid is placed on and fits so firmly that it is almost impossible to dislodge it, even if suspicion is aroused, which is not probable, as it fits very exactly. A card similar to the one selected by the audience is placed on the table, and the slab put on. The rest is easily seen. As the lid is placed over the ashes it is slightly pressed down by the performer, when it grips the table cover, so that on the top being lifted off only the entire card remains. The little table is made of metal, and generally japanned black and gold. A forcing-pack is used to cause the audience to select a similar card to that concealed.