CONJURING TRICKS

WITH

COINS, WATCHES, RINGS

AND

HANDKERCHIEFS

From "MODERN MAGIC"

BY

PROFESSOR HOFFMAN

Author of "More Magic," "Parlor Amusements," etc.

WITH 57 ILLUSTRATIONS

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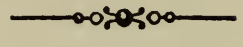
PUBLISHERS' NOTE.



THE present issue of PROFESSOR HOFFMANN'S MODERN MAGIC (which has now reached its Eighth Edition, and still maintains its position as the leading authority on all branches of Conjuring) is designed to meet a frequently expressed desire for a more portable form of that work, and to enable the amateur who may be interested in any particular branch of the subject to study it with greater convenience.

The various Sections are as under. Price, Fifty Cents each :—

I. CARD TRICKS.

II. TRICKS WITH COINS, WATCHES, RINGS, AND HANDKERCHIEFS.

III. TRICKS WITH DOMINOES, DICE, BALLS, HATS, ETC.; ALSO STAGE TRICKS.

IV. MISCELLANEOUS TRICKS.

N. B.—The Introductory Chapter, having a general application to the whole of the last three Sections, is, for the sake of completeness, repeated in each such Section.

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CONJURING TRICKS

WITH

COINS, WATCHES, RINGS, AND HANDKERCHIEFS.

INTRODUCTION.

BEFORE proceeding to the practice of the magic art, it will be well to give a short description of two or three appliances, which are of such constant use that they may be said to form the primary stock-in-trade of every conjuror. These are—a short wand, a specially adapted table, and certain secret pockets in the magician's dress.

THE MAGIC WAND.

This is a light rod, twelve to fifteen inches in length, and about three-quarters of an inch in diameter. To the uninitiated its use may appear a mere affectation, but such is by no means the case. Apart from the prestige derived from the traditional properties of the wand, it affords a plausible pretext for many necessary movements, which would otherwise appear awkward and unnatural. Thus, if the performer desires to hold anything concealed in his hand, by holding the wand in the same hand he is able to keep it closed without exciting suspicion. If it is necessary, as frequently happens, to turn his back upon the audience for an instant, the momentary turn to the table, in order to take up or lay down the wand, affords the required opportunity.

THE MAGICIAN'S TABLE.

The first necessity of the amateur, aspiring to amuse his friends with a pre-arranged *séance*, is a proper table. The table necessary for an average drawing-room exhibition differs from an ordinary table in two points only: its height, which is about six inches greater than usual; and the addition of a hidden shelf or ledge at the back. It should have turned legs of some hard wood, stained and polished, and these, if it is desired to make the table portable, should be *screwed* into the four corners, so as to be readily taken off and put on again. In length it may be three to four feet, and in breadth eighteen inches to two feet. At the back should be fixed, about six inches below the level of the top of the table, a projecting shelf, six to eight inches in width, and extending nearly from end to end. This shelf, which is technically known as the *servante*, should be covered with thick woolen cloth, in order to deaden the sound of any object falling on it.

The manner of fixing the *servante* is optional. In some tables it is made to slide in and out like a drawer; in others to fold on hinges against the back of the table, or itself to form the back. This latter is the most convenient mode, as the opening made by the flap when let down gives access to the interior of the table, which forms a convenient receptacle for necessary articles. Over the table should be thrown an ordinary cloth table-cover, of such a size as to hang down about ten or fifteen inches at the front and sides, but not more than an inch or so on the side away from the audience. To prevent its slipping, the cloth may be fastened on this side with a couple of drawing-pins. The precise height of the table should be determined by the stature of the performer. The *servante* should be just so high from the ground as to be level with the knuckles of the performer as his arm hangs by his side; and the top of the table, as already stated, about six inches higher than this. It will be found that this height will enable the performer secretly to take up or lay down any article thereon without stooping or bending the arm, either of which movements would suggest to the spectators that his hand was occupied in some manner behind

the table. One of the first tasks of the novice should be to acquire the power of picikng up or laying down any article on the *servante* without making any corresponding movement of the body, and especially without looking down at his hands, for if the audience once suspect that he has a secret receptacle behind the table, half the magic of his tricks is destroyed.

An oblong box, twelve or fourteen inches in length by three in depth, well padded with wadding, and placed on the *servante*, will be found very useful in getting rid of small articles, such as coin, oranges, etc., as such articles may be dropped into the box without causing any sound, and therefore without attracting attention.

In default of a table regularly made for the purpose, the amateur may adapt an ordinary table for use as a make-shift. A common library- or kitchen-table having a drawer on one side, and raised on four bricks or blocks of wood to the requisite height, will answer the purpose very fairly. The table must be covered with a cloth; the drawer, pulled out about six inches on the side remote from the audience, forming the *servante*. Again, a very good *extempore* conjuring table may be manufactured with the aid of a good-sized folding bagatelle-board. Place the shut-up board on a card- or writing-table (a few inches shorter than the board), in such manner that there may be left behind it (on the side farthest from the audience) a strip of table six or seven inches in width. This will form the *servante*. Throw an ordinary cloth table-cover over all, letting it hang down a foot or eighteen inches in front, and tucking its opposite edge under the hinder edge of the board, whose weight will prevent it slipping. If the cloth is too large, it must be folded before placing it on the table.

THE MAGICIAN'S DRESS.

The costume *de rigueur* of the magician of the present day is ordinary "evening dress." The effect of the feats performed is greatly heightened by the close fit and comparative scantiness of such a costume, which appears to allow no space for secret pockets or other place of concealment. In reality, however, the magician is provided with two special pockets, known as *profondes*, placed in the

tails of his dress-coat. Each is from four to six inches in depth and seven in width, and the opening, which is across the inside of the coat-tail, slanting slightly downwards from the center outwards, is, like the *servante*, so placed as to be just level with the knuckles of the performer, as his hand hangs by his side. He can thus, by the mere action of dropping either hand to his side, let fall any article instantly into the corresponding *profonde*, or take anything from thence in like manner. If the performer at the same moment slightly turns his other side to the spectators, he may be perfectly secure from detection.

Some performers have also a couple of *pochettes* (small pockets) made in the trousers, one behind each thigh. These are generally used for purposes of production only, the *profondes* being employed in preference for getting rid of any article. Many professors, in addition to the above-mentioned, have a spacious pocket, opening perpendicularly, inside the breast of the coat, under each arm, for the purpose of what is called "loading"—*i. e.*, bringing a rabbit, or other article, into a hat, etc. Other pockets may be added, as the fancy of the performer may dictate.

An elastic band, about an inch in width, should be stitched around the lower edge of the waistcoat on the inside. When the waistcoat is in wear, the band makes it press tightly round the waist, and any object of moderate size—a card, or pack of cards, a handkerchief, etc.—may be slipped under it without risk of falling. Used in conjunction with the pockets above described, the vest, thus prepared, affords a means of instantaneously effecting needful "changes"; one hand dropping the genuine article into the *profonde* on that side, while the other draws the prepared substitute from under the waistband; a slight turn of the body, towards the table or otherwise, sufficing to cover the movement.

CONJURING TRICKS

WITH

COINS, WATCHES, RINGS, AND HANDKERCHIEFS.

CHAPTER I.

Principles of Sleight-of-hand more especially applicable to Coin Tricks.

Before attempting tricks with coin, it will be necessary for the student to practise certain sleights and passes which more especially belong to this particular branch of the magic art, though the sleight-of-hand used in "coin tricks" is more or less applicable to most other small objects. The principles which we have given

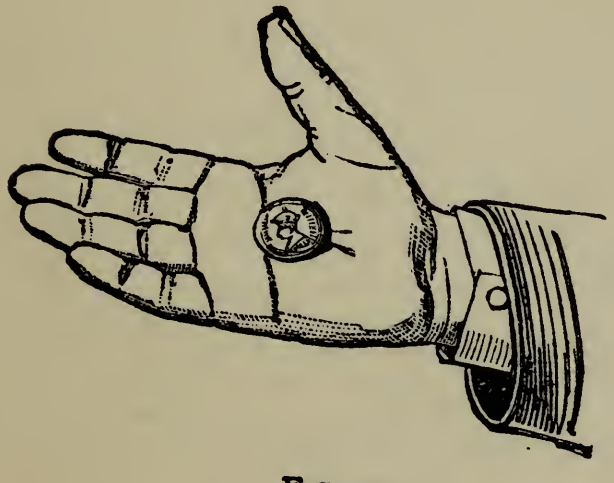

Fig. 59.

Fig. 60.

for card tricks will not here be of any direct assistance to the student; but the readiness of hand and eye which he will have acquired, if he has diligently put in practice the instructions already given, will be of great value to him as a preliminary training, and it may safely be predicted that any person who is a first-rate performer with cards will find little difficulty in any other branch of the art.

The first faculty which the novice must seek to acquire is that of "palming"—*i.e.*, secretly holding an object in the open hand by the contraction of the palm. To acquire this power, take a half-crown, florin, or penny (these being the most convenient in point of size), and lay it on the palm of the open hand. (*See* Fig. 59.) Now close the hand very slightly, and if you have placed the coin on the right spot (which a few trials will quickly indicate), the contraction of the palm around its edges will hold it securely (*see* Fig. 60), and you may move the hand and arm in any direction without fear of dropping it. You should next accustom yourself to use the hand and fingers easily and naturally, while still holding the coin as described. A very little practice will enable you to do this. You must bear in mind while practising always to keep the inside of the palm either downwards or towards your own body, as any reverse movement would expose the concealed coin. When you are able to hold the coin comfortably in the right hand, practise in like manner with the left, after which you may substitute for the coin a watch, an egg, or a small lemon—all these being articles of frequent use in conjuring.

Being thoroughly master of this first lesson, you may proceed to the study of the various "passes." All of the passes have the same object—viz., the apparent transfer of an article from one hand to the other, though such article really remains in the hand which it has apparently just quitted. As the same movement frequently repeated would cause suspicion, and possibly detection, it is desirable to acquire different ways of effecting this object. For facility of subsequent reference, we shall denote the different passes described by numbers.*

Pass 1.—Take the coin in the right hand, between the second and

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* It should be here mentioned that the term "palming," which we have so far used as meaning simply the act of *holding* any article, is also employed to signify the act of *placing* any article in the palm by one or other of the various passes. The context will readily indicate in which of the two senses the term is used in any given passage.

It is hardly necessary to remark that the diagrams, save where the letterpress indicates the contrary, represent the hands of the performer *as seen by himself.*

third fingers and the thumb (*see* Fig. 61), letting it, however, really be supported by the fingers, and only steadied by the thumb. Now move the thumb out of the way, and close the second and third fingers, with the coin balanced on them, into the palm. (*See* Fig. 62.) If the coin was placed right in the first instance, you

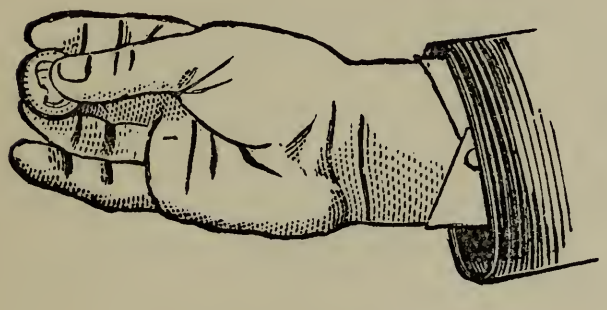


FIG. 61.

FIG. 62.

will find that this motion puts it precisely in the position above described as the proper one for palming; and on again extending the fingers, the coin is left palmed, as in Fig. 60. When you can do this easily with the hand at rest, you must practise doing the same thing with the right hand in motion toward the left, which should meet it open, but should close the moment that the fingers of the right hand touch its palm, as though upon the coin, which you have by this movement feigned to transfer to it. The left hand must thenceforward remain closed, as if holding the coin, and the right hand hang loosely open, as if empty.

In the case of an article of larger size than a coin—as, for instance, a watch or an egg—you need not take the article with the fingers, but may let it simply lie on the palm of the right hand, slightly closing that hand as you move it towards the left. The greater extent of surface in this case will give you plenty of hold, without the necessity of pressing the article into the palm. Remember that, in any case, the two hands must work in harmony, as in the genuine act of passing an article from the one hand to the other. The left hand must therefore rise to meet the right, but should not begin its journey until the right hand begins its own. Nothing

looks more awkward or unnatural than to see the left hand extended with open palm, before the right hand has begun to move towards it.

After the pass is made, a judicious use of the wand will materially assist in concealing the fact that the object still remains in the right hand. For this purpose the performer should, before commencing the pass, carelessly place the wand under either arm, as though merely to leave his hands free. Immediately that the pass is made the right hand should, with a sort of back-handed movement, which under the circumstances is perfectly natural, grasp the wand, draw it from under the arm, and thenceforth retain it till an opportunity occurs of disposing of the coin as may be necessary. The position of the fingers in the act of holding the wand is such as to effectually mask the concealed coin, while yet the hand appears perfectly easy and natural. The same expedient may be employed with equal advantage in the remaining passes.

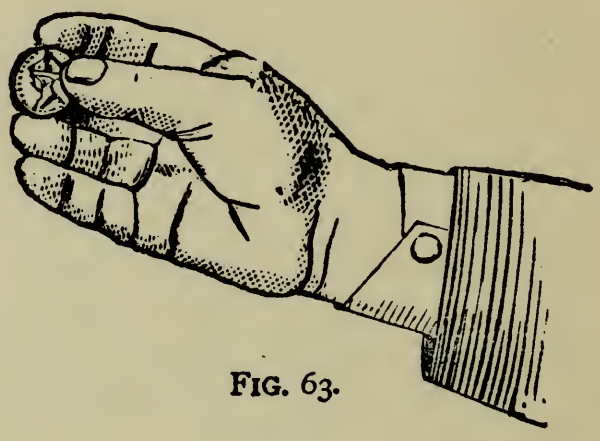


FIG. 63.

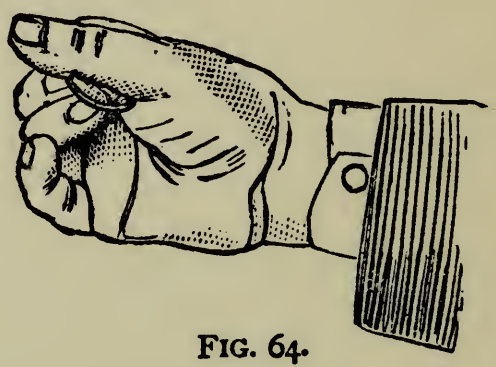


FIG. 64.

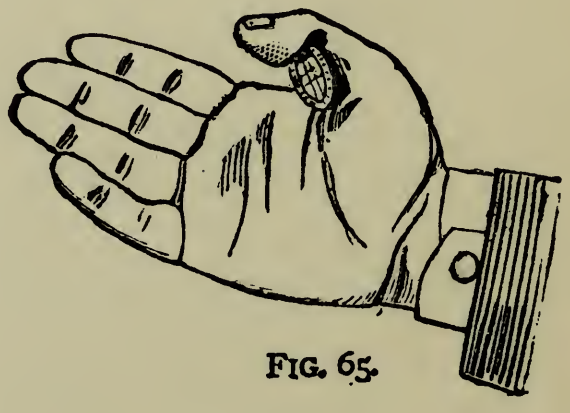


FIG. 65.

PASS 2.—This is somewhat easier than Pass 1, and may sometimes be usefully substituted for it. Take the coin edgeways between the first and third fingers of the right hand, the sides of those fingers pressing against the edges of the coin, and the middle finger steadying it from behind. (*See* Fig. 63.) Carry the right hand towards the

left, and at the same time move the thumb swiftly over the face of the coin till the top joint just passes its outer edge (*see* Fig. 64) ; then bend the thumb, and the coin will be found to be securely nipped between that joint and the junction of the thumb with the hand. (*See* Fig. 65.) As in the last case, the left hand must be closed the moment the right hand touches it; and the right must thenceforth be held with the thumb bent slightly inwards towards the palm, so that the coin may be shielded from the view of the spectators. This is an especially quick mode of palming, and if properly executed the illusion is perfect. It is said to be a special favourite of the elder Frikell.

Pass 3.—Hold the left hand palm upwards, with the coin in the position indicated in Fig. 59. Move the right hand towards the left, and let the fingers simulate the motion of picking up the coin, and instantly close. At the same moment slightly close the left hand, so as to contract the palm around the coin, as in Fig. 60, and drop the hand, letting it hang loosely by your side.

Pass 4. (*Le Tourniquet*).—This (sometimes known as the "French drop") is an easy and yet most effective pass. Hold the left hand palm upwards, with the coin as shown in Fig. 66. Now move the right hand towards the left, passing the thumb of the right hand under, and the fingers over the coin, closing them just as they pass it. The effect is the same to the eye of the spectator as if you seized the coin with thumb and fingers, but, in reality, at the moment when the coin is covered by the fingers of the right hand, you let it drop quietly (*see* Fig. 67) into the palm of the left.

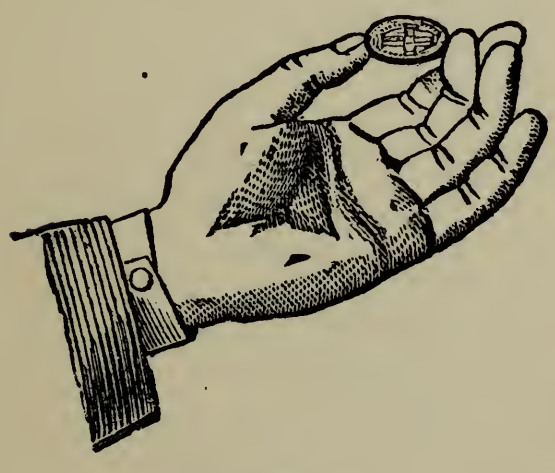


Fig. 66.

The right hand you should carry upwards and forwards after it leaves the left hand, following it with your eyes, and thereby drawing away the attention of the audience from the other hand. (*See* Fig 68.) Do not be in too great a hurry to drop the left hand, but turn

the palm slightly towards you, with the fingers a little bent, and, after a moment's pause, let it fall gently to your side. The hollow made by the bent fingers will be sufficient to hold the coin.

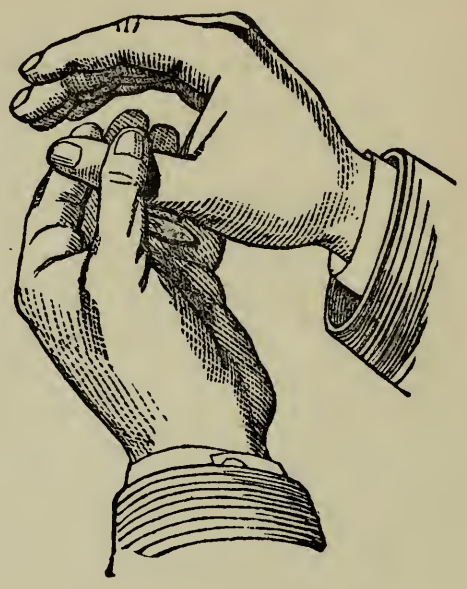


FIG. 67.

This pass is available even for a sixpence or threepenny piece, which from their small size, cannot readily be palmed by the ordinary means. It is also very useful for "ball" conjuring.

PASS 5. (*La Pincette*).—This is a modification of the pass last described. The coin is held as in Fig. 69, between the thumb and first and second fingers of the left hand. You then make the movement of taking it between the same fingers of the other hand, which for that purpose makes a kind of "swoop" down upon it, the back of the hand being kept towards the spectators. At the moment when the coin is covered by the fingers of the right hand, it is allowed to slip gently down into the palm of the left, and the right is instantly elevated as if containing it.

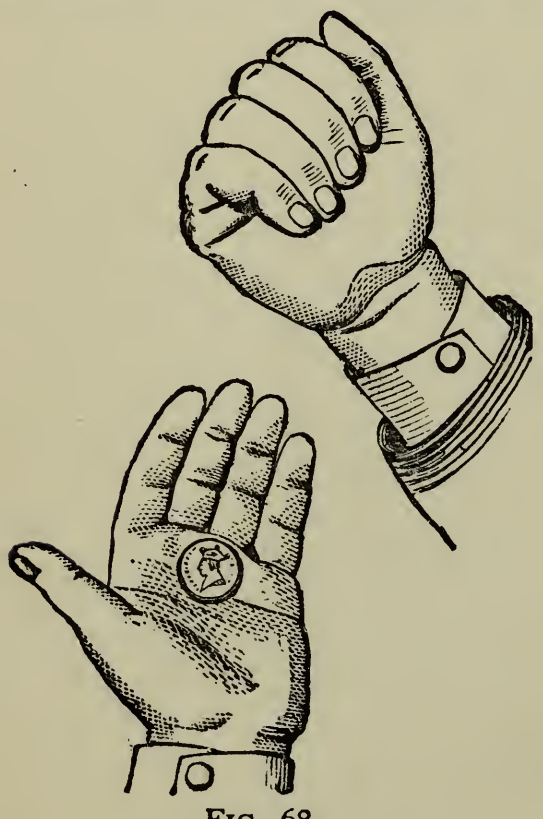


FIG. 68.

PASS 6.—This pass is best adapted for use with three or four coins, as the chink of the coins against one another materially assists the illusion. Having to get rid of, say, four pence or florins, you take them in the right hand, as indicated in Fig. 70, viz., well back towards the wrist. Move the right hand sharply towards the left, with the fingers foremost, so that the finger-

tips of the right hand may come smartly, at about right angles, against the palm of the left, at the same time slightly bending the fingers. The coins, instead of being shot forward (as to the eye and ear of the spectators they appear to be) into the left hand, are, in reality, retained in the hollow formed by the fingers of the right, as in Fig. 71. They are turned completely over as the hands come in contact, producing a loud chink. The left hand is, of course, closed, and the thumb of the right is allowed to sink gently on the coins, so that when the hand falls by your side, they may not make a second chink, and so betray their presence in the wrong hand.

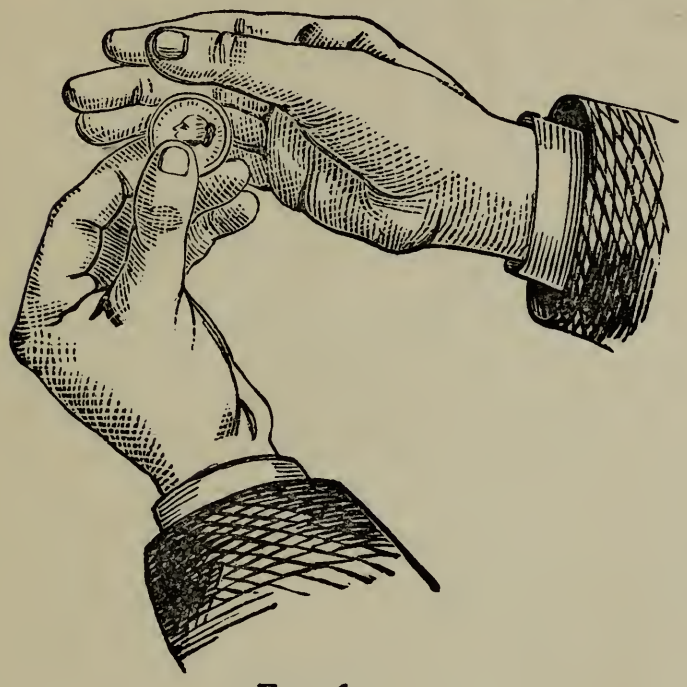


FIG. 69.

PASS 7. (*La Coulée*).—This pass is best adapted for a coin of large diameter, like the French five-franc piece, and is but little used by English conjurors. If, however, the student has a very small hand (a serious disadvantage in conjuring generally), he may find it convenient to use the pass in question with a half-crown or penny. Take the coin in the right hand between the first and second fingers and the thumb, and in the act of apparently transferring it to the left hand, gently slide it with the ball of the thumb into the position shown in

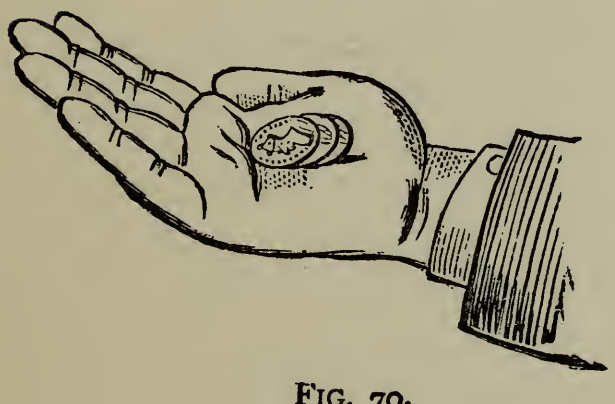


FIG. 70.

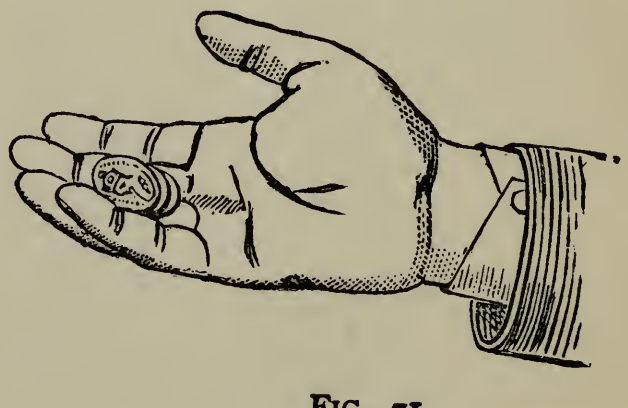


FIG. 71.

Fig. 72, where it is held by the pressure of the first and fourth fingers against its opposite edges, the hand remaining completely open.

Pass 8.—The peculiarity of this pass is, that it is made while holding the wand in the hand, a case in which none of the other passes are available. Holding the wand and coin in the right hand, as indicated in Fig. 73, you strike the edge of the coin sharply against the palm of the left hand, and instantly close that hand. The effect of the movement is to drive back the coin (which should be held very lightly) into the position shown in Fig. 74, in which, being behind the first three fingers, it is completely hidden. You should lose no time in relaxing the fingers of the right hand, and gently closing them around the coin, as their straightened position, if continued, might arouse suspicion. You must, however, be careful that, in doing so, you do not allow the coin to chink against the wand, as the sound would naturally draw attention to its whereabouts.

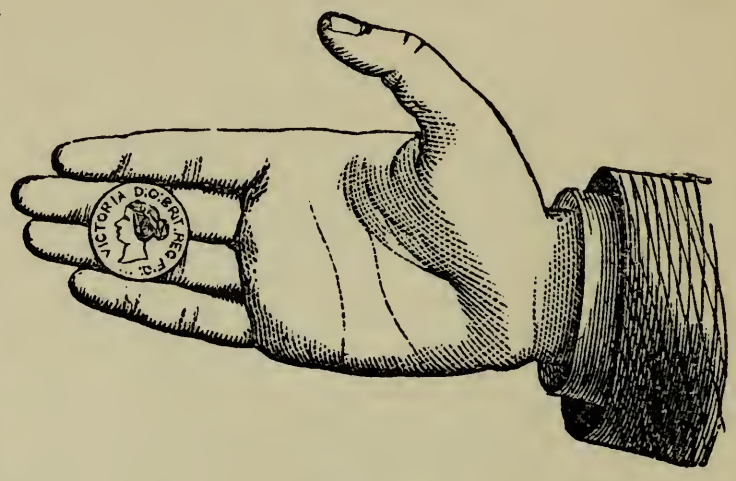


Fig. 72.

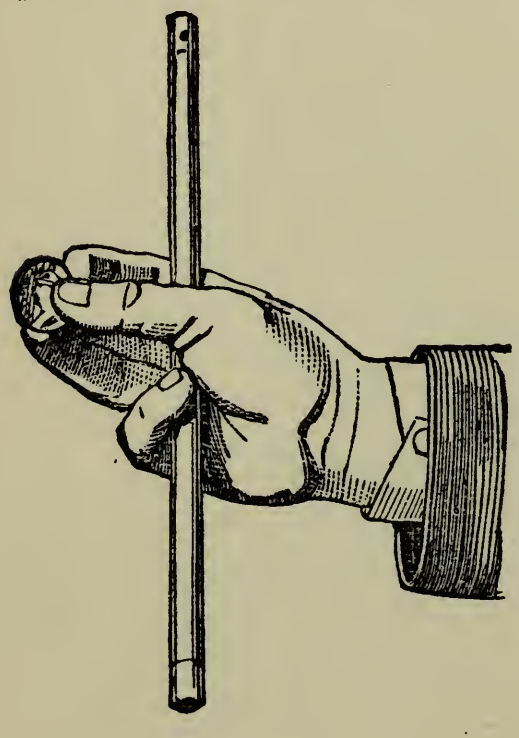


Fig. 73.

It must not be imagined that all of the passes above given are in turn used by every performer. Almost every conjuror has his favourite pass or passes, either selected from those above described, or invented by himself. Any mode by which a coin can be held in the hand without indicating its presence may be worked up into a pass. Thus, some performers will hold a coin by its edges

between two of the fingers, or between the thumb and the side of the hand. Others, again, hold the coin flat against the first or second joint of the second or third finger, retaining it by slightly bending the finger. The novice should experiment till he ascertains which method best suits the conformation of his own hand. We have specified the hand to and from which each pass is generally used; but if the student desires to attain special excellence, he should practise until he is able to use each from left to right, as well as from right to left. In performing before a company of spectators, and standing with the left side towards them, it is well to use a pass which apparently transfers the coin from the right hand to the left, and *vice versâ*. The coin is thus left in the hand farthest away from the spectators, and the performer has the benefit of the cover of the body in dropping it into the *pochette*, or otherwise disposing of it.

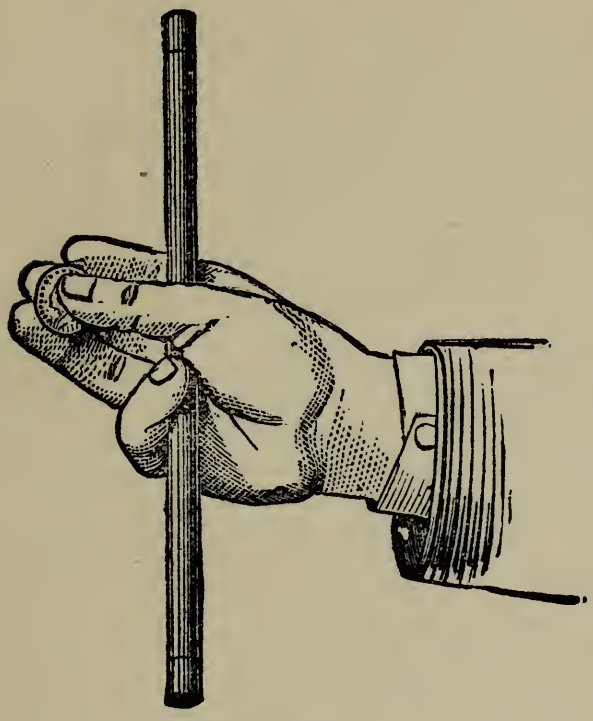


FIG. 74.

The student will here, as in card conjuring, find great advantage in practising before a looking-glass, before which he should, in the first place, actually *do* that which he afterwards pretends to do, and carefully notice the positions and motions of his hands in the first case, which he should then do his best to simulate, that there may be as little difference as possible between the pretence and the reality. He should further accustom himself *always to follow with his eyes the hand in which the object is supposed to be*, this being the most certain means of leading the eyes and the minds of his audience in the same direction. When he is able to perform the passes neatly with a single florin or penny, he should then practise with coins of smaller size, with two coins at once, and afterwards with three or four.

A word of caution may here be desirable. These passes must by no means be regarded as being themselves tricks, but only as processes to be used in the performance of tricks. If the operator, after pretending to pass the coin, say, from the right hand to the left, and showing that it had vanished from the left hand, were to allow his audience to discover that it had all along remained in his right hand, they might admire the dexterity with which he had in this instance deceived their eyes, but they would henceforth guess half the secret of any trick in which palming was employed. If it is necessary immediately to reproduce the coin, the performer should do so by appearing to find it in the hair or whiskers of a spectator, or in any other place that may suit his purpose, remembering always to indicate beforehand that it has passed to such a place, thereby diverting the general attention from himself. As the coin is already in his hand, he has only to drop it to his finger-tips as the hand reaches the place he has named, in order, to all appearance, to take it from thence.

Having given this little piece of advice as to the hand in which the coin actually is, we must add a few words more as to the hand in which it is *not*. Whenever you have (apparently) placed any article either in the closed hand, or in some piece of apparatus from which it is afterwards to disappear, you should not, as a rule, show that the article has departed from the spot where you have apparently placed it, without interposing some magical process, however slight, which may colourably account for its disappearance. A mere nothing will suffice—a touch of the wand, the pronouncing of a magic formula, the pressure of a finger; but in some form or other the ceremony should never be omitted. Thus, to take a very simple example, we will suppose that by means of Pass 1 you have apparently placed in the left hand a coin, which really remains in the palm of the right. If you at once open the left hand, and show that the coin is not there, the spectators will naturally jump to the correct explanation, viz., that you did not, in reality, put the coin there at all. If, however, you delay opening the left hand for a minute or two, so as to let the audience get accustomed to the idea that the coin is therein, and then, before opening it, touch the hand mysteriously with your wand, or even simply, as you slowly open the left hand, rub the ball

of the wrist with the second and third fingers of the hand which holds the coin (*see* Fig. 75), you not only give that hand an occupation apparently inconsistent with the fact of anything remaining concealed in it, but you suggest to the audience that the gesture in question is the cause of the disappearance of the coin. It is surprising what an effect even such a trifle as this has in misleading the judgment of a spectator. He knows perfectly well, in the abstract, that touching the closed hand with the wand, or rubbing it with a finger of the opposite hand, is not an adequate cause for the disappearance of the coin; but the fact being indisputable that the coin *has* disappeared, the mind unconsciously accepts the explanation which is thus indirectly offered. The advice here given becomes less important where, before the hand is opened, you are able to get rid of the object from that in which it originally appeared. Here the spectator is precluded from imagining that you retained it in the hand in which he first saw it, as that hand also is shown to be empty, and the absolute disappearance of the coin being a self-evident fact, you may leave the spectator to account for it in his own manner.

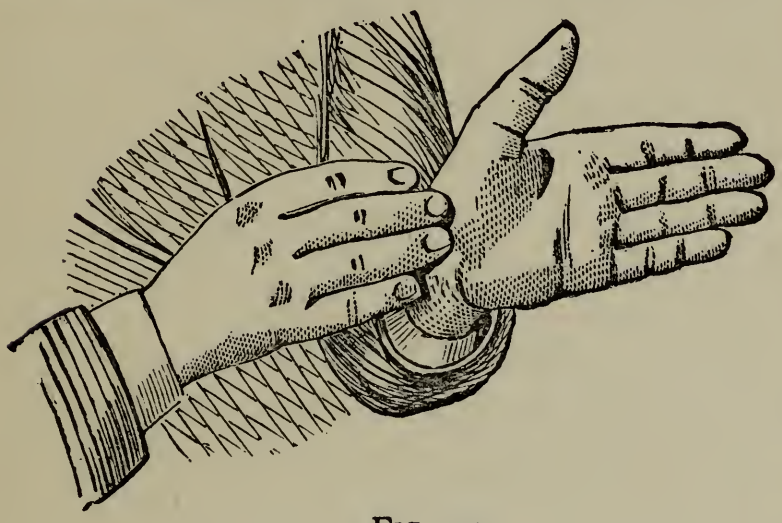


FIG. 75.

The various passes may be employed not only to cause the disappearance of an article, as above described, but to secretly exchange it for a substitute of similar appearance. These exchanges are of continual use in conjuring; indeed, we may almost say that three parts of its marvels depend on them. Such an exchange having been made, the substitute is left in sight of the audience, while the performer, having thus secretly gained possession of the original, disposes of it as may be necessary for the purpose of the trick. We proceed to describe various forms of changes, denoting them, as in the case of the passes, by numbers.

CHANGE 1.—You desire, we will suppose, to exchange—or, in conjuror's parlance, to "ring"—a florin, marked by the audience, for another. You have the latter, which we will call the "substitute," ready palmed in your left hand, of course taking care to keep the palm turned away from the audience. Taking the marked florin in the right hand, you palm it in that hand by Pass 1, but instead of closing the left hand as the fingers of the right touch it, keep that hand loosely open, and show lying on its palm the substitute, which the audience take to be the original just placed there by your right hand.

CHANGE 2.—This is the same as Change 1, save that you use with the right hand Pass 2 instead of Pass 1.

CHANGE 3.—Here also you use Pass 2, but you have the substitute palmed in the right hand instead of the left. Taking up the marked florin with the same hand, you make with it Pass 2, at the same instant dropping the substitute from its palm into the left hand. This is a very neat and effective change. Some performers are expert enough to make this change by means of Pass 1 instead of Pass 2, the genuine coin taking the place of the substitute in the palm; but this demands dexterity of a more than average order.

CHANGE 4.—For this change you must have the substitute palmed in the right hand, and take the marked coin between the thumb and second finger of the left. Then by Pass 4 appear to take it in the right hand, and at the proper moment exhibit the substitute, which you have already in that hand.

CHANGE 5.—Have the substitute palmed in your right hand, and hold the marked coin openly on the palm of the left. Pick up the genuine coin with the right hand, at the same moment releasing the palmed substitute, which will accordingly fall into the left hand, the fingers of which should be held slightly hollowed, the better to conceal it. Show the marked coin in the right hand, and say, "You have seen me take up this coin visibly, I will make it return invisibly," or make some other appropriate observation. Close the left hand, make Pass 1 or 2 with the right hand, with a motion towards the left, but without bringing the hands near together. The marked coin will, after the pass, be concealed in your right palm. Immediately opening your left hand, you show the substitute, which the audience believe to be the original which they have just seen.

There are many other changes; indeed, they are almost too numerous to describe. If you are able to palm and to make the various passes neatly, you will readily invent methods of "ringing" for yourself; in the meantime, you will find that the above will answer every necessary purpose, so far as coin tricks are concerned.

CHAPTER II.

Tricks with Coin without Apparatus.

(For Florin read Quarter.)

There is an immense variety of tricks with coin—some with apparatus, some without; some demanding a thorough mastery of sleight-of-hand; some so simple as to be within the compass of the merest tyro. The only classification which we shall attempt will be to divide them into such as do and such as do not require special apparatus.

A Florin being spun upon the Table, to tell blindfold whether it falls head or tail upwards.—You borrow a florin, and spin it, or invite some other person to spin it, on the table (which must be without a cloth). You allow it to spin itself out, and immediately announce, without seeing it, whether it has fallen head or tail upwards. This may be repeated any number of times with the same result, though you may be blindfolded, and placed at the further end of the apartment.

The secret lies in the use of a florin of your own, on one face of which (say on the "tail" side) you have cut at the extreme edge a little notch, thereby causing a minute point or tooth of metal to project from that side of the coin. If a coin so prepared be spun on the table, and should chance to go down with the notched side upwards, it will run down like an ordinary coin, with a long continuous "whirr," the sound growing fainter and fainter till it finally ceases; but if it should run down with the notched side downwards, the friction of the point against the table will reduce this final whirr to half its ordinary length, and the coin will finally go down with a sort of "flop." The difference of sound is not sufficiently marked to attract the notice of the spectators, but is perfectly distinguishable by an

attentive ear. If, therefore, you have notched the coin on the "tail" side, and it runs down slowly, you will cry "tail;" if quickly, "head."

If you professedly use a borrowed florin, you must adroitly change it for your own, under pretence of showing how to spin it, or the like.

You should not allow your audience to imagine that you are guided by the sound of the coin, as, if once they have the clue, they will easily learn to distinguish the two sounds. They are not, however, likely to discover the secret of the notch, and if any one professes to have found out the trick, you may, by again substituting an unprepared florin, safely challenge him to perform it.

ODD OR EVEN, OR THE MYSTERIOUS ADDITION.—This is a trick of almost childish simplicity, depending upon an elementary arithmetical principle. We have, however, known it to occasion great perplexity, even to more than ordinarily acute persons.

You take a handful of coins or counters, and invite another person to do the same, and to ascertain privately whether the number he has taken is odd or even. You request the company to observe that you have not asked him a single question, but that you are able, notwithstanding, to divine and counteract his most secret intentions, and that you will in proof of this, yourself take a number of coins, and add them to those he has taken, when, if his number was odd, the total shall be even; if his number was even, the total shall be odd. Requesting him to drop the coins he holds into a hat, held on high by one of the company, you drop in a certain number on your own account. He is now asked whether his number was odd or even; and, the coins being counted, the total number proves to be, as you stated, exactly the reverse. The experiment is tried again and again, with different numbers, but the result is the same.

The secret lies in the simple arithmetical fact, that if you add an odd number to an even number the result will be odd; if you add an odd number to an odd number the result will be even. You have only to take care, therefore, that the number you yourself add, whether large or small, shall always be odd.

TO CHANGE A FLORIN INTO A PENNY, BACK AGAIN, AND THEN TO PASS THE SAME INVISIBLY INTO THE POCKET OF THE OWNER. —This is a trick of genuine sleight-of-hand, and will test your expertness in two or three different passes. Having beforehand palmed a penny in your right hand, you borrow from one of the company a florin (or half-crown), requesting the owner to mark it in such manner that he may be able to identify it. Make him stand up facing you, your own right side and his left being towards the audience. Taking the marked florin between the fingers and thumb of the right hand (the back of which, from your position, will be toward the spectators), you ask him whether he is nervous, whether he can hold fast, and so on. On receiving satisfactory replies, you state that you are about to put him to the test, and request him to hold out his right hand, telling him that you are about to count three, and that at the word "three" you will drop the florin into his hand, which he is to close tightly upon it. You accordingly count, "One! two! three!" each time making a motion as of dropping the florin into his hand, and at the word "three" actually do drop it, when he closes his hand upon it, as directed; but you are not satisfied. "That won't do, my dear sir," you exclaim; "you are not half quick enough—you allow all the electric fluid to escape. We'll try once more, and pray be a little quicker in your movements. Oblige me with the coin again. Now, then, are you ready?—One! *two!!* THREE!!!" giving the words with great energy. As you say "three" you stamp your foot, and apparently again drop the florin, but really drop the penny instead, by Change 3. He is sure this time to close his hand very quickly, and, having no reason to the contrary, naturally believes that it is the florin which he holds, your previous feint, when you did actually drop the florin, being specially designed to lead him to that conclusion. You next request him to hold the closed hand high, that all may see it. This draws the general attention to him, and away from yourself, and enables you to place in your palm the florin, which was left, after the change, in the bend of your right thumb. You continue, "You did better that time, sir. Now, what will you bet me that I cannot take that two-shilling-piece out of your hand without your knowing it?" Whether he admits or defies your power, the course of the trick is the same.

"Well," you say at last, "you seem so determined that I am almost afraid to take the whole of the two-shilling piece away from you, I think I must be content with one-and-elevenpence. Allow me to touch your hand with my wand." You do so, and on opening his hand he discovers that the two-shilling piece has changed into a penny.

You thank him for his assistance, hand him the penny, and dismiss him to his seat. Naturally enough, he objects to accept the penny in place of his florin. You pretend at first not to understand him, but, as if suddenly enlightened, you exclaim, "Oh, the florin, you want the florin? My dear sir," indicating the penny, "that *is* the florin. At present it is under an electric influence, but you have only to wait till that goes off (it won't take more than three weeks or so), when it will resume its former appearance. You don't believe me, I see; but I can easily convince you by discharging the electric fluid, when the change will take place at once. Observe!" You take the penny between the thumb and second finger of the left hand (after the manner indicated in Fig. 66), and make Change 4, making a gentle rubbing movement with the fingers and thumb of the right hand before you open that hand and disclose the restored florin, at the same time carelessly dropping your left hand to your side, and letting fall the penny into your *pochette* on that side. Bring up the left hand again, showing, but without apparent design, that it is empty; and still holding the coin in the right hand, make Pass 1, as if you transferred it to the left hand. Make a motion with the left hand, as if handing the coin, and say to the owner, "Will you be good enough to examine the florin, and see that it is the same you marked." He naturally holds out his hand for the coin, which he believes to be in your left hand, and which you pretend to give him; but it has vanished. "Well," you say, "is it the same florin?" Looking, probably, rather foolish, he replies that he has not got it. "Not got it!" you say; "why I have just given it to you. I passed it into your pocket. Look for yourself." He forthwith begins to search his pockets. "You are trying the wrong one," you say; "this is the pocket." As if desiring merely to assist his search, you plunge into any pocket which he has not yet tried your right hand (in the palm of which the coin was left after the pass), and letting the coin drop

to the finger ends, take it out as if it were already in the pocket, as nine-tenths of the audience will believe it to have been.

To make a marked Florin and Penny, wrapped in separate Handkerchiefs, change places at command.—Borrow a florin (or half-crown) and a penny, requesting the owners to mark them, that they may be sure of knowing them again. Also borrow two pocket handkerchiefs.

It may be well to mention, once for all, that it is generally desirable to borrow from the audience, when you can, any indifferent article used in a trick (*e.g.*, a hat, a watch, or a handkerchief), as you thereby seem to give a guarantee for the absence of preparation. Articles so borrowed are taken upon trust, so to speak, and by making a secret exchange you may still use a prepared substitute, which will escape the close scrutiny to which any article confessedly provided by yourself would be subjected.

While the articles above mentioned are being collected from the audience, you secretly palm in your left hand a penny of your own. Receiving the borrowed coins in your right hand, apparently transfer them to the left, but really only transfer the florin, the marked penny remaining in your right hand. This may be effected by making Pass 2 with the marked penny, at the same time allowing the marked florin to drop from the palm as directed in Change 3. Take the earliest opportunity of transferring the marked penny to the palm of the right hand, and showing the marked florin and the substitute penny (which the spectators take to be the genuine one) on the open left hand, place them on your table, begging the audience to observe that they do not for one moment leave their sight. Then picking up with the right hand the florin, on which you may casually show the mark, and throwing one of the borrowed handkerchiefs over the hand, take hold (through the handkerchief) of apparently the florin which you have just shown, but really of the marked penny, and transfer the marked florin to the palm. The shape of the coin, which the audience take to be the florin, will be distinctly seen through the handkerchief, whose folds will fall down around it. Give the handkerchief containing the coin to some person, requesting him to hold it tightly just below the coin, and well above his head, that

all may see it.* Now take up the substitute penny, and apparently wrap it, in like manner, in the second handkerchief, really substituting as before the coin concealed in your palm. The substitute penny, which remains in your right hand, you must drop into your *pochette* or *profonde* at the first available opportunity. Give the second handkerchief to another person to hold. The first handkerchief now, to all appearance, contains the florin, and the second the penny. Invite the two persons to stand face to face, the hands holding the handkerchiefs just touching, and after gravely cautioning them to hold very tight, etc., etc., give their hands a gentle rap with your wand, saying, "Change!" Upon examination, the coins are found to have obeyed your commands.

Managed with neatness and address, this is an admirable drawing-room trick; the previous marking of the coins apparently precluding any possibility of using substitutes, and allowing the spectator no alternative but to admit that by some mysterious means the identical coins have changed places.

A similar trick may be performed without the use of the handkerchief. As before, you borrow a marked florin and penny, exchanging the latter for one of your own, and palm the genuine one. Taking up the marked florin from the table, you hand it to some one to hold, substituting for it as you do so the genuine penny by Change 3, as indicated in the trick last described. The florin is thus left in your right hand. Palm it, and take up the substitute penny between the second finger and thumb of the left hand, and pretend by Pass 4 to transfer it to the right, which you immediately close. Drop the penny into your *pochette* on the left side, and announce that by your magic power you will compel the penny which you hold to change places with the florin held by the spectator. When the hands are opened, the supposed change is found to be accomplished.

TO MAKE TWO MARKED COINS, WRAPPED IN SEPARATE HANDKERCHIEFS, COME TOGETHER IN ONE OF THEM.—The coins and handkerchiefs borrowed for the purpose of the last trick will again serve in this one. Palm in your right hand a penny of your own, and throw over the

* This takes it out of the range of his eyes, and prevents his indulging any desire for a premature examination of the contents.

same hand one of the borrowed handkerchiefs. This will effectually conceal the substitute penny, which you may now take between the finger and thumb. Holding the handkerchief spread out upon the open hand, you take up with the left hand the marked penny and place it on the handkerchief, as if to wrap it therein, but at the same time with the third finger push a fold of the handkerchief under the substitute penny in your right hand. You now invert the handkerchief over your left hand for a minute, allowing the marked penny to drop back into that hand, and at the same time twist the fold already mentioned around the substitute. The audience see the shape of a coin wrapped up in the handkerchief, and naturally believe that it is that of the marked penny which you have apparently placed inside it. In reality, it is that of your own penny, wrapped merely in an outside fold. You now hand the handkerchief to some one to hold, requesting him to grasp the coin, and hold tightly.

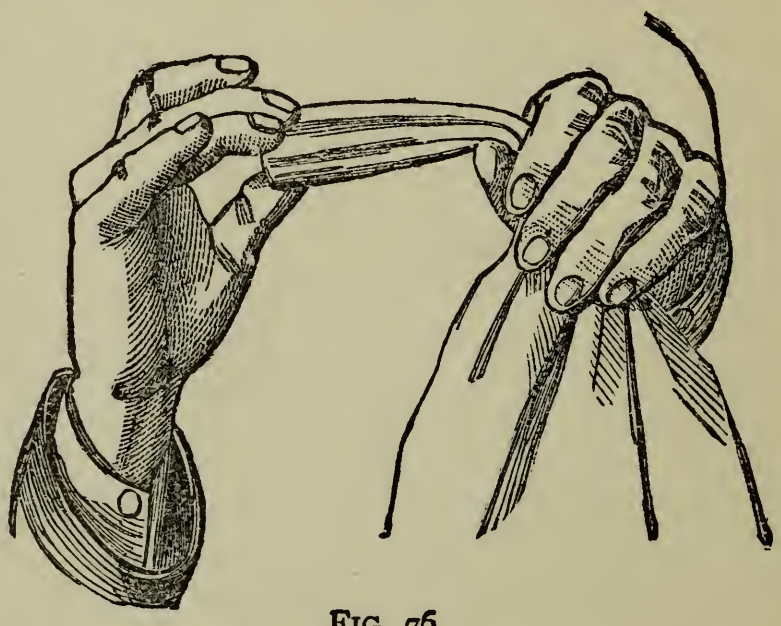


FIG. 76.

The marked penny, it will be remembered, remains in your left hand, and the marked florin on the table. As you go to take up the latter, you transfer the penny to your right hand, and palm it; then pick up the florin, holding it at the tips of the fingers. Spread the second handkerchief on the open palm of the left hand. Bring the florin down smartly upon it, and by the same movement let the penny fall from the palm on to the handkerchief. The two coins will now be lying (covered by the right hand) on the handkerchief, a couple of inches apart. Close the left hand on both coins, and turn the hand over, so that the edges of the handkerchief hang down. With the right hand grasp the handkerchief five or six inches below the coins. Take one of these through the handkerchief between the finger and thumb of the left

hand, letting the other fall loose inside the handkerchief, which you then invite some one to hold in like manner, but in a horizontal position. (*See* Fig. 76.) This position is adopted in order that the two coins may not, by any accidental chink, prematurely disclose the fact that both are already in the handkerchief.

You now announce that you are about to make both coins pass into one handkerchief. Advancing to the person who holds the first handkerchief, you request him, still maintaining his hold, to remove his hand four or five inches below the coin, to give you room to operate. First showing that your hand is empty, you gently rub the substitute penny through the handkerchief between your finger and thumb, when, being only wrapped within a fold, it quickly falls into your hand. No one ever thinks of inquiring at this point whether it is the marked one or not. Taking it in the left hand, in position for Pass 4, you say to the person holding the second handkerchief "Having extracted this penny from the one handkerchief, I will now pass it into the other. I won't even touch the handkerchief, but will simply take the coin in my hand, and say, 'Pass!' Will you be good enough, at the word 'pass,' to let go of the coin you are holding, but still keep hold of the handkerchief with the other hand." Appearing, by Pass 4, to take the penny in the right hand, you open that hand with a quick motion towards the handkerchief, saying, "Pass!" The person holding the handkerchief looses his hold, as directed, when the two coins are heard to chink together, as though the second coin had just arrived in the handkerchief, and on examination they are, of course, found to be those marked.

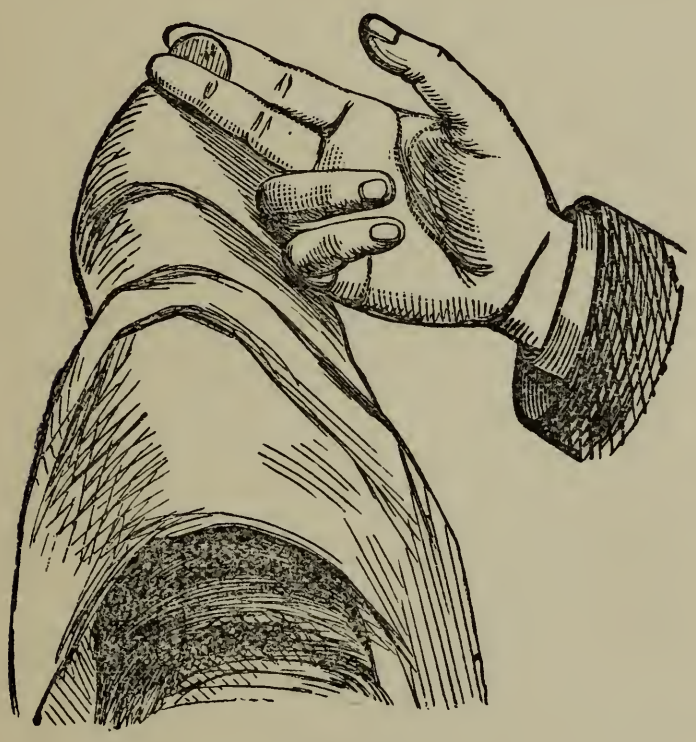


FIG. 77.

We may here describe another and still neater mode (the invention, we believe, of M. Robert-Houdin) of apparently wrapping a coin securely in a handkerchief, though really only covered by an outer fold.

Holding the coin upright between the fingers and thumb of the left hand, throw the handkerchief fairly over it. Having shown that it is fairly covered, remark, "But perhaps you may fancy I have changed the coin. Allow me to show you that I have not." With the right hand, palm upwards, take the coin through the handkerchief, (as shown in Fig. 77), between the first and second fingers of that hand. For a moment let go with the left hand (but without removing it from under the handkerchief). Turn over the right hand towards yourself, and again seize the coin with the left hand; but this time nip the opposite edge of the coin to that which it first held, and through the double thickness of the handkerchief. Remove the right hand from the coin, and with it raise the outer edge of the handkerchief and show the coin, as in Fig. 78. Then let the edges of the handkerchief fall. Apparently the coin is underneath, and in the centre of the handkerchief; but in reality it is outside, lying in a slight fold on the side away from the spectators.

FIG. 78.

The above description sounds intricate, but, if carefully followed with the coin and handkerchief will be found perfectly simple in

practice. It is worth while taking some pains to acquire this sleight, as it is of great value in coin tricks.

To Pull Four Florins or Half-crowns through a Handkerchief.—You begin by borrowing four marked half-crowns, florins, or penny-pieces, and a silk or cambric handkerchief. You then request the assistance of a very strong man. This gives an opportunity for a little fun in the selection. Having at last found a volunteer to your liking, you seat him on a chair facing the company. Spreading the handkerchief on your left palm, and placing the four coins upon it, you close your hand upon them through the handkerchief, and hand them to him, requesting him to hold them firmly. Then, as if suddenly recollecting yourself, you say, "Pardon me, I have omitted one little detail which is rather important. Oblige me with the handkerchief again for one moment, if you please. I ought to have shown the company that there are no holes in it." (The last sentence should not be pronounced until you have gained possession of the handkerchief, as the company might possibly declare themselves satisfied of the fact without examination, which would not answer your purpose.) The handkerchief being returned to you, you spread it out to show that it is free from holes, coming among the audience to do so, and appearing to lay great stress upon the fact. Again spreading it over your left hand, you count the coins one by one upon it; then giving a glance round at the company, you say, as you quickly return to your platform, "You have all seen that the four coins are fairly wrapped in the handkerchief," or make any other remark in order to draw the general attention, as a sharp, quick remark almost always will, to your face and away from your hands. At the same moment you move the left thumb over the face of the coins, thereby covering them with a fold of the handkerchief, and seize them, through the fold thus made, between the thumb and fingers of the right hand, as indicated in Fig. 79, immediately withdrawing the left hand. The coins will now be held in the right hand, the handkerchief hanging down loosely around them. To any one who has not watched your movements with more than ordinary vigilance, it will appear that the coins are within and under the handkerchief, though they are, in reality, wrapped in an external fold. Giving

them a twist round in the handkerchief, you hand it to the person assisting you, asking him to say whether the money is still there, to which he naturally replies in the affirmative. You then tell him to grasp the handkerchief with both hands three or four inches below the coins, and to hold as tightly as he possibly can. Placing your wand under your right arm, and taking hold of the coins (through the handkerchief) with both hands, the right hand undermost, you begin to pull against him, making a show of pulling with great force, and remarking that you are very glad it is not *your* handkerchief, that you should not have thought he was so strong, etc. Meanwhile, and while the company are enjoying the discomfiture of the owner of the handkerchief, you untwist the latter, and secretly get the money out of the fold into your right hand, and palm it therein. Give one last pull with your left hand, and let go smartly, observing that you fear you must give it up, and own yourself conquered. Take your wand in your right hand; this will make it seem natural for you to keep that hand closed, and will materially aid in concealing the fact that the money is therein. Your antagonist, or the spectators for him, will by this time have discovered that the money has vanished; but you pretend to be unconscious of the fact, and request him to give it back, that you may return it to the owners. He naturally declares that he has not got it. With all the seriousness that you can command, you insist that he has it, and that he must restore it. On his continued denial you suggest that he should search his pockets, which you tap, one after another, with your wand, each giving a metallic sound as if containing money; but the coins are still not to be found. At last, after all his pockets have

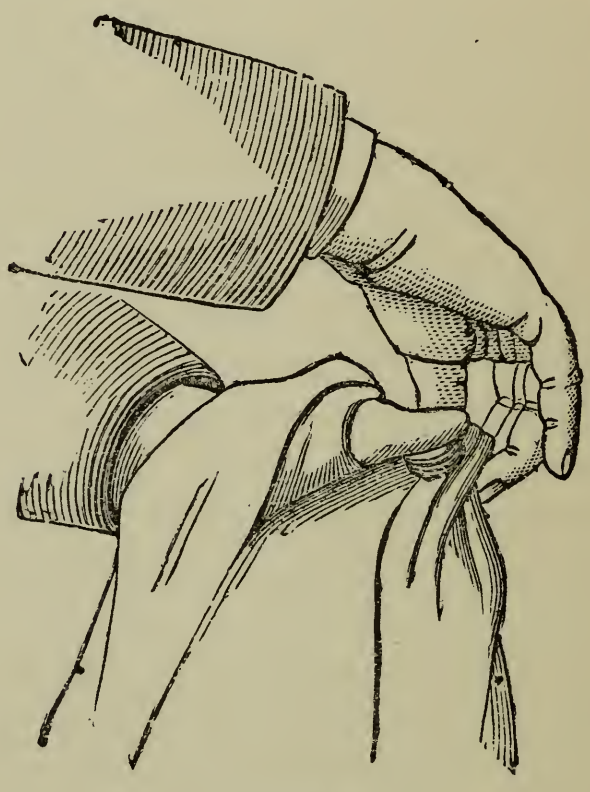


FIG. 79.

been tried in vain, you, as if upon a sudden thought, tap the leg of his trousers, the metallic chink still following every tap of the wand till you have nearly reached his feet, when you exclaim, "Yes, there it is. Will you have the kindness to put your foot on that chair?" He does so, and quickly transferring your wand to the left hand, with the fingers of the right you turn up the edge of the trouser, giving at the same time a slight shake, when the four coins are seen to fall out, to the great surprise of the victim.

This effect is produced as follows: The coins being in your right hand, you introduce them with the second, third, and fourth fingers under the edge of the trouser; then, with the first finger and thumb which are left outside, you nip them through the cloth, and hold them an instant till you have withdrawn the remaining fingers, when with a slight shake you let them fall.

The metallic chink on tapping the pockets may be produced in two ways. One method is to use a hollow metal wand, japanned to match the one you ordinarily use, and containing throughout its length a loose piece of thick wire, which, striking against the sides of the tube, exactly imitates the chink of money. The other mode is to use merely the ordinary wand, allowing the end which you hold to chink against the money held in the same hand. With a little practice the effect is equally deceptive as with the special wand.

To pass a Marked Florin (or Half-crown) into the Centre of two Oranges in Succession.—For this excellent trick a little previous preparation is necessary. A slit, an inch and a half deep, and just large enough to admit a florin, is made in each of two oranges, and in one of them a florin (which for distinction we will call No. 1) is placed. These must be put in readiness behind the scenes, or so placed as to be out of sight of the audience.

The performer palms in either hand a second florin (No. 2), and advancing to his audience, borrows from one of them a florin, first marked by the owner. (This last we will call No. 3). He invites special attention to the fact that throughout the experiment he is about to perform, the coin is never removed from their sight, and he accordingly places it (really substituting, by one or other of the changes, florin No. 2) in full view on his table. He then goes out to fetch an

orange, and takes the opportunity of slipping the marked florin (No. 3) into the vacant one. He brings forward *this* orange publicly, and places it on his table at his *right* hand. (The other orange he has meanwhile placed in his secret pocket on the right side, ready for palming at a moment's notice.) He then says, "I think, by the way, it would be as well to have *two* oranges. Can any gentleman oblige me with one?" No one responding, he looks about him, and presently stepping up to one of his audience, pretends to take from his hair, hat, or handkerchief this second orange (which contains, it will be remembered, florin No. 1), and places it on the *left* hand side of the table. He now (standing behind his table) asks into which orange, the right or the left, he shall pass the florin. As the right of the audience is his left, he is at liberty to interpret the answer in whichever way he thinks proper, and he does so in such manner as to designate the orange containing the non-marked florin, No. 1. Thus, if the audience say "the left," he answers, "On my left? Very good!" If they choose "the right," he says, "On your right? Very good!" Not one person in a thousand will detect the equivoque.

Taking up florin No. 2 from the table, and holding it in his left hand, he pretends by the *tourniquet* to take it in his right, and thence to pass it into the orange, meanwhile dropping it from his left hand on to the *servante*, or into the *profonde*. Showing his hands empty, he cuts open the orange, and exhibits the florin (No. 1) therein contained. Before giving the audience time to examine it for the mark, he hears, or pretends to hear, a murmur among them to the effect that that was not the orange chosen. "Pardon me," he says, "some of you seem to think that I had a special reason for preferring this particular orange. I gave you absolute liberty to choose which you liked, and I understood you to say that you chose this one. However, in order to satisfy everyone, I will repeat the trick with the other orange." Taking up the second orange, he thrusts the knife through it, in the slit already made, and gives the knife thus loaded to some one to hold. Then, standing at some distance from it, he takes up florin No. 1, and, getting rid of it by one or other of the "passes" previously described, he makes a motion as of throwing it towards the orange. He now requests the person holding the orange himself

to cut it open; when the genuine florin, No. 3, is found therein, and duly identified.

The finding of the second orange in the possession of the company may, if preferred, be omitted, and both oranges be brought forward openly in the first instance.

Occasionally a refractory spectator may insist upon the wrong orange (*i.e.*, that containing the genuine coin) being cut open first. As you have offered the audience the choice, you cannot well resist this; but it makes very little difference. In accordance with the general desire, you cut open the orange, and show the coin (No. 3), drawing particular attention to the mark. Its identity being fully established, you offer, for the general satisfaction, to pass the same coin into the second orange. Being satisfied that it was the genuine coin in the first case, the audience will the more readily believe that it is so in the second; but in this case you should cut open the second orange yourself, as it will be necessary to again substitute the genuine florin before you hand the coin to be examined.

THE FLYING MONEY.—TO MAKE A COIN PASS INVISIBLY FROM THE ONE HAND TO THE OTHER, AND FINALLY THROUGH THE TABLE.—Have ready beforehand a florin or half-crown, with a little wax on one side of it, and take an opportunity of secretly sticking it, by means of the wax, against the under side of the table (any ordinary table) with which you intend to perform the trick. Have also a similar coin of your own palmed in your right hand. Borrow a marked florin from one of the company, and lay it carelessly upon the table, but in so doing exchange it for the one previously palmed. You now have the substitute on the table, and the marked coin palmed in its place. Turn up your sleeves, to show that they have nothing to do with the trick, and make a few introductory remarks about the extraordinary power of the mesmeric influence as applied to metallic substances; then, taking up the coin from the table between the fingers and thumb of the left hand, which you hold with the palm towards the company, so as to show incidentally that it is otherwise empty, continue to the following effect:—"Here, ladies and gentlemen, is an ordinary coin, a mere inert piece of silver. If

you take it in your hand, there it will remain till you lay it down. But let a person possessing the mesmeric gift only breathe upon it" (you suit the action to the word), "and it is at once endowed with hearing, sense, and motion, and will fly from hand to hand at the mere word of command, and that so rapidly, that its flight is absolutely invisible. See, I take it *so*" (taking it in the right hand). "One, two, three! Pass! and it flies back into my left hand again. In order to show that there has been no substitution, perhaps the owner will kindly verify the mark." The coin is examined, and found to be the same.

This illusion is produced as follows:—When you breathe upon the substitute coin, you naturally turn the left hand palm upwards. In the act of taking that coin in the right hand, which you do with the hands in the position depicted in Fig. 69, you drop the genuine coin, which was previously palmed in the right hand, into the left, the position of the hand concealing it from the audience. After a momentary pause, you close the left hand, and hold it extended about level with your eyes. At each of the words, "One, two, three," you make a slight motion of the right hand towards it, and at the word "Pass," palm the coin by means of Pass 1, at the same time making a half turn of your body to the left, opening the left hand, and pointing with the index finger of the right hand to the coin lying therein. While it is being examined for the mark, you drop the substitute, which remains palmed in your right hand, into the *pocket* on that side, and bring up your hand empty.

Having proceeded thus far, borrow a second florin, but without in this case suggesting that it should be marked, breathe upon it, and lay it with that first used upon the table. Now with your right hand take up one of the coins, and by Pass 1 pretend to transfer it to the left, really retaining it in the palm of the right hand. Then take up the second coin between the fingers and thumb of the right hand, and announce that you are about to make the coins, which you now hold in each hand, come together. Holding your arms well apart, you make a motion with the left hand as if throwing something towards the right, at the same moment saying as before, "One, two, three! Pass!" and making the two coins in the right hand come together with an audible chink. You then open the hand, and show that the

left is empty, and that both of the coins are together in the right hand.

You continue, "You all think you know how that was done, I dare say. You imagine, no doubt, that the money was merely thrown from one hand to the other with extreme rapidity. 'The quickness of the hand deceives the eye,' as Shakspeare (or somebody else) says. I will therefore show you the same experiment in another form in which you will find that no such solution is admissible. I will pass the money right through this table, which is, as you see, pretty solid. The quickness of the hand would not be of much use in this case. I take one of the coins in the left hand, as before."

Here, however, you introduce a feint. Taking up the coin in the right hand, you transfer it to the left, but purposely do it with a pretended awkwardness, and hold the right hand afterwards rather stiffly, so as to lead the spectators to believe that you have really retained the coin in the right hand. To do this cleverly will require considerable practice, but it will by no means be labour lost, as feints of this kind are of frequent use.

The spectators, delighted to have, as they imagine, caught you tripping, are sure to exclaim that the coin is still in your right hand. "Surely, ladies and gentlemen," you say, with an injured air, "you don't think that I would avail myself of such a transparent artifice. See for yourselves!" opening your hands. "I won't ask you to apologize, but pray give me a little more credit for the future. Come, we will have no mistake about it this time." Take the florin between the finger and thumb of the left hand, and, by means of the *tourniquet* or *pincette*, appear to transfer it to the right. Pick up the second coin with the left hand, and place that hand under the table, holding the closed right hand above it. Say "Pass!" open the right hand, show it empty, and at the same moment chink the two florins together in the left hand, and bring them up for inspection.

Looking around you, you continue, "I am afraid you are only half convinced; some of you look incredulous still. Come, we will try the experiment once more, and we will see whether you can find me out this time. As before, I take one coin in each hand." This time you actually do so. You again pass your left hand under the table, detaching in its passage the third florin, which you had pre-

viously stuck to the under side of the table, but taking care that the two do not prematurely jingle together. Then, holding the other florin with the fingers of the right hand, which should be held palm downwards about a foot above the table, make Pass 1 with that hand, thus bringing the coin into its palm, and at the same time chink the other two coins in the left hand, and bring them up for examination. One of them, in this instance, is a substitute, and therefore, in the unlikely event of the audience insisting that the trick should be performed with marked coins, this last act must be omitted.

With a regular conjuring-table, the trick might be made even more surprising, from the facilities which the *servante* would afford for getting rid of and regaining the coin. But even if you habitually use such a table, it is better not to avail yourself of it for this purpose. The trick is, in any shape, too minute for stage performance, and in a drawing-room it is apt to draw special attention to the table, which in the case of a trick-table is a little embarrassing.

To rub One Sixpence into Three.—This is a simple little parlour trick, but will sometimes occasion great wonderment. Procure three sixpences of the same issue, and privately stick two of them (as directed for the florin in the last trick) with wax to the under side of a table, at about half an inch from the edge, and eight or ten inches apart. Announce to the company that you are about to teach them how to make money. Turn up your sleeves, and take the third sixpence in your right hand, drawing particular attention to its date and general appearance, and indirectly to the fact that you have no other coin concealed in your hands. Turning back the table-cover, rub the sixpence with the ball of the thumb backwards and forwards on the edge of the table. In this position your fingers will naturally be below the edge. After rubbing for a few seconds, say, "It is nearly done, for the sixpence is getting hot;" and, after rubbing a moment or two longer with increased rapidity, draw the hand away sharply, carrying away with it one of the concealed sixpences, which you exhibit as produced by the friction. Pocketing the waxed sixpence, and again showing that you have but one coin in your hands, repeat the operation with the remaining sixpence.

THE MULTIPLICATION OF MONEY.—This is an old and favourite trick. It may be performed with shillings, pence, or florins, as may best suit your convenience. Whichever you use (we will suppose florins), you prepare for the trick by secretly palming in the right hand such number (say three) as you intend to magically add. Advancing to the audience, you beg the loan of ten or a dozen florins (the precise number is immaterial), at the same time requesting some one of the company to collect them, and bring them to you. He collects, we will suppose, twelve. You request him to count them openly upon the table, that all may be able to verify their number. This being done, you invite a second person also to step forward and assist. Picking up from the table the same number of coins as you have concealed in your palm, you give them to one of the two persons (whom we will call *A*) to hold. Then, taking up the remaining coins, you request the second person (whom we will call *B*) to take charge of them. When he holds out his hand to receive them, you let fall with them the palmed coins, so that he really receives twelve, though he believes that he has only nine. You make him close his hand, and hold it high above his head. You then ask *A* for the coins you entrusted to him. On his returning them to you, you take them between the second finger and thumb of the left hand, and pretend by the *tourniquet* to transfer them to the right, really getting rid of them at the earliest opportunity on the *servante*, or into one of your *pochettes*. The audience believe that the three coins are in your closed right hand. You announce that you are about to pass them invisibly into the hand of *B*, and after the necessary amount of magical gesture, you open your hand, and show that they have vanished; and *B*, on examining his stock, finds that the supposed nine have increased to twelve.

It is a very good plan, in performing this trick, for the performer himself to collect the coins from the company in a plate, the coins to be added being held in the same hand which carries the plate, when, the thumb being naturally above and the fingers below, the coins are effectually concealed. After the coins have been counted, the performer, taking the plate in the other hand, pours them from it into the hand which already holds the concealed coins, thus bringing them together easily and naturally.

A further improvement may be made in the trick by using, in place of an ordinary plate, a special plate or salver, generally made of tin japanned, but sometimes of crockery or china. The speciality of this plate (which is known as the "money plate," or "multiplying salver") consists in a flat space running along its bottom, between its upper and under surface, just wide enough and deep enough to hold concealed a row of coins (florins or shillings, as the case may be), and closed at the one end, but open at the other, the opening being concealed by the edge of the plate. (*See* Fig. 80.) You prepare the plate beforehand by placing in the concealed space three, four,

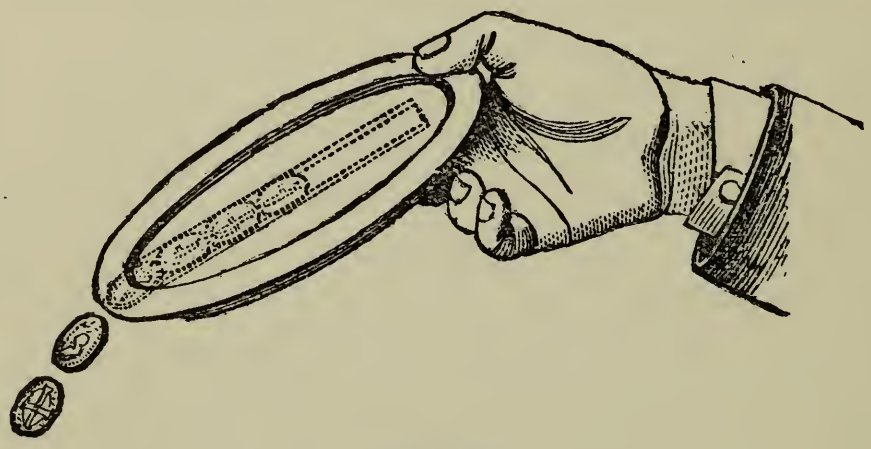


FIG. 80.

or six coins, and place it on your table. When you first take it up, you take hold of it *near the opening*, when you may, of course, handle it as freely as you please, as, the mouth of the passage being upwards, the coins cannot possibly fall out. Letting the plate hang downwards in a perpendicular position, and passing it carelessly from hand to hand, the audience cannot help observing that you have nothing concealed in your hands. Then collect (or count out, if already collected) the money in the plate, and, after taking away and handing to *A* a number equal to the coins concealed, pour the remainder direct from the plate into the hands of *B*, first, however, so reversing the position of the plate (which you may do by merely transferring it from the one hand to the other) as to turn the opening of the passage away from you. When you now slope the plate to pour the remaining coins into his hands, the money in the concealed passage will naturally pour out with them (*see* Fig. 80), thus making the required addition with hardly a possibility of detection.

It is a good plan to perform the trick first without, and then to repeat it with, the aid of the money plate, making a great point in the second instance of the fact that you do not even touch the money, and accounting for the use of the plate as designed to preclude all possibility of the use of sleight-of-hand, or any other mechanical mode of deception. The spectators, having already seen you perform the trick without the aid of the plate, are precluded from supposing that this latter has any special connection with the secret; and seeing clearly that you have in this instance no coins concealed in your hands, naturally conclude that the same was the case on the former occasion. Thus the repetition of the trick, instead of assisting them to a solution, rather increases the mystery.

The trick may be varied at pleasure so far as regards the manner of the disappearance of the coins which are supposed to be passed invisibly into the hands of the person holding the larger number. One mode is to ask one of the company to wrap them up in a piece of stiff paper, for which you forthwith secretly substitute a piece of similar paper, in which a like number of coins have been wrapped, but have been removed, the paper, however, retaining the form of the coins. Taking this in the left hand, you pretend to take from it, invisibly, with the finger and thumb of the right hand, each coin in succession, and to pass it in the same manner into the hand of the person holding the remaining coins, finally tearing the paper in half to show that they have really passed away from it. Or you may, if you prefer it, place the coins in question on the "vanishing plate," to be hereafter described, whence they mysteriously disappear as you take them off one by one. This is a very effective mode. Or you may place them in the "plug-box," the "Davenport cabinet," or any other of the various appliances after-mentioned for vanishing money.

TO MAKE A MARKED SIXPENCE VANISH FROM A HANDKERCHIEF, AND BE FOUND IN THE CENTRE OF AN APPLE OR ORANGE PREVIOUSLY EXAMINED.—Have ready, concealed in either hand, a sixpence of your own, with a little wax smeared on one side of it. Roll another minute portion of wax into a round ball half the size of a peppercorn, and press it lightly upon the lowest button of your waist-

coat, so that you may be able to find it instantly when wanted. You must also have at hand an ordinary full-sized table-knife and a plate of oranges.

You begin by borrowing a sixpence (requesting the owner to mark it) and a handkerchief. You spread the handkerchief flat on the table, with its sides square with those of the table. Then standing behind your table, you place ostensibly the borrowed sixpence, but really your own (with the waxed side up), in the centre of the handkerchief, then fold over the corners, one by one, beginning with one of those nearest to yourself, in such manner that each shall overlap the sixpence by about an inch, gently pressing each corner as you fold it down. Ask some one to come forward, and ascertain by feeling the handkerchief, that the sixpence is really there. Then offer the knife for inspection, and after all are satisfied that it is without preparation, hand the plate of oranges to be examined in like manner, requesting the audience to choose one for the purpose of the trick. While they do so, your fingers go in search of the little ball of wax, and press it against one side of the marked sixpence, which still remains in your hand. Press the sixpence against one side of the blade of the knife, at about the middle of its length, and lay the knife on the table, the sixpence adhering to its under side. Then taking hold of the handkerchief, as represented in Fig. 81, and blowing on its centre, draw the hands quickly apart. The two corners of the side next to you will thus be brought one into each hand, and adhering to one of them (the one which you first folded down), will be the substitute sixpence, which will thus appear to have vanished. Hand the handkerchief for examination, that it

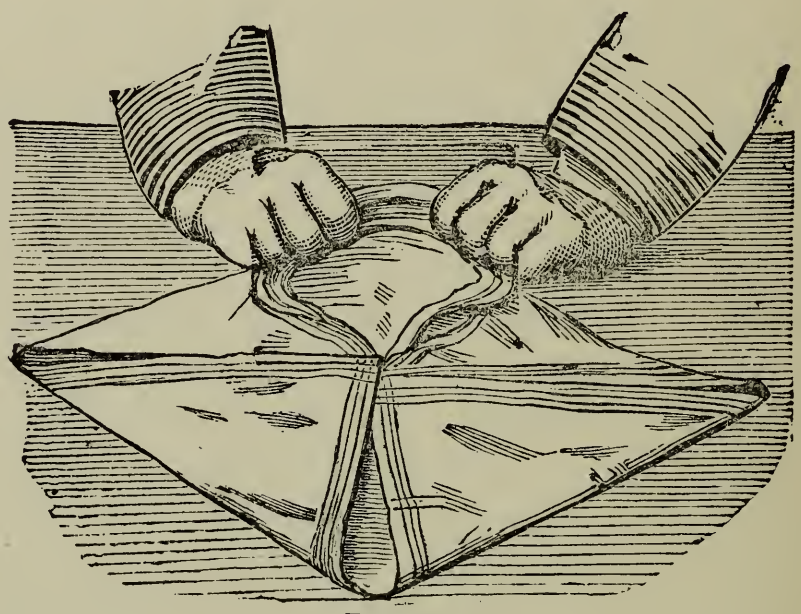


FIG. 81.

may be seen that the coin has really disappeared, and meanwhile get rid of the substitute into your pocket or elsewhere. Turn up your sleeves, and show that your hands are empty. Then take up the knife (taking care to keep the side on which the sixpence is away from the spectators), and cut open the orange. Cut about half way down with the *point*, and then finish the cut by drawing the whole length of the blade through the opening thus made. This will detach the sixpence, which will fall between the two halves of the orange, as though it had all along been contained therein. Wipe it with the handkerchief to remove the juice of the orange from it, and at the same time rub off any wax which may still adhere to it, and hand it for identification.

The coin may, if preferred, be found in an egg instead of the orange, the audience being invited to choose which shall be used. This trick is sometimes performed by the aid of a knife made for this special purpose, with a small spring lever, after the manner of a flute key, soldered against one side of the blade. The coin is held in position by the short arm of the lever, which answers the same purpose as the wax in the form of the trick above described. The disadvantage of using this, which is known as the "fruit knife," is, that you cannot hand the knife for examination, and this, to our mind, spoils the trick.

THE TRAVELLING COUNTERS.—This is a very similar trick to that already described under the title of the "Multiplication of Money." It is performed with twelve metal counters. The performer begins by counting the twelve counters on the table; then, taking up four of them, he hands them to a spectator to hold, and taking the remainder in his own hand, commands them to change places. On examination, his commands are found to be obeyed. The spectator has eight, while the performer has only four. The spectator is now requested to take charge of the eight, when the operator commands the four which he himself holds to rejoin them. This, also, is found to be accomplished. The operator now hands the twelve to a second spectator, requesting him to hold them tightly. After a moment's interval, he is requested again to count them, but finds that he has grasped them too tightly, for they are now welded

together into a solid mass. The performer again takes them, and by merely breathing on them, restores them to their original state.

The student, with the experience which he has by this time gained, will naturally conjecture that the trick is in reality performed with sixteen loose counters, and twelve soldered together; that the performer commenced the trick with four counters palmed in his right hand, which he secretly added to the four which he handed to the spectator; that, taking up the remaining eight, and apparently transferring them from his right hand to his left, he really transferred four only, leaving the remainder in the right hand; and that when he again handed the eight counters to the spectator, he added these last to them. That in apparently transferring the remaining four from hand to hand he palmed them, forthwith dropping them into one of his *pochettes*, and taking from the same place, or from under his waistband, the solid twelve, which he finally handed to the second spectator in place of the twelve loose counters; again substituting the loose ones, as before, when by breathing on them he professed to restore them to their primitive state.

As the student has so successfully guessed all this, it would be an impertinence on our part to further explain the trick.

The Wandering Sixpence.—Have ready two sixpences, each slightly waxed on one side. Borrow a sixpence, and secretly exchange it for one of the waxed ones, laying the latter, waxed side uppermost, on the table. Let any one draw two cards from any ordinary pack. Take them in the left hand, and, transferring them to the right, press the second waxed sixpence against the centre of the undermost, to which it will adhere. Lay this card (which we will call *a*) on the table, about eighteen inches from the sixpence which is already there, and cover that sixpence with the other card, *b*. Lift both cards a little way from the table, to show that the sixpence is under card *a*, and that there is apparently nothing under card *b*. As you replace them, press lightly on the centre of card *a*. You may now make the sixpence appear under whichever card you like, remembering that, if you wish the sixpence *not* to adhere, you must bend the card slightly upwards in taking it from the table; if otherwise, take it up without bending.

CHAPTER III.

Tricks with Coin requiring Special Apparatus.

The "Heads and Tails" Trick.—This is a pretty little trick, of an unpretending nature, but of very good effect, especially if introduced in a casual and apparently *extempore* manner. The performer borrows, or produces from his own pocket, four penny-pieces. Placing them upon the table, he requests some one to make a pile of them, all one way, say "tail" upwards. He next requests the same or another person to turn over the pile so made, without disturbing the relative position of the coins, and announces with an air of supernatural knowledge that they will now all be found "head" upwards. This appears so ridiculously obvious, that the audience naturally observe (with more or less straightforwardness of expression) that "any fool could tell that." "Pardon me," says the performer, "it is not quite such a simple matter as you think. I very much doubt whether any of you could do as much. I will place the coins again; watch me as closely as you please. I will place them as before—Tail, tail, tail, tail. Is that fairly done? Now I will turn them over." He does so, letting the tips of his fingers rest upon them. "What are they now?" A general chorus replies, "All heads, of course!" But on examination it is found that only three are "heads," and one a "tail." Again he arranges them, placing them this time alternately—head, tail, head, tail. He turns them over. The natural order (beginning from below) would again be head, tail, head, tail; but they are found to be head, tail, tail, tail. Again he places them, tail, tail, tail, head. When turned over they should be tail, head, head, head, but are found to be tail, head, alternately.

The secret lies in the use of a prepared penny, consisting of similar halves (in the case above described two "tails") soldered together, so

as to be "tail" on either side. This the performer palms in his right hand. After first going through the operation with the genuine coins, as above, he picks them up with his left hand, and apparently transferring them to the right, really transfers three of them only. He then performs the trick with these and the prepared coin, when the apparently miraculous result above described becomes a matter of course.

It is best not to repeat the trick too often, and a little practice is necessary in order to be able to return the three genuine coins neatly to the left hand (in which the fourth borrowed coin must be retained throughout the trick), at the same time secretly retaining your own. It is a frequent occurrence for one or other of the company, imagining that the seeming wonder is, in some unexplained way, a result of some natural principle, to request to be allowed to try for himself. It is obvious that, under such circumstances, it would not do to hand him the prepared coin, and hence the necessity for some quick and natural method of again getting the four genuine coins together.

The trick may be brought to an effective conclusion as follows: After you have got rid of the double-faced penny, you may continue, "Perhaps it is a little too complicated for you with four coins; suppose we try it with one only, and I won't even turn it over." Placing one of the genuine pence on the middle of the right palm, which you hold out horizontally before you, you draw special attention to the fact that the coin is (say) "tail" upwards. Quickly covering it with the other hand, you say, "What is it now?" "Tail," is the reply. "Wrong again!" you say, and, lifting up the hand, show that the coin has this time vanished altogether. This mysterious disappearance is effected as follows: When you apparently cover the coin with the left hand, you bring the hands together with a quick lateral motion as though sliding the one across the other. This shoots the coin from the palm down the opposite sleeve, the motion being so quick that the keenest eye cannot detect it. This little sleight is by no means difficult, and is well worthy of acquirement, as it may be introduced with equal effect in many tricks.

THE MAGIC COVER AND VANISHING HALFPENCE.—This is a very old trick, but is still very popular with a juvenile audience.

The principal apparatus consists of half-a-dozen halfpence, of which the centre portion has been cut out, leaving each a mere rim of metal. Upon these is placed a complete halfpenny, and the whole are connected together by a rivet running through the whole thickness of the pile. When placed upon the table, with the complete coin upwards, they have all the appearance of a pile of ordinary halfpence, the slight lateral play allowed by the rivet aiding the illusion. A little leather cap (shaped something like a fez, with a little button on the top, and of such a size as to fit loosely over the pile of halfpence), with an ordinary die, such as backgammon is played with, complete the necessary requirements.

You begin by drawing attention to your magic cap and die, late the property of the king of the fairies. In order to exhibit their mystic powers, you request the loan of half-a-dozen halfpence (the number must, of course, correspond with that of your own pile), and, while they are being collected, you take the opportunity to slip the little cap over your prepared pile, which should be placed ready to hand behind some small object on the table, so as to be unseen by the spectators. Pressing the side of the cap, you lift the pile with it, and place the whole together in full view, in close proximity to the die. The required halfpence having been now collected, you beg all to observe that you place the leather cap (which the spectators suppose to be empty) fairly over the die. Taking the genuine coins in either hand, you pretend, by one or other of the passes, to transfer them to the other. Holding the hand which is now supposed to contain the coins immediately above the cap, you announce that they will at your command pass under the cap, from which the die will disappear to make room for them. Saying, "One, two, three! Pass!" you open your hand, and show that the coins have vanished. If you use a regular table, you may place them on the *servante*, and show both hands empty; and then, lifting up the cap by the button, you show the hollow pile, covering the die, and appearing to be the genuine coins. Once more covering the pile with the cap, you announce that you will again extract the coins, and replace the die; and to make the trick still more extraordinary, you will this time pass the coins right through the table. Placing the hand which holds the genuine coins beneath the table, and once more saying, "One, two, three!

Pass!" you chink the coins, and, bringing them up, place them on the table. Again picking up the cap, but this time pressing its sides, you lift up the hollow pile with it, and disclose the die. Quickly transfer the cap, without the pile, to the other hand, and place it on the table, to bear the brunt of examination, while you get rid of the prepared coins.

The trick may be varied in many ways, according to the ingenuity of the performer, but it belongs at best to the "juvenile" school of conjuring, and we have not thought it worth while to waste space in elaborating it.

THE ANIMATED COIN, WHICH ANSWERS QUESTIONS, ETC.—This trick is performed in a variety of different ways, some with apparatus, some without. The effect produced is as follows:—The performer borrows a coin, and, after making a few mesmeric passes over it, drops it into a glass upon the table, where it immediately begins to jump about as if alive. The performer then announces that the coin thus mesmerized has the power of fortune-telling, naming chosen cards, predicting the number that will be thrown by a pair of dice, etc. The coin answers "Yes" by jumping three times, "No" by jumping once—according to the approved spiritualistic code of signals. We shall not stay to discuss the questions asked, which are of the same class as those which are generally put to the Magic Bell or Drum, but proceed at once to explain the various modes of producing the movement of the coin.

One plan is for the performer to have a coin of his own, to which is attached a long black silk thread, the other end of which is in the hand of an assistant behind the scenes, or elsewhere out of sight of the audience. This coin is placed on the table in readiness, but concealed from the spectators by some larger object in front of it. When the performer advances to the table with the borrowed coin, he secretly picks up the prepared one, and drops the latter into the glass as being that which he has borrowed. A short, quick jerk of the thread by the assistant will make the coin spring up and fall back again, producing the required chink. It is only necessary to be careful not to jerk the thread so violently as to make the coin fly out of the glass. It is desirable, where practicable, to make the thread pass

either through a hole in the top of the table, or a ring fixed to its surface and placed immediately behind the glass. This will keep that portion of the thread nearest to the glass perpendicular behind it, in which position it will be completely hidden by the glass, and so be invisible.

Some performers prefer to use the actual coin borrowed. The arrangements in this case are the same as above described, save that the silk thread, instead of having a substitute coin attached to it, has merely a pellet of wax at its end. The performer having handed round the glass for inspection, and standing in front of the table with his left side turned towards the audience, picks up a pellet of wax with his right hand at the same moment that, holding the borrowed coin in his left hand, he begs the spectators to take especial notice that he really uses the borrowed coin, and no other. Having said this, he transfers the coin, by a perfectly natural movement, to his right hand, and pressing against it the waxen pellet, drops it into the glass.

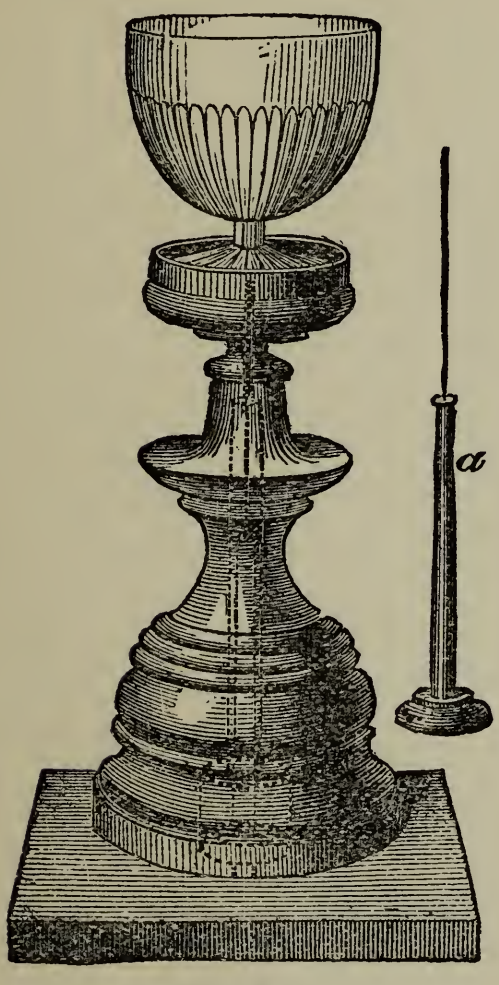


FIG. 82.

The third and last mode of performing the trick is by means of a special glass, with a hole drilled through its foot. This is placed on a suitable pedestal (*see* Fig. 82), in which works up and down a steel needle, forming the upper portion of a kind of loose piston, *a*. The top of the pedestal is covered with green baize, allowing free passage to the needle, which when pushed upward strikes the coin from below, with much the same effect as the thread pulling it from above. This pedestal is only available with one of the mechanical tables which will be described in connection with "stage tricks." Such tables

contain, among other contrivances, what are called "pistons," being small metal rods, which, by pulling a string, are made to rise vertically an inch or so above the surface of the table, sinking down again as soon as the cord is released. The pedestal is placed immediately above one of these, whose movement is in turn communicated to the loose piston in the pedestal, and thence to the coin.

It only remains to be stated how the necessary knowledge for the answers is communicated to the person who controls the movements of the piece. With respect to chosen cards, the cards are either indicated by the wording of the questions, or are agreed on beforehand, the performer taking care to "force" the right ones. The assistant is enabled to predict the throw of the dice by the simple expedient of using a small boxwood vase, in which there are two compartments, in one of which a pair of dice (apparently the same which have just been dropped in haphazard from the top) have been arranged beforehand for the purpose of the trick. The ordinary fortune-telling questions, as to "Which young lady will be married first?" "Which spends most time at her looking-glass?" "Which has most sweethearts?" and so on, are either answered in accordance with previous arrangement, or according to the fancy of the moment. Of course, where a question of this kind is asked, the performer takes care to follow up the question by designating a number of persons in succession, so that a mere "Yes" or "No" may be a sufficient answer.

We shall next proceed to describe three or four pieces of apparatus designed to cause a piece of money to disappear, and therefore well adapted for commencing a coin trick. There are other appliances, more particularly adapted for re-producing a coin. Any of these will be available for the conclusion; the particular combination being at the option of the performer.

THE VANISHING HALFPENNY BOX. TO MAKE A HALFPENNY VANISH FROM THE BOX, AND AGAIN RETURN TO IT.—This is a little round box, made of boxwood, about an inch deep, and of such diameter that its internal measurement exactly admits a halfpenny; in other words, that if a halfpenny be placed in it, it exactly covers the

bottom. The top and bottom of the box are lined with some bright-coloured paper, and with it is used a halfpenny, one side of which is covered with similar paper. If therefore this halfpenny be placed in the box with the papered side upwards, the halfpenny is naturally taken to be the bottom of the box, which thus appears empty.

The performer begin by tendering the box for examination, keeping the while the prepared halfpenny palmed in his right hand. When the box has been sufficiently inspected, he borrows a halfpenny from the audience, and secretly exchanges it for his own, taking care that the spectators only see the unprepared side of the latter. He then announces that this box, apparently so simple, has the singular faculty of causing the disappearance of any money entrusted to its keeping, as they will perceive when he places in it the halfpenny he has just borrowed. He places the halfpenny in it accordingly, holding it with the uncovered side towards the audience, but letting it so fall that it shall lie in the box with the papered side upwards. He now puts the lid on, and shakes the box *up and down*, to show by the rattling of the coin that it is still there. He desires the audience to say when they would wish the coin to leave the box, and on receiving their commands, touches the lid with his wand, and again shakes the box. This time, however, he shakes it laterally, and as in this direction the coin exactly fits the box, it has no room to rattle, and is therefore silent. He boldly asserts that the coin is gone, and opening the box, shows the inside to the spectators, who seeing, as they suppose, the papered bottom, are constrained to admit that it is empty. Once again he closes the box, and touches it with the wand, announcing that he will compel the coin to return. Shaking the box up and down, it is again heard to rattle. Taking off the lid, he turns the box upside down, and drops the coin into his hand. This brings it out with the papered side undermost, and so hidden. Again handing the box to be examined, he exchanges the prepared halfpenny for the one which was lent to him, and which he now returns to the owner with thanks.

A variation may be introduced by causing the borrowed halfpenny to re-appear in some other apparatus, after it has vanished from the box in question. The borrowed coin may, if desired, be marked, in order to heighten the effect of the trick.

THE RATTLE BOX. TO MAKE A COIN VANISH FROM THE BOX, THOUGH STILL HEARD TO RATTLE WITHIN IT.—This is a useful and ingenious little piece of apparatus. It is an oblong mahogany box, with a sliding lid. Its dimensions are about three inches by two, and one inch in depth externally; internally, it is only half that depth, and the end piece of the lid is of such a depth as to be flush with the bottom. Thus, if a coin be placed in the box, and the box held in such a position as to slant downwards to the opening, the coin will of its own weight fall into the hand that holds the box (*see* Fig. 83), thus giving the performer possession of it without the knowledge of the audience.

Between the true and the false bottom of the box is placed a slip of zinc, which, when the box is shaken laterally, moves from side to side, exactly simulating the sound of a coin shaken in the box. In its normal condition, however, this slip of zinc is held fast (and therefore kept silent) by the action of a spring also placed between the two bottoms, but is released for the time being by a pressure on a particular part of the outer bottom (the part in contact with the fingers in Fig. 83). A casual inspection of the box suggests nothing, save, perhaps, that its internal space is somewhat shallow in proportion to its external measurement.

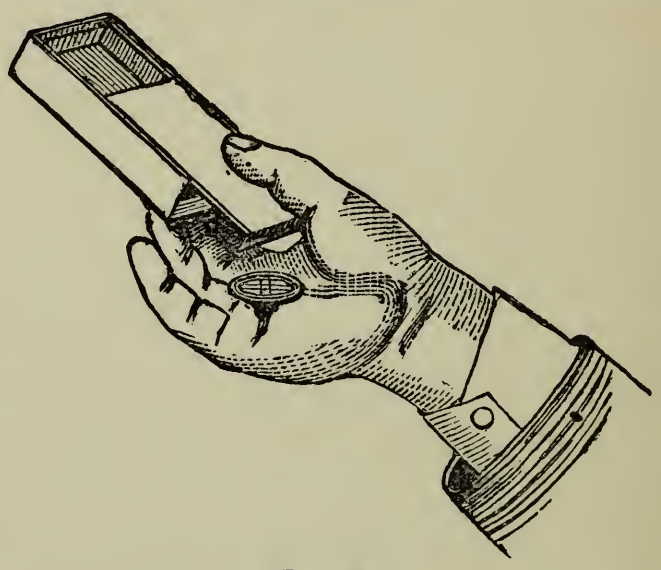


FIG. 83.

The mode of using it is as follows: The performer invites any person to mark a coin, and to place it in the box, which he holds for that purpose as represented in the figure; and the coin is thus no sooner placed in the box than it falls into his hand. Transferring the box to the other hand, and pressing the spring, he shakes it to show by the sound that the coin is still there; then, leaving the box on the table, he prepares for the next phase of the trick by secretly placing the coin, which the audience believe to be still in

the box, in any other apparatus in which he desires it to be found, or makes such other disposition of it as may be necessary. Having done this, and having indicated the direction in which he is about to command the coin to pass, he once more shakes the box to show that it is still *in statu quo*. Then, with the mystic word "Pass!" he opens the box, which is found empty, and shows that his commands have been obeyed.

THE PEPPER-BOX, for vanishing money.—This is a small tin box, of the pepper-box or flour-dredger shape, standing three to four inches high. (*See* Fig. 84.) The box portion (as distinguished from the lid), is made double, consisting of two tin tubes sliding the one within the other, the bottom being soldered to the inner one only. By pulling the bottom downwards, therefore, you draw down with it the inner tube, telescope fashion. By so doing you bring into view a slit or opening at one side of the inner tube, level with the bottom, and of such a size as to let a coin, say a two-shilling piece, pass through it easily. (*See* Fig. 85.) The lid is also specially prepared. It has an inner or false top, and between the true and false top a loose bit of tin is introduced, which rattles when the box is shaken, unless you at the same time press a little point of wire projecting from one of the holes at the top, and so render it, for the time being, silent.

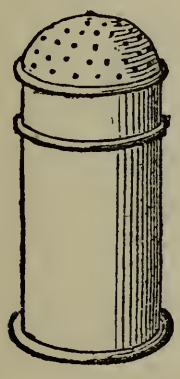


FIG. 84.

FIG. 85.

The box is first exhibited with the inner tube pushed up into its place, and the opening thereby concealed. A marked coin is borrowed, but either before or after the coin is placed therein, as may best suit his purpose, the performer secretly draws out the inner tube a quarter of an inch or so, thus allowing the coin to slip through into his hand. As he places the box on the table, a very slight pressure suffices to force the tube up again into its original position, and close the opening. Having made the necessary disposition of the coin, the performer takes up the box, and shakes it, to show (apparently) that the coin is still there, pressing on the little point above mentioned

when he desires it to appear that it has departed, and immediately opening the box to show that it is empty. The pepper-box will not bear minute inspection, and is in this particular inferior to the rattle-box.

THE BRASS MONEY-BOX, for the same purpose.—This is on a similar principle to that of the pepper-box, but has no rattle movement, and is not adapted for any coin of larger size than a shilling. Its shape will be best understood from an examination of the diagrams. (*See* Figs. 86, 87.) It has no moveable lid, but merely a slit in the top, just large enough to admit the coin, which, when once dropped in, cannot be got out again without a knowledge of the secret.

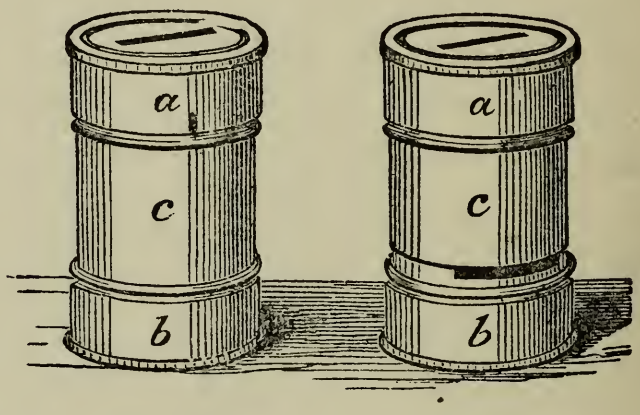


FIG. 86. FIG. 87.

This, like the pepper-box, consists of two tubes one within the other; but the inner tube is firmly soldered to the two end pieces, *a* and *b*, which are solid. The only moveable portion is the outer tube *c*, which is so arranged as to slide upwards (within *a*) for about an eighth of an inch, thereby disclosing the opening of the inner tube, and allowing the coin to slip through. Fig. 87 represents the box with the slit open, and Fig. 86 with it closed.

Some little practice is required to use the money-box with dexterity. The performer should hold it tightly by the middle between the finger and thumb of his right hand, taking care that the side on which the secret opening is shall lie toward the inside of his hand. As he drops the coin through the slit, he should press lightly on the top with the fingers of the left hand, and at the same time push *c* upwards with the right hand. The coin will now slip through into his hand, while a slight downward pressure as he replaces the box on the table will again push down *c*, and make all close as before. If the performer prefers to use one hand only, he should press downwards on the top with the first finger, at the same time pressing upwards with the second finger and thumb.

There are various ways of using this little apparatus. It may either be used as above, as a means of surreptitiously gaining possession of a coin, to be afterwards produced in some other apparatus, or it may be used by itself singly, the coin being made apparently to fall through the bottom at the will of the performer. It may also be used as a puzzle, its secret being so well concealed that it will bear a very minute examination without discovery.

THE BRASS BOX FOR MONEY, KNOWN AS THE "PLUG-BOX."—This is a piece of apparatus so ingenious in construction, and capable of being used in so many different ways, that we should recommend the student of magic to make it one of his first investments. It is about three inches in height, and one and a half in diameter, and is composed of four separate parts. *See* Fig. 88, in which *a* represents the outside or body of the box, being in reality a mere brass tube open at both ends, with a moveable bottom, *b*, which fits tightly in the end of *a*, appearing when in its place to be a fixture, and to form with *a* one complete whole; *a* has no lid, properly so called, but is closed by inserting in it what appears to be a solid brass plug or piston. This plug, however, though in appearance solid, also consists of two parts—the plug proper, *c*, which is really solid, and a brass sheath, *d*, exactly fitting it as to its diameter, but a quarter of an inch longer, thus leaving, when *c* is placed in *d*, and pushed home, a hollow space at the bottom of *d* capable of containing a florin or half-crown. The sheath *d* is of precisely the same length as *a*, and is so made as to fit easily upon *c*, but tightly within *a*. When the plug-box is exhibited to the audience, the bottom, *b*, is in its proper place, and *c*, which is shown apart from *a*, is covered with its sheath, *d*. There being nothing in its appearance to point to any other conclusion, the spectators naturally believe that the apparatus consists of those two parts only. If now the plug be placed within

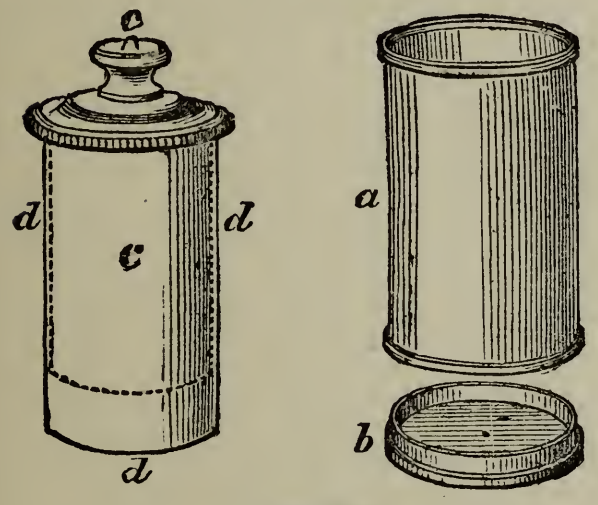


FIG. 88.

the box, and pushed home, the moveable bottom, *b*, will be pressed out, and fall into the hand of the performer. On again withdrawing the plug, the sheath *d*, which, as already mentioned, fits more tightly within *a* than upon *c*, is left within *a*; the bottom of *d*, which comes exactly flush with the lower edge of *a*, now appearing to be the bottom of the latter. To the eyes of the audience, the box is exactly as they saw it at first, and it may even be examined pretty freely, with little risk of its secret being discovered by any one.

The plug-box may be used in a variety of different ways—to vanish, reproduce, or exchange. For the first purpose, the coin to be got rid of is dropped into *a*. When the plug is inserted, and pressed home, the coin falls, with *b*, into the hand of the performer; and on the plug being again withdrawn, nothing is seen but the interior of *d*, which is of course empty. Where it is desired to use the box for the purpose of reproducing a coin, such coin is placed beforehand within *d*. The box is first shown empty, but has only to be closed and re-opened, and the coin is found within it. For exchanges, the substitute is placed in *d*, and the genuine coin in *a*. This latter falls out with the bottom, and the substitute is in due course discovered. A half-crown may thus be changed to a penny, or a sovereign to a shilling.

But the chief use of the plug-box is as an auxiliary in those more important tricks in which the coin, apparently remaining up to the last moment in the spectator's own possession, is suddenly made to appear in some quarter to which (if it had really so remained) it could not possibly have been transported by natural means. The performer in this case places a similar coin beforehand in *d*. Dropping, or allowing the owner to drop, the marked coin into *a*, he closes the box, which he shakes to prove that the coin is really there. Giving the box to some one to hold, he is then enabled, without exciting the smallest suspicion, to retire, and make what disposition he pleases of the marked coin, which he has thus got into his own possession. When he has completed his arrangements, he again takes the box, and, opening it, takes out the substitute, which the audience naturally believe to be the genuine coin; and getting rid of this by sleight-of-hand or otherwise,

passes the coin (at that very moment, so far as the audience can judge) to the place where it is ultimately destined to be found.

A favourite mode of using the plug-box is as follows:—A coin (say a florin) is wrapped in a small piece of paper, after which the coin is taken out and the paper again folded in such a manner as to retain the impression of the coin, and so to look, as far as possible, as if still containing it. The paper thus folded is placed beforehand in *d*, and the performer, borrowing a florin, requests the owner to wrap it carefully in a piece of paper, which he hands him for the purpose, and which is similar in size and general appearance to the folded piece. The florin, thus wrapped up, is placed in *a*, and the box closed, the performer thus gaining possession of paper and coin. The box is then handed to the owner of the money, who is asked to open it and see for himself that his money is still there. Seeing the folded paper, which he takes to be the same in which his money was wrapped, he answers in the affirmative. The box is again closed, the coin, meanwhile, being disposed of according to the pleasure of the operator—the owner finding on a closer examination that his money has departed from the box, though the paper in which it was wrapped (as he imagines) still remains.

THE HANDKERCHIEF FOR VANISHING MONEY.—This is another appliance for vanishing a coin. It is an ordinary handkerchief of silk or cotton, in one corner of which, in a little pocket, is sewn a coin, say a florin or a penny, or any substitute which, felt through the substance of the handkerchief, shall appear to be such a coin. The mode of using it is very simple. Holding the handkerchief by the corner in which is the coin, and letting it hang loosely down, the performer borrows a similar coin, and, after carelessly shaking out the handkerchief, to show that all is fair, he places, to all appearance, the borrowed coin in the centre (underneath), and gives the handkerchief to some one to hold. In reality, he has only wrapped up the corner containing the substitute coin, and retains the genuine one for his own purposes. When it is desirable to make it appear that the coin has left the handkerchief, he simply takes it from the person holding it, and gives it a shake, at the same moment rapidly running the edges

of the handkerchief through his hands, till the corner containing the coin comes into one or the other of them.

THE DEMON HANDKERCHIEF (*Le Mouchoir du Diable*).—This is a recent improvement on the above, and possesses a much wider range of utility, inasmuch as it really does cause the disappearance of any article placed under it, and is available to vanish not only coin, but a card, an egg, a watch, or any other article of moderate size. It consists of *two* handkerchiefs, of the same pattern, stitched together all round the edges, and with a slit of about four inches in length cut in the middle of one of them. The whole space between the two handkerchiefs thus forms a kind of pocket, of which the slit above mentioned is the only opening. In shaking or otherwise manipulating the handkerchief, the performer takes care always to keep the side with the slit away from the spectators, to whom the handkerchief appears to be merely the ordinary article of everyday use. When he desires by its means to cause the disappearance of anything, he carelessly throws the handkerchief over the article, at the same time secretly passing the latter through the slit in the under side, and hands it thus covered to some one to hold. Then, taking the handkerchief by one corner, he requests him to let go, when the object is retained in the space between the two handkerchiefs, appearing to have vanished into empty air.

This, like the plug-box, is an appliance which no conjuror should be without. It may be purchased ready-made at any of the *depôts* for magical apparatus, or may be of home-manufacture, which in this case (contrary to the general rule) is not unlikely to produce the better article.

THE DAVENPORT CABINET.—This little cabinet must by no means be confounded with the wardrobe in which the notorious Brothers performed their mystic evolutions. The cabinet now in question is but four inches high and two and a half square, and consists of two parts, an outer case, or body, covered at the top, but otherwise open throughout, and a drawer, occupying the upper portion of its interior space. (*See* Fig. 89.) When the drawer is removed, the case, which has no bottom, may be examined through-

out, and will be found to be perfectly plain and unsophisticated ; save that a keen examiner might observe a little brass pin, a quarter of an inch long, projecting from the back of the cabinet on the inside, just on a level with the bottom of the drawer when replaced in its proper position. The drawer may also beexamined, and will be found to be perfectly plain, with the bottom (which is so thin as to preclude any suspicion of a concealed space), covered within and without with black cloth. On turning the drawer round, and examining the back, a minute hole may be discovered, corresponding in situation with the brass pin already mentioned. If a pin be thrust into this hole, the purpose of the two is immediately manifest ; for the pressure of the pin releases a tiny catch, and allows the bottom of the drawer, which is in reality only supported by this catch at the back and a cloth hinge in the front, to drop into the position indicated in Fig. 90. This is precisely what takes place when the drawer, being restored to its proper position in the cabinet, is duly closed. The pressure of the brass pin at the back releases the catch, and the bottom of the drawer falls as just described, and allows any article which may have been placed therein to drop into the hand of the person holding the cabinet. (*See* Fig. 91.) The act of pulling out the drawer again presses the bottom up to its proper place, where it is secured by the catch until once more released by the pressure of the pin. The strong point of this ingenious little apparatus is that it is absolutely self-acting, and its secret can only be detected by examining the cabinet from below at the moment when the drawer is pushed home ; and this it is easy to prevent by the simple expedient of handing each portion *separately* for inspection.

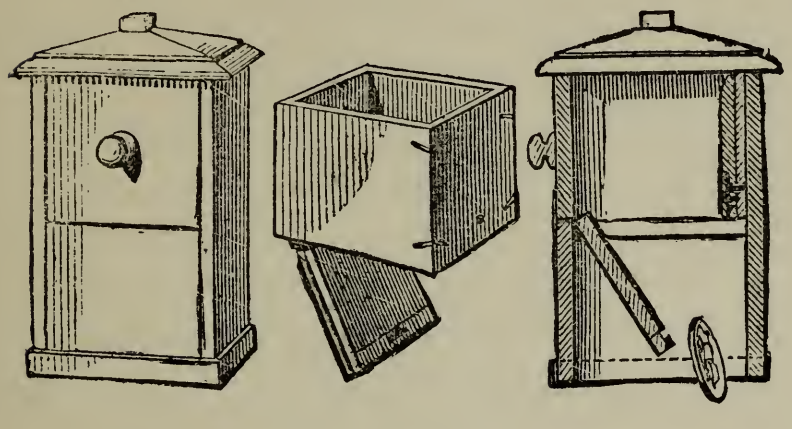


FIG. 89. FIG. 90. FIG. 91.

The performer begins by handing first the cabinet and then the drawer for examination. Then, placing the cabinet on the palm of

his hand, he invites any one of the audience to deposit any small article, a coin, a ring, a watch, etc., in the drawer, and to replace the drawer in the cabinet. As soon as the drawer is closed, the article drops through into his hand. Taking hold of the cabinet with the other hand (lifting it by the top only, and with the very tips of his fingers, so as to preclude all apparent possibility of deception), he places it on the table or elsewhere, in full view. Having thus gained possession of the borrowed article, he concludes the trick by reproducing it in any manner he thinks proper.

We have thus far discussed pieces of apparatus more especially designed to cause the *disappearance* of a coin, and thus adapted for use in the first stage of a trick. We shall next consider such as are intended to reproduce, under more or less surprising circumstances, the coin thus got rid of, such reproduction forming the second stage, or *dénouement*.

The Nest of Boxes.—This consists of a number, generally six, but sometimes more, of circular wooden boxes, one within the other, the largest or outer box having much the appearance, but being nearly double the size, of an ordinary tooth-powder box, and the smallest being just large enough to contain a shilling. The series is so accurately made, that by arranging the boxes in due order one within the other, and the lids in like manner, you may, by simply putting on all the lids together, close all the boxes at once, though they can only be opened one by one.

These are placed, the boxes together and the lids together, anywhere so as to be just out of sight of the audience. If on your table, they may be hidden by any more bulky article. Having secretly obtained possession, by either of the means before described, of a coin which is ostensibly deposited in some other piece of apparatus, *e.g.*, the Davenport Cabinet, you seize your opportunity to drop it into the innermost box, and to put on the united lids. You then bring forward the nest of boxes (which the spectators naturally take to be one box only), and announce that the shilling will at your command pass from the place in which it has been deposited into the box which you hold in your hand, and which you forthwith deliver to one

of the audience for safe keeping. Touching both articles with the mystic wand, you invite inspection of the first to show that the money has departed, and then of the box, wherein it is to be found. The holder opens the box, and finds another, and then another, and in the innermost of all the marked coin. Seeing how long the several boxes have taken to open, the spectators naturally infer that they must take as long to close, and (apart from the other mysteries of the trick), are utterly at a loss to imagine how, with the mere moment of time at your command, you could have managed to insert the coin, and close so many boxes.

If you desire to use the nest for a coin larger than a shilling, you can make it available for that purpose by removing beforehand the smallest box. Nests of square boxes, with hinged lids and self-closing locks, are made, both in wood and in tin, on the same principle. These are designed for larger articles, and greatly vary in size and price.

THE BALL OF BERLIN WOOL.—An easy and effective mode of terminating a money trick is to pass the marked coin into the centre of a large ball of Berlin wool or worsted, the whole of which has to be unwound before the coin can be reached. The *modus operandi*, though perplexing to the uninitiated, is absurdly simple when the secret is revealed. The only apparatus necessary over and above the wool (of which you must have enough for a good-sized ball), is a flat tin tube, three to four inches in length, and just large enough to allow a florin or shilling (whichever you intend to use for the trick) to slip through it easily. You prepare for the trick by winding the wool on one end of the tube, in such manner that when the whole is wound in a ball, an inch or so of the tube may project from it. This you place in your pocket, or anywhere out of sight of the audience. You commence the trick by requesting some one to mark a coin, which you forthwith exchange, by one or other of the means already described, for a substitute of your own, and leave the latter in the possession or in view of the spectators, while you retire to fetch your ball of wool, or simply take it from your pocket. Before producing it, you drop the genuine coin down the tube into the centre of the ball, and withdraw the tube, giving the ball a squeeze to

remove all trace of an opening. You then bring it forward, and place it in a glass goblet or tumbler, which you hand to a spectator to hold. Taking the substitute coin, you announce that you will make it pass invisibly into the very centre of the ball of wool, which you accordingly pretend to do, getting rid of it by means of one or other of the Passes described in Chapter I. You then request a second spectator to take the loose end of the wool, and to unwind the ball, which, when he has done, the coin falls out into the goblet.

The only drawback to the trick is the tediousness of the process of unwinding. To obviate this, some performers use a wheel made for the purpose, which materially shortens the length of the operation.

THE GLASS GOBLET AND COVER.—This apparatus consists of an ordinary glass goblet, of rather large size, with a japanned tin cover, in shape not unlike the lid of a coffee-pot, but of sufficient height to contain, in an upright position, a couple of florins or half-crowns. These are placed side by side in a flat tube, just large enough to admit them, fixed in a slightly sloping position in the upper part of the cover, and divided in two by a tin partition. Across the lower end of this tube is a tin slide, which, in its normal condition, is kept closed by the action of a spring, but is drawn back whenever a knob on the top of the cover is pressed down. If a slight pressure be applied, one coin only is released; but if the knob be still further pressed down, the second also falls. The mechanism of the cover is concealed by a flat plate or lining, also of tin, soldered just within it, with an oblong opening just large enough to admit of the passage of the coins. The inside of the cover is japanned black, the outside according to the taste of the maker.

You take care not to bring on the goblet and cover until you have, by substitution, gained possession of the two marked coins which you have borrowed for the purpose of the trick. Retiring to fetch the glass and cover, you prepare the latter by inserting the marked coins. This you do by holding the cover upside down, pressing the knob (thus drawing back the spring slide), and dropping the coins into their receptacle. On removing the pressure on the knob, the slide returns to its normal position. You then bring forward the

goblet and cover, and place them on the table. Holding the goblet upside down, to show that it is empty, you place the cover over it, ostensibly to prevent anything being secretly passed into it, and, for still greater security, throw a handkerchief, borrowed for that purpose, over the whole. You now announce that, notwithstanding the difficulties which you have voluntarily placed in the way, you will pass the two marked coins through the handkerchief, and through the metal cover into the glass. Taking in your right hand one of the substitutes, which have all along remained in sight, and which the audience take to be the genuine coins, you pretend by Pass 1 to transfer it to your left, and pressing gently on the knob with the last-mentioned hand, cause one of the marked coins to drop from the cover, at the same moment opening the hand to show that the coin has left it. The audience hear, though they do not see, the fall of the coin. With the second coin it is well to introduce an element of variety, and you may therefore offer to dispense with the handkerchief, that all may see as well as hear the coin arrive. As a further variation, you may use your wand as the conducting medium. Taking the substitute coin in the left hand, you apparently, by Pass 4, transfer it to your right. Then taking the wand in the left hand, you hold it perpendicularly, with its lower end resting upon the knob of the cover. Holding it with the thumb and second finger of the right hand, one on each side of it, you draw them smartly downwards, at the same time pressing with the wand on the knob, when the second coin will be seen and heard to fall into the glass. Taking off the cover, and leaving it on the table, you bring forward the glass, and allow the owners to take out and identify the coins.

It is a great addition to have a second cover, similar in appearance to the first, but hollow throughout, and without any mechanism. You are thus enabled to hand both goblet and cover for examination before performing the trick. As you return to your table, your back being towards the spectators, you have ample opportunity for substituting the mechanical cover, the plain one being dropped either into one of your *profondes*, or on to the *servante* of your table.

THE GLASS WITHOUT COVER, FOR MONEY. — This is of tumbler shape, without foot, and of green or other dark-coloured glass,

so that it is semi-opaque. In this instance no cover is used, and the borrowed coins are not seen, but merely heard, to drop into the glass, where they are found in due course.

The secret of the glass lies in a false bottom of tin, working on a hinge, and held down by a catch worked by a pin through the bottom of the glass, and flying up with a spring when released. The performer, having gained possession of three or four borrowed coins by either of the means before mentioned, retires to fetch the glass, and takes the opportunity to place the coins beneath the false bottom. He then comes forward, glass in hand. He does not offer the glass for examination, but turns it upside down, and rattles his wand inside it, showing, ostensibly, that it is empty. Having done this, he places it on his table, as near the back of the stage as possible, at the same time moving the catch, and so releasing the false bottom, which naturally flies up, and uncovers the concealed coins. Standing at a considerable distance from the glass, he takes one by one the substitutes, which to the eyes of the audience represent the genuine coins, and gets rid of them by one or other of the various passes, saying as each one apparently vanishes from his hand, "One, two, three—Pass!" At the same moment the sound of a falling coin is heard, proceeding apparently from the glass, but really from behind the scenes, or any other available spot out of sight, where an assistant, placed as near to the glass as circumstances will admit, drops *another* coin into *another* glass. If the position of the assistant, with reference to the audience, is pretty nearly in a straight line with the glass which they see, the illusion will be perfect. When all the coins are supposed to have passed in this manner, the performer, advancing to the glass, pours out, either upon a tray or upon his open palm, the borrowed coins, and leaving the glass upon the table, comes forward, and requests the owners to identify them.

We have thus far described eight different contrivances for vanishing money, and (including the "plug-box," which may be used in both ways) five for reproducing it. It is obvious that either of the first may be used in combination with either of the second, producing some fifty different effects. By the use of sleight-of-hand in place of apparatus at either stage of the trick, still more numerous varia-

tions may be produced, and these may be still further multiplied by the use of other appliances to be hereafter described, which, though of less general utility, may be occasionally introduced with excellent effect. The apparatus which we shall next describe is one which is very frequently used in combination with that last mentioned. It is known as

THE MIRACULOUS CASKET.—This is a neat leather- or velvet-covered box, about three inches by two, and two and a half high. When opened, it is seen to be filled with a velvet cushion or stuffing, after the manner of a ring-case, with four slits, each just large enough to admit a half-crown or florin. (*See* Fig. 92.) By an ingenious mechanical arrangement in the interior, which it would take too much space to describe at length, each time the box is closed one of the coins is made to drop down into the lower part, and on the box being reopened is found to have vanished.

The casket may be used in many tricks with good effect. In combination with the magic glass, last above described, it is employed as follows:—The four coins which have been substituted for the genuine ones are placed, in sight of all, in the magic casket, which is then closed, and handed to one of the audience to hold. The performer then states that he is about to order the four coins now in the casket to pass one by one into the glass upon the table. "One!" he exclaims. A coin is heard to fall into the glass. The person who holds the casket is requested to open it; three coins only are left. It is again closed, and the performer says, "Two!" Again the chink of the falling coin is heard, and another coin is found to have disappeared from the casket. The operation is repeated till all have vanished, and the operator pours forth from the glass four coins, which, on examination, are found to be the same which were originally borrowed, and which the audience believe that they saw placed in the casket.

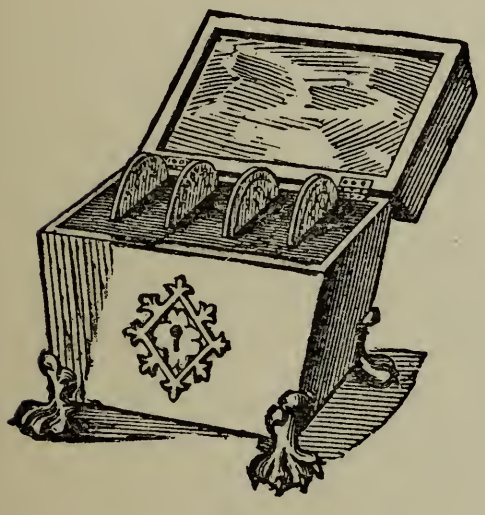


FIG. 92.

The casket may also be used with capital effect in conjunction with

THE HALF-CROWN (OR FLORIN) WAND.—This is a wand, apparently of ebony, but really of brass, japanned black. It is about twelve inches in length, and five-eighths of an inch in diameter. On one side of it, and so placed as to be just under the ball of the thumb when the wand is held in the hand, is a little stud, which moves backwards and forwards for a short distance (about an inch and a quarter), like the sliding ring of a pencil-case. When this stud is pressed forward, a half-crown or florin, as the case may be, appears on the opposite end of the wand (*see* Fig. 93), retiring within it when the stud is again drawn back. The half-crown is a genuine one, but is cut into three portions, as indicated in Fig. 94, which represents a transverse section of it at right angles to the actual cuts. Each of the three segments is attached to a piece of watch-spring, and from the direction of the cuts it is obvious that, when these pieces of watch-spring are pressed together (as they naturally are when drawn back into the wand), *c* will be drawn behind, and *a* in front of *b*. (*See* Fig. 95.)

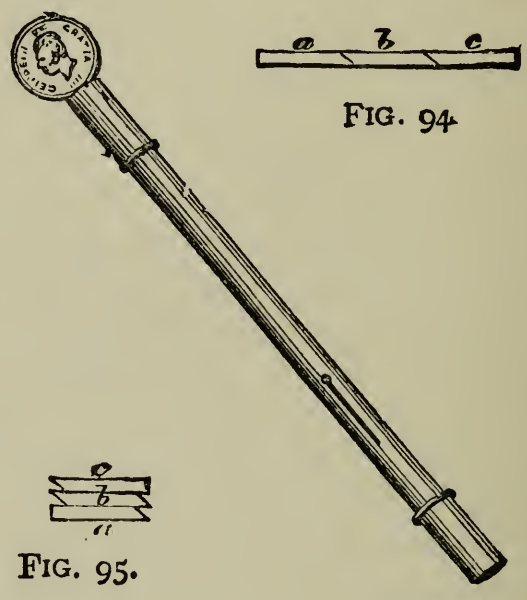


FIG. 93.

FIG. 94.

FIG. 95.

The wand is used as follows :—The performer palms in his left hand as many half-crowns as he intends to produce. Then, taking the wand in the right hand, and lightly touching with it the spot whence he desires to (apparently) produce a half-crown, he pushes forward the stud, and the split coin appears on the opposite end of the wand. He now draws the upper part of the wand through the left hand, at the same moment pressing back the stud, and causing the split coin to retire within the wand, immediately handing for examination with the left hand one of the half-crowns already placed there, and which by this gesture he appears to have just taken

from the top of the wand. This is again repeated, and another half-crown exhibited, till the stock in the left hand is exhausted.

It is desirable, on each occasion of pressing forward or withdrawing the stud, to place the opposite end of the wand in such a situation as to be a little shielded from the eyes of the spectators, so that they may not see the actual appearance or disappearance of the coin. A very slight "cover" will be sufficient. The end of the wand may be placed within a person's open mouth (and withdrawn with the half-crown thereon), within a pocket, or the like. Where no such cover is available, a quick semi-circular sweep should be made with the wand as the coin is protruded or withdrawn.

With the aid of this wand the passage of the four half-crowns from the casket to the glass, just described, becomes still more effective. The four substitute half-crowns having been placed in the casket, and the latter closed, the performer announces that he will withdraw them visibly, one by one, and will then invisibly pass them into the glass. Further, to prove that the trick is not performed by any mechanical or physical means, he will not even take the casket in his hand, but will withdraw the coins one by one with his wand, and thence pass them direct into the glass. Touching the casket with the wand, he presses the stud, and shows the half-crown on the end. Apparently taking off the coin with his left hand, as before described (the hand, however, being in this case empty), he makes the motion of throwing the coin from the hand to the glass, saying, "Pass!" The sound of a falling coin is heard (as already explained), and he shows that his hand is empty, the same process being repeated as to the remaining coins.

The wand may also be effectively introduced in the trick of the Shower of Money, which next follows. After having caught in the ordinary manner such number of coins as he thinks fit, the performer perceives, or pretends to perceive, that the audience suspect that the coins are in some manner concealed in his right hand. To show that this is not the case, he offers to catch a few coins on the top of his wand instead of in his hand, and finishes the trick by producing two or three on the wand accordingly. Wherever you can, as in this instance, produce the same result by two wholly different methods the effect on the audience is most bewildering. Their con-

jectures as to the explanation of the first method being inadmissible as to the second, and *vice versâ*, the more they puzzle over the matter, the further are they likely to be from a correct solution.

THE SHOWER OF MONEY.—The magical phenomenon known under this name surpasses the philosopher's stone, in the pursuit of which so many of the wise men of old expended their lives and fortunes. The alchemist's secret aimed only at producing the raw material, but the magician's quick eye and ready hand gather from space money ready coined. Unfortunately, the experiment is subject to the same drawback as the more ancient process—viz., that each twenty shillings produced cost precisely twenty shillings, leaving hardly sufficient profit to make this form of money-making remunerative as a commercial undertaking.

The effect of the trick is as follows:—The performer borrows a hat, which he holds in his left hand. Turning up his sleeves, he announces that he requires a certain number, say ten, of florins or half-crowns. The spectators put their hands in their pockets with the idea of contributing to the supposed loan; but the professor, anticipating their intention, says, "No, thank you; I won't trouble you this time. There seems to be a good deal of money about to-night; I think I will help myself. See, here is a half-crown hanging to the gaselier. Here is another climbing up the wall. Here is another just settling on this lady's hair. Excuse me, sir, but you have a half-crown in your whiskers. Permit me, madam; you have just placed your foot on another," and so on. At each supposed new discovery the performer takes with his right hand, from some place where there clearly was nothing an instant before, a half-crown, which he drops into the hat held in his left hand, finally turning over the hat, and pouring the coins from it, to show that there has been "no deception."

The explanation is very simple, the trick being merely a practical application of the art of "palming," though its effect depends on the manner and address of the operator even more than on his skill in sleight-of-hand. The performer provides himself beforehand with ten half-crowns. Of these he palms two in his right hand, and the remainder in his left. When he takes the hat, he holds it in the

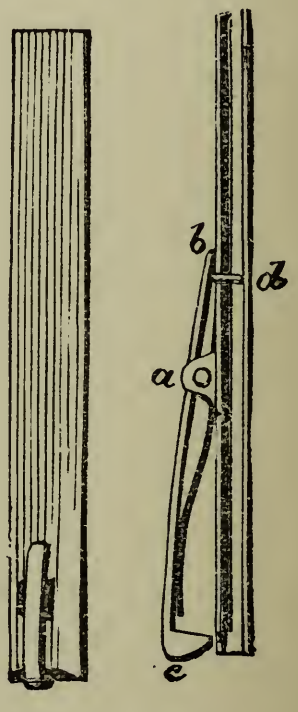
left hand, with the fingers inside and the thumb outside, in which position it is comparatively easy to drop the coins one by one from the hand into the hat. When he pretends to see the first half-crown floating in the air, he lets one of the coins in his right hand drop to his finger-tips, and, making a clutch at the air, produces it as if just caught. This first coin he really does drop into the hat, taking care that all shall see clearly that he does so. He then goes through a similar process with the second; but when the time comes to drop it into the hat, he merely pretends to do so, palming the coin quickly in the right hand, and at the same moment letting fall into the hat one of the coins concealed in his left hand. The audience, hearing the sound, naturally believe it to be occasioned by the fall of the coin they have just seen. The process is repeated until the coins in the left hand are exhausted. Once more the performer appears to clutch a coin from space, and showing for the last time that which has all along been in his right hand, tosses it into the air, and catches it visibly in the hat. Pouring out the coins on a tray, or into the lap of one of the company, he requests that they may be counted, when they are found to correspond with the number which he has apparently collected from the surrounding atmosphere.

Some performers, by way of bringing the trick to a smart conclusion, after they have dropped in all the coins, remark, "The hat begins to get heavy," or make some similar observation, at the same time dipping the right hand into the hat, as if to gauge the quantity obtained; and, giving the money a shake, bring up the hand with four or five of the coins clipped breadthwise against the lowest joints of the second and third fingers. Then pretend to catch in quick succession that number of coins, each time sliding one of the coins with the thumb to the finger-tips, and tossing it into the hat.

It is by no means uncommon to see a performer, after having apparently dropped two or three coins into the hat in the ordinary way, pretend to pass in one or more through the side or crown. This produces a momentary effect, but it is an effect purchased at the cost of enabling an acute spectator to infer, with logical certainty, that the coin seen in the right hand was not the same that was, the moment afterwards, heard to chink within the hat; and this furnishes a distinct clue to the secret of the trick.

It is obvious that, in the above form of the trick (which so far should be classed among "tricks without apparatus"), the performer cannot show the inside of his hands; and it is not uncommon to find an acute observer (particularly where the performer is guilty of the indiscretion we have just noted) so far hit upon the true explanation, as to express audibly a conjecture that the money which the performer catches is really the same coin over and over again. There is, however, a mechanical appliance known as the "money-slide," which is designed to meet this difficulty, and to enable the performer still to catch the coin, though he has but a moment before shown that his hand is empty.

The money-slide is a flat tin tube, about eight inches in length, an inch and a quarter in width, and of just such depth as to allow a half-crown or florin (whichever coin may be used) to slip through it freely, edgeways. It is open at the top, but is closed at the lower end by a lever, acting like the lever of a shot-pouch. (*See* Fig. 96, which shows the external appearance of the tube, and Fig. 97, which represents, on a somewhat larger scale, a section of its essential portion.) The normal position of the lever (which works on a pivot, *a*) is as shown in Fig. 97, being maintained in that position by a small spring. Under such circumstances, the passage of the tube is barred by the pin *d* (which works through a small hole in the face of the tube); but if *ac*, the longer arm of the lever, be pressed down, the pin *d* is withdrawn, but the extreme lower end of the tube is for the moment barred by the bent end of *ac*. The pressure being withdrawn, the lever returns to its former condition. When required for use, four or five half-crowns are dropped into the tube from the upper end, and the tube is fastened, by a hook affixed to it for that purpose, inside the waistcoat of the performer, so that its lower end hangs just above the waistband, the lever side of the tube being next the body. If the tube be lightly pressed through the waistcoat, the longer arm of the lever is thereby



FIGS. 96, 97.

pressed down. The pin *d* is lifted, and the row of half-crowns slide down to the bottom of the tube, where, however, they are arrested by the bent end of *ac*. As soon as the pressure is removed, the lever returns to its position. The mouth of the tube is left open, and the first of the half-crowns drops out, and would be followed by the others, but the pin, *d*, which at the same moment returns to its position across the tube, stops their further progress. Thus each time the lever is pressed and again released, one half-crown, and one only, drops out at the mouth of the tube.

The use of this appliance in the trick we have just described will be obvious. The performer, having turned up his sleeves to prove that they have no part in the matter, shows that his right hand is absolutely empty. Continuing his observations, his hand rests for a moment with a careless gesture against his waistcoat, the ball of the wrist being above and the fingers below the waistband. A momentary pressure causes a half-crown to fall into his hand. This he palms, and in due course proceeds to catch, as already described.

As the capacity of the slide is limited, and the same gestures frequently repeated would be likely to excite suspicion, it is best to begin the trick in the ordinary manner, and after having produced three or four coins in this way, to overhear, or pretend to overhear, a suggestion that the coin is all the while in your hand. Ostentatiously throwing the coin with which you have so far worked, into the hat, you draw special attention (not in words, but by gesture) to your empty hand (the left hand is never suspected), and then have recourse to the slide. You throw the coin thus obtained into the hat, and again show your hand empty. You produce another coin from the slide, and make this serve you for the next two or three catches, and so on, as circumstances may dictate.

The money magically caught as above may be used for the trick of the Multiplication of Money, described at page 35, the two forming a natural and effective sequence.

THE VANISHING PLATE, OR SALVER.—This is a most useful and ingenious piece of apparatus. In appearance it is an ordinary japanned tin tray, of about ten inches in diameter; but it has the faculty of causing money placed upon it to disappear in a most sur-

prising manner. A number of coins, collected from the company, are placed upon the salver. The performer, standing but a few feet from the spectators, openly takes them off one by one, but each, as his fingers grasp it, vanishes utterly. His sleeves (which in conjuring come in for a vast amount of undeserved suspicion) may be rigorously examined; but even though, as a concession to popular prejudice, he should bare his arm to the shoulder, the result would still be the same.

A closer inspection of the salver (which the performer takes good care not to permit) would reveal the fact, that though apparently consisting, like any other, of only one thickness of metal, it is in reality made double, allowing sufficient space between its upper and under surface for the concealment of any number of coins laid singly. The centre portion of the upper surface, though apparently of a piece with the rest, is in reality moveable, though pressed upwards and kept in its place by the action of four small springs. When the performer apparently picks up a coin (which he takes care shall be on this centre portion), he presses smartly upon it, at the same moment drawing it sharply towards the outer rim. The moveable portion of the salver yielding to the pressure, the effect is as shown in the figure (Fig. 98), and the coin is shot under the outer rim, between the upper and under surface of the salver, the moveable portion rising again to its place as soon as the momentary pressure is removed. The tray is japanned in such manner that the circular lines of the pattern correspond with the outline of the moveable portion, and will bear any amount of mere ocular inspection, so long as it is not permitted to be handled.

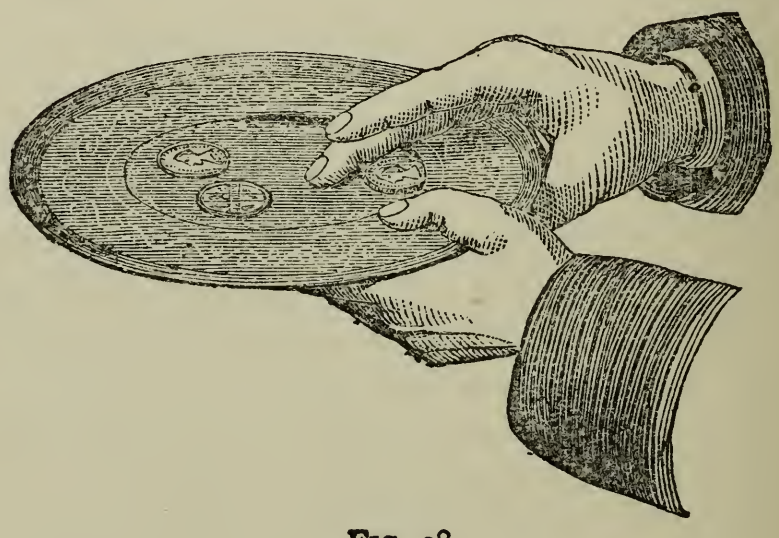


FIG. 98.

The vanishing salver may be introduced with good effect in many

tricks, as, for instance, that of the Multiplication of Money, above referred to, the coins to be magically added being placed upon the salver, whence they are taken off one by one, and commanded to pass into the hands of the person who holds the money. It may also be advantageously used in conjunction with the glass described at page 201, each coin, as it vanishes from the salver, being heard to drop into the glass.

THE "CHANGING" PLATE.—The student has already been made acquainted with various methods of exchanging a marked coin, etc., for a substitute. There are still one or two appliances for this purpose remaining to be described, all taking the form of metal plates or trays, but greatly varying in their construction.

The first, which we only mention for the sake of completeness, as it is now superseded by later and better inventions, consists of a small circular tin tray, with a round hole or well in the centre, of about an inch and a half in diameter and a quarter of an inch in depth. The lines of the pattern are so arranged as to make this cavity as little noticeable as possible. The well is moveable, forming, in fact, a portion of a sliding piece below the tray, in which sliding piece *two* such wells are excavated, the one or the other in turn corresponding to the opening in the tray, according as the sliding piece is pushed backwards or forwards. When the tray is required for use, the substitute coin is placed beforehand in one of the two wells, which is then pushed out of sight, and the other brought below the opening. The borrowed coin is received on the plate, and allowed to drop into the empty well. As soon as this is done, the operator, with his forefinger, which is naturally beneath the plate, draws back the slide, and brings the other coin in sight, while the genuine one drops into his hand. The construction of the plate, though simple enough in itself, is a little difficult to explain; but as we only allude to it in order to counsel the student to avoid it, any obscurity in our description is of little importance.

The instrument now used for the same purpose is known as the French changing-plate, and may be described as a combination of the vanishing salver (page 68) and the multiplying money-plate (page 36). It is round, and has beneath it a flat tube similar to that of

the multiplying plate; and it is in this tube that the substitute coins are placed. The upper surface of the plate is similar in appearance to that of the vanishing plate; but in this case the centre portion is divided across the middle, and one half only is moveable, sinking downwards to the depth of a quarter of an inch all along the dividing line, whenever pressure is applied to a particular portion of the under surface of the plate. The coins to be changed are received by the operator on this moveable portion, and immediately handed to some person to hold, the performer sloping the plate, and (apparently) pouring the coins into the hands or hat held out to receive them. In reality, in the act of sloping the plate, he depresses the moveable portion of the surface, and, as a natural consequence, the coins, instead of sliding, as they appear to do, right off the plate, slip between the upper and under surface, while the substitutes fall from the tube below into the hands of the person who is to take charge of them. The whole movement is so rapid, and the fall of the substituted coins coincides so exactly with the disappearance of the genuine ones, that the eye is completely deceived. The tray, having apparently served its purpose, is carried off by the magician or his servant, with ample opportunity to make any necessary disposition of the genuine coins.

A still later improvement is that which is known as

THE TRAY OF PROTEUS.—The tray to which the inventors (Messrs. Hiam & Lane) have given the above high-sounding title, is the latest, and not the least ingenious, of the series of magical trays.

The tray in question will not only change, but add, subtract, or vanish coins, under the very eyes of the spectators. In form it is an oblong octagon, measuring eight inches by six, and standing about three-quarters of an inch high. (*See* Fig. 99.) It is divided across the centre, and one half of the centre portion is moveable in the same manner as in the case of the tray last described, save that in this instance the depth between the upper and under surface of the tray being greater, this moveable portion is depressible to a proportionately greater depth. The opposite or fixed side of the tray is divided horizontally (*see* Fig. 100, representing a longitudinal section) into two levels or platforms, *a* and *b*, the lower, *b*, having a raised edge. Where the tray is to be used for the purpose of "chang-

ing," the coins to be substituted are placed in a row on the upper platform, *a*. The genuine coins are placed by the performer, holding the tray as indicated in Fig. 99, on the moveable flap, *c*. Slightly lowering the opposite end of the tray, he presses the button *d*, thus sloping the flap *c*, and the coins naturally slide into *b*. Still keeping the flap open, he now tilts up the opposite end of the tray. The genuine coins cannot return, by reason of the raised edge of *b*; but the substitute coins in their turn slide out upon *c*, which is then allowed to return to its original position. The necessary movement, though comparatively tedious in description, is in skilful hands so rapid in execution that, where coins of the same kind are substituted — *e.g.*, half-crowns for half-crowns—the most acute spectator cannot detect that any change has taken place. A most startling effect is produced by substituting coins of a different kind, as pence for half-crowns, the coins appearing to be transformed by a mere shake into a different metal. The change involving a double process—viz., the disappearance of certain coins and the appearance of others—it is obvious that the tray will be equally available for either process singly. Thus coins placed upon the tray may be made to instantly vanish, or, by reversing the process, coins may be made to appear where there was nothing a moment previously. In like manner, a given number of coins may be increased to a larger, or decreased (in this case really *changed*) to a smaller number.

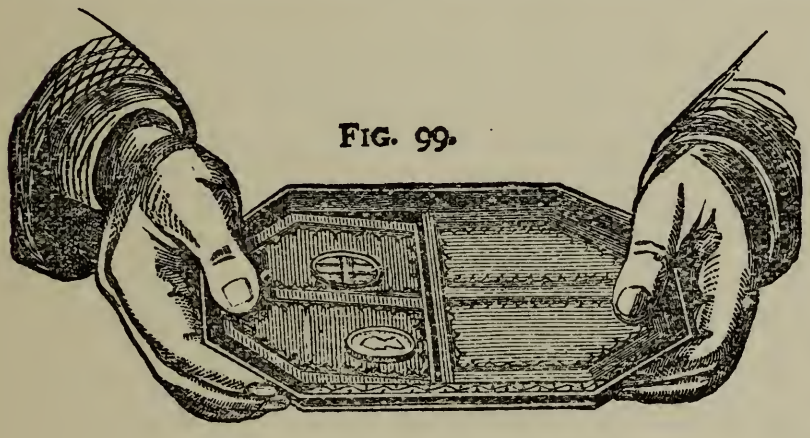


FIG. 99.

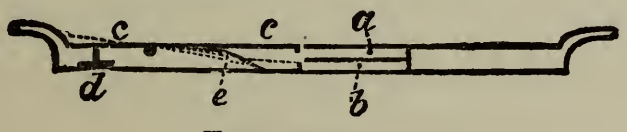


FIG. 100.

This tray has not, like that last described, any additional flat tube beneath the tray, but one end of *a* and *b* is closed by a little slide, hidden beneath the edge of the tray, to allow of the money therein being extracted when necessary.

CHAPTER IV.

Tricks with Watches.

To indicate on the Dial of a Watch the Hour secretly thought of by any of the Company.—The performer, taking a watch in the one hand, and a pencil in the other, proposes to give a specimen of his powers of divination. For this purpose he requests any one present to write down, or, if preferred, merely to think of, any hour he pleases. This having been done, the performer, without asking any questions, proceeds to tap with the pencil different hours on the dial of the watch, requesting the person who has thought of the hour to mentally count the taps, *beginning from the number of the hour he thought of.* (Thus, if the hour he thought of were "nine," he must count the first tap as "ten," the second as "eleven," and so on.) When, according to this mode of counting, he reaches the number "twenty," he is to say "Stop," when the pencil of the performer will be found resting precisely upon that hour of the dial which he thought of.

This capital little trick depends upon a simple arithmetical principle; but the secret is so well disguised that it is very rarely discovered. All that the performer has to do is to count in his own mind the taps he gives, calling the first "one," the second "two," and so on. The first seven taps may be given upon any figures of the dial indifferently; indeed, they might equally well be given on the back of the watch, or anywhere else, without prejudice to the ultimate result. But the eighth tap must be given invariably on the figure "twelve" of the dial, and thenceforward the pencil must travel through the figures *seriatim*, but in reverse order, "eleven," "ten," "nine," and so on. By following this process it will be

found that at the tap which, counting from the number the spectator thought of, will make twenty, the pencil will have travelled back to that very number. A few illustrations will make this clear. Let us suppose, for instance, that the hour the spectator thought of was twelve. In this case he will count the first tap of the pencil as thirteen, the second as fourteen, and so on. The eighth tap in this case will complete the twenty, and the reader will remember that, according to the directions we have given, he is at the eighth tap always to let his pencil fall on the number twelve; so that when the spectator, having mentally reached the number twenty, cries, "Stop," the pencil will be pointing to that number. Suppose, again, the number thought of was "eleven." Here the first tap will be counted as "twelve," and the ninth (at which, according to the rule, the pencil will be resting on eleven) will make the twenty. Taking again the smallest number that can be thought of, "one," here the first tap will be counted by the spectator as "two," and the eighth," at which the pencil reaches twelve, will count as "nine." Henceforth the pencil will travel regularly backward round the dial, and at the nineteenth tap (completing the twenty, as counted by the spectator) will have just reached the figure "one."

The arithmetical reason for this curious result, though simple enough in itself, is somewhat difficult to explain on paper, and we shall therefore leave it as an exercise for the ingenuity of our readers.

To Bend a Borrowed Watch Backwards and Forwards. —This little deception is hardly to be called a conjnring trick, but it may be introduced with good effect in the course of any trick for which a watch has been borrowed. Looking intently at the watch, as though you noticed something peculiar about it, you remark to the owner, "This is a very curious watch, sir; it is quite soft." Then taking it (as shown in Fig. 101), with the dial inwards towards your own body, and holding it between two fingers of each hand on the back, and the thumb of each hand on the face, you bend the hands outwards, at the same time bringing the points of the fingers nearer together, immediately bringing them back to their former position. The motion may be repeated any number of times. By a curious

optical illusion, which we are not able to explain, but which we assume to be produced in some way by the varying shadow of the fingers on the polished surface of the metal, the watch appears, to a spectator at a little distance, to be bent nearly double by each outward movement of the hands. The illusion is so perfect, that great amusement is occasionally produced by the consternation of the owner, who fancies that irreparable injury is being done to his favourite "Waltham" If, however, his faith in your supernatural powers is so great as to resist this ordeal, you may test it even more severely by means of

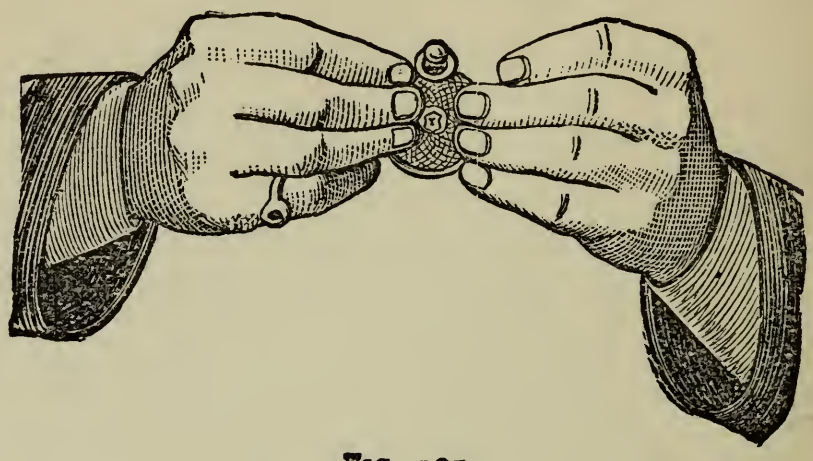


FIG. 101.

THE WATCH-MORTAR AND THE MAGIC PISTOL.—The watch-mortar is an apparatus in the form of an ordinary mortar, with a pestle to match. Suggesting to the owner of the borrowed time-keeper that it wants regulating, you offer to undertake that duty for him. He probably declines, but you take no notice of his remonstrances, and, placing his watch in the mortar, bring down the pestle with a heavy thump upon it. A smash, as of broken glass, is heard, and, after sufficient pounding, you empty the fragments of the watch into your hand, to the horror of the owner. You offer to return the fragments, but he naturally objects to receive them, and insists that you restore the watch in the same condition as when it was handed to you. After a little discussion, you agree to do so, premising that you can only effect the object through the agency of fire. Fetching a loaf of bread, you place it on the table in view of the company. Then wrapping the fragments of the watch in paper, you place them in a pistol, and, aiming at the loaf, request the owner of the watch to give the signal to fire. The word is given, "One, two, three—Bang!" Stepping up to the loaf, you bring it forward to the spectators, and

tearing it asunder, exhibit in its very centre the borrowed watch, completely restored, and bright as when it first left the maker's hands.

The seeming mystery is easily explained. The mortar has a moveable bottom, which allows the watch at the performer's pleasure to fall through into his hand. There is a hollow space in the thick end of the pestle, closed by a round piece of wood lightly screwed in, which, fitting tightly in the bottom part of the mortar, is easily unscrewed by the performer, or rather unscrews itself, as he apparently grinds away at the ill-fated chronometer. In the cavity are placed beforehand the fragments of a watch, which, thus released, fall into the mortar, and are poured out by the performer into his hand, in order to show that there has been "no deception." When the performer goes to fetch the loaf, he has already obtained possession of the watch, which, after giving it a rub upon his coat-sleeve or a bit of leather to increase its brightness, he pushes into a slit already made in the side of the loaf. When the loaf is torn asunder (which the performer takes care to do from the side opposite to that in which the opening has been made), the watch is naturally found imbedded therein.

If a regular conjuring-table is used, the loaf may be placed in readiness on the *servante*. The performer in this case, having got possession of the watch, and holding it secretly palmed, borrows a hat. Walking carelessly behind his table, he asks, as if in doubt, "Who lent me this hat?" holding it up with one hand, that the spectators may see that it is empty. While all eyes are thus drawn to the hat, he with the other hand forces the watch into the loaf, and then, in bringing the hat down on the table, introduces the loaf into it, after the manner of the well-known "cannon-ball" trick, to be described hereafter. The hat is then placed on the table as if empty, and the pistol fired at the hat. This little addition heightens the effect of the trick, but demands somewhat greater address on the part of the performer.

The pistol employed, being of constant use in magical performances, will demand a special explanation. It consists of two parts, viz., an ordinary pocket-pistol, and a conical tin funnel, measuring about five inches across its widest diameter, and tapering down to a

tube of such a size as to fit easily over the barrel of the pistol This tube is continued inside the cone, and affords a free passage for the charge, which consists of powder only. Any object which is apparently to be fired from the pistol is pressed down between the outside of this tube and the inside of the tin cone, where it remains wholly unaffected by the explosion. The outside of the cone is japanned according to taste, the tube and the rest of the interior being always black.

There are numerous other ways of finishing the trick, with or without the use of the pistol. The watch-mortar has discharged its duty when it has apparently reduced the borrowed watch to fragments, and has placed it in reality in the hands of the performer. The sequel of the trick, with which the mortar has nothing to do, will depend on the ingenuity of the performer and his command of other apparatus.

There is another form of watch-mortar, which is frequently used, though to our own taste it is very inferior to that above described. It consists of a cylindrical tin box or case, about four inches high and three in diameter, open at the top, standing on a broad flat foot. Within this fits loosely another similar cylinder, of about an inch less in depth. The upper edge of this latter is turned over all round, giving the two the appearance of being both of a piece. The whole is closed by an ornamental cardboard cover, also cylindrical. If this cover be lifted lightly—*i.e.*, without pressure—it will come off alone; but if its sides are pressed, they will clip the turned-over edge of the upper or moveable compartment, and lift this with it. In this form of the trick the borrowed watch is placed in a little bag, and the two together deposited in the upper compartment. In the mortar proper —*i.e.*, the space between the two compartments—is placed beforehand a similar little bag, containing the broken fragments of a watch. The cover being under some pretext put on, the upper compartment is lifted off with it, and the pounding consequently falls on the prepared fragments.

THE SNUFF-BOX VASE.—This is an apparatus of frequent use in Watch Tricks, and it may be also made available with many other articles. It is made of various sizes, from five to eight inches

in height, and of the shape shown in Fig. 102. It consists of three parts, the cover *a*, the vase proper *c*, and a moveable portion *b*, the latter being made with double sides, so that it fits at once in and upon *c*. If *a* is raised without pressing its sides, it comes off alone; but if its sides are pressed in removing it, it lifts off *b* with it. In this compartment *b* is placed a small round box of tin or cardboard (from which the vase derives its name), and another box, exactly similar in appearance, is placed underneath *b*, inside the vase proper *c*. Whether, therefore, the cover is removed with or without *b*, the audience see apparently the same box within. The only circumstance that could possibly excite suspicion would be the greater depth of *c* as compared with *b*; and this is obviated by making the bottom of *c* moveable, resting on a spiral spring passing through the foot of the apparatus. When *b* is in the vase, the bottom of *c* sinks down to make way for it, but again rises by the pressure of the spring as soon as *b* is removed. To the eye of the spectator, therefore, the interior of the vase appears always of the same depth.

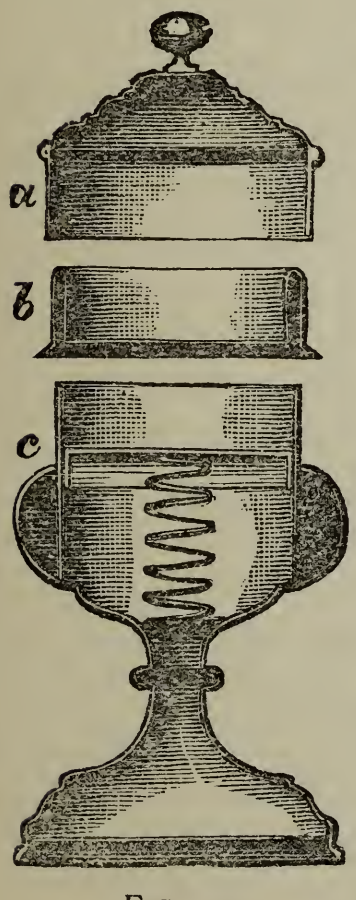


FIG. 102.

Some vases are made with a "clip" action in the lid, so that by slightly turning round the knob on the top three projecting teeth of metal are made to tighten upon *b*, and thus attach it to *a*, a reverse movement of the knob again releasing it. In this form of the apparatus the cover may be lifted by the knob only, without the necessity of pressing on the sides—a very decided improvement.

The snuff-box vase may be used to cause the appearance, disappearance, or transformation of any article small enough to be contained in one of the boxes within. Thus, in the case of the last trick, the performer, having secretly obtained possession of the borrowed watch, may, instead of using the loaf, conclude the trick with good effect as follows:— Retiring for an instant in order to fetch the vase, he places the watch in the small box contained in *c*. Returning, he removes the cover

only, thus exposing the interior of *b*, and requests one of the audience to examine and replace the small box therein contained. The box is seen by all to be empty, and, being replaced, the vase is again covered. The operator now fires at the vase. Having done so, he again brings it forward, but this time removes *b* along with the cover. The other box, which the audience take to be the same, is now exposed, and, on being examined, is found to contain the restored watch.

If you do not happen to possess the watch-mortar or the magic pistol, you may make the trick equally effective without them, by using in their place the "Demon Handkerchief," described at page 54. Having borrowed the watch, you place a substitute (which you must have ready palmed) under the handkerchief, and give it to some one to hold. Then fetching the snuff-box vase (and concealing the watch in *c*), you exhibit and replace the empty box in *b*, as above, and place the vase on the table. Taking a corner of the handkerchief, you request the person holding it to drop it when you count "three." Then saying, "One, two, three. Pass!" you wave the handkerchief, which appears to be empty, and advancing to the table and uncovering the vase, show that the watch is now in the box.

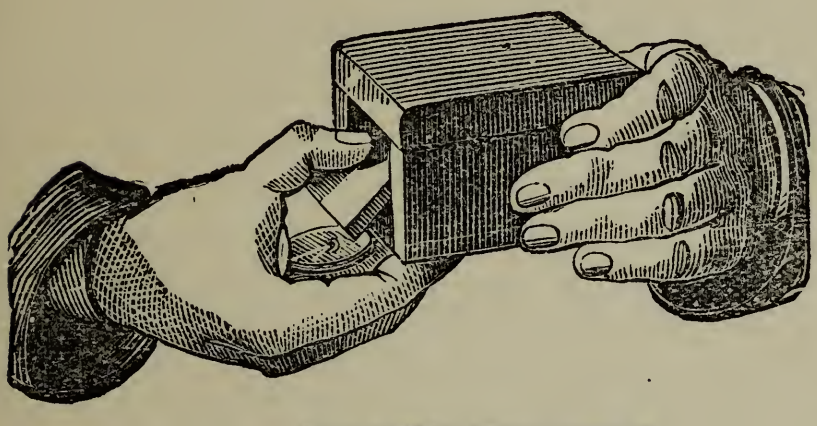
It is obvious that the snuff-box vase may equally well be used to produce the opposite effect—*i.e.*, after having openly placed a watch or other article in either of the boxes, you may, by exposing in turn the other box, cause it to apparently disappear, or in like manner make it apparently change to any article previously placed in the second box.

THE WATCH BOX.—This is an oblong mahogany box—size, four inches by three, and two and a half deep. To the eye of the uninitiated, it is a simple wooden box, with lock and key, and padded within at top and bottom. In reality, however, one of its sides is moveable, working on a pivot. (*See* Figs. 103, 104.) In its normal position, the side in question is held fast by a catch projecting from the corresponding edge of the bottom of the box. To release it, pressure in two places is required—a pressure on the bottom of the box so as to lift the catch, and a simultaneous pressure on the upper part of the moveable side of the box, thus forcing the lower part outwards, and allowing the watch or other article placed in the box, to fall into the

hand of the performer. For this purpose the box is held as shown in Fig. 103.

The manner of using the box is as follows: A borrowed watch is placed in it, the owner being requested, in order to ensure its safe keeping, himself to lock it up and keep the key. The performer places the box on his table, in full view, but avails himself of the moment during which his back is turned to the audience to extract the watch, as shown in Fig. 103, and to again close the secret opening. Having thus gained possession of the watch, he can conclude the trick by causing it to re-appear in the snuff-box vase, or in any other way that he thinks proper.

FIG. 103.



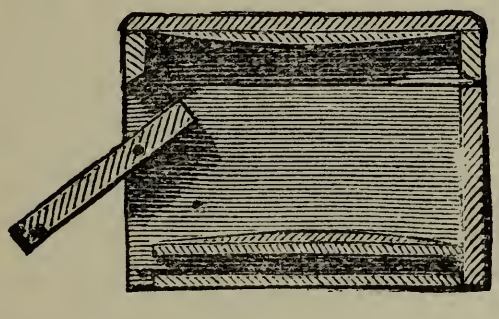


FIG. 104.

There is an improved watch-box, the invention of the late M. Robert-Houdin, which contains, concealed in the lid, a mechanical arrangement producing a ticking sound, which may be set in motion and again stopped at the pleasure of the performer, By using this box, the watch may be heard apparently ticking inside until the very moment when it is commanded by the operator to pass to some other apparatus.

THE WATCH TARGET.—This is in appearance an ordinary-looking round target, of about twelve inches in diameter, and supported on an upright pillar. It is painted in concentric circles, and on the bull's-eye is fixed a little hook. Its use is as follows: A watch having been borrowed, and smashed to pieces or made to disappear altogether,

as before explained, the performer brings forward the target, which is either held by the assistant or placed upon the magician's table. Producing the magic pistol, the performer proceeds to load it (visibly or invisibly, according to the circumstances of the trick) with the borrowed watch or the fragments thereof. Then, taking careful aim, he fires at the target, when the borrowed watch is seen to alight on the little hook already mentioned, whence it is removed and handed to the owner.

A closer inspection of the target, which is sometimes of wood, but more often of tin, japanned, would disclose the fact that the bull's-eye is moveable, revolving perpendicularly on its own axis. It is coloured alike on both sides, and each side is provided with such a hook as already mentioned, so that whichever side of the bull's-eye is for the time being level with the face of the target, no difference is perceptible to the spectator. There is a little projecting pin, or stop, at one point of the diameter of the bull's-eye, which prevents its making more than a half revolution, and a little spiral spring, attached to one of the two pivots on which it moves, compels it to turn, when at liberty, always in one particular direction until stopped by the pin, so that its normal condition is to have one particular side, which we will call, for greater clearness, side *a*, always turned towards the face of the target. The bull's-eye may, however, be turned round, so that the opposite side, *b*, is towards the face of the target, and there is a little catch which retains it as so turned; but the instant the catch is withdrawn, the action of the spring makes it fly round again to its old position. The catch is released by means of a stiff wire passing through the pillar on which the target rests, and terminating in a round disc of metal in the foot. The mode of connection between the wire and the catch varies according to the fancy of the maker; but, whatever this may be, the catch is invariably released by an *upward* pressure of the disc from below. If the target is held in the hand of the assistant, this is effected by the direct pressure of the fingers; but in stage performances, where the target is placed on a table, this, as indeed almost every other mechanical piece, is set in motion by the upward movement of a wire rod (known as a piston), made, by the pulling of a string, to rise through the upper surface of the table.

When the target is required for use, the bull's-eye is twisted round, so that the side *a* is turned towards the back, and in this position it is fixed by the catch. The borrowed watch is then hooked on the same side of the bull's-eye. The assistant, in bringing forward the target, takes care to keep the face turned towards the spectators, so that the watch, being behind, is unseen. At the moment of firing the pistol the disc is pressed upwards, and the catch being thus withdrawn, the bull's-eye instantly spins round, and the side *a*, on which is the watch, takes the place of side *b* on the face of the target. The movement is so instantaneous that the quickest eye cannot follow it, and the explosion of the pistol at the same moment aids still further to baffle the vigilance of the spectators, to whom it appears as if the borrowed watch had really passed from the pistol to the face of the target.

This forms an effective conclusion to the Watch-Mortar Trick, the fragments (supposed to be those of the borrowed watch) being placed in the pistol, and remaining there. Where the watch-box, above described, is used, you merely go through the motion of taking the watch out, invisibly, through the top of the box, and in like manner placing it in the pistol.

THE MESMERISED WATCH. TO MAKE ANY WATCH A REPEATER.—This is a trick which may be incidentally introduced with advantage in the course of any illusion in which a borrowed watch is employed. The performer, addressing the owner, asks carelessly, "Is this watch a repeater?" The answer is in the negative, and the performer resumes, "Would you like it to become a repeater? I have only to mesmerise it a little." So saying, he makes pretended mesmeric passes over the watch, every now and then holding it to his ear. At last he says, "I think it will do now. Let us try." Taking the chain between his finger and thumb, he lets the watch hang down at full length in front of him. "Come, watch, oblige me by telling us the hour that last struck. (We will suppose that the time is twenty minutes to nine.) To the astonishment of all, the watch chimes eight successive strokes, with a clear bell-like tone. "Now the last quarter." The watch chimes "two" and stops. "You see, sir, that under the mesmeric influence your watch becomes a capital

repeater. Let us test its intelligence still further. Here is a pack of cards; will you oblige me by drawing one. Now, watch, tell me what card this gentleman has taken; and answer in the proper spiritualistic fashion, by three strokes for 'yes,' and one for 'no.' Do you know the card?" The watch chimes thrice. "Very good. Is it a club?" The watch chimes once. "Is it a spade?" The watch again strikes once. "Is it a heart?" The watch chimes three times. "The card is a heart, is it? Now, will you tell us what heart?" The watch chimes seven, and stops. "The watch declares that your card was the seven of hearts, sir. Is that so?" The card is turned, and shown to have been correctly named. Another card (say the queen of hearts) is now drawn. The watch names the suit as before, but when ordered to name the particular card, remains silent, and the performer therefore puts further questions. "Is the card a plain card?" Answer, "No." "It is a court card, is it? Well, is it the knave?" Answer, "No." "Is it the queen?" "Yes." Other questions may in like manner be put, *e.g.*, as to the number thrown by a pair of dice. The watch is at any moment handed for inspection, and if any suggestion of special mechanism be made, a second watch is borrowed, and mesmerised with the like result.

The secret lies in the use of an ingenious little piece of apparatus, which is placed in the waistcoat pocket of the performer, and from which the sound proceeds. This apparatus, which is represented in Fig. 105, consists of a short brass cylinder (about an inch and a quarter in depth, and two inches in diameter), containing a small clock-bell, with the necessary striking mechanism, which is wound up beforehand with a key, after the manner of a watch. This mechanism is set in motion by pressure on the button *a*, the hammer continuing to strike as long as the pressure is continued, but ceasing as soon as the pressure is removed. The cylinder, which is perforated all round, in order to give free passage to the sound, is placed upright in the left pocket of the performer's waistcoat, which should be just so tight

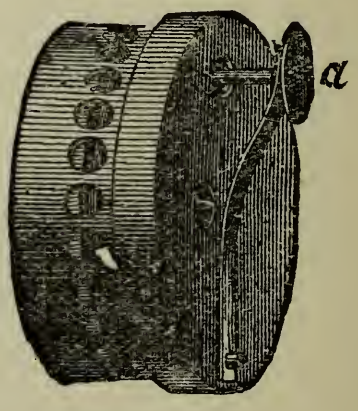


FIG. 105.

around the ribs that the mere expansion of the chest shall cause the necessary pressure against the button *a*, the pressure ceasing when the chest is again contracted. (The placing of a playing-card in the pocket for *a* to rest against will be found to facilitate the arrangement.) This is the whole of the secret. In working the trick the performer has only to take care to hold the watch in a tolerably straight line between the pocket and the audience, when, the line in which the sound travels being the same as if it actually came from the watch, it will be almost impossible to detect the deception.

Some performers, instead of placing the apparatus in the pocket, as above described, hold it in the right hand (the wand being held in the same hand) and cause it to strike by the pressure of the fingers. This is in one sense less effective, inasmuch as you cannot show the hands empty, but it is a very much more easy and certain method, so far as the striking is concerned.

The striking apparatus is generally made to give from fifty to sixty strokes. The performer must be careful not to prolong the trick until the whole are expended, or the unexpected silence of the watch may place him in an embarrassing position.

It is hardly necessary to remark that the drawn cards are forced. Where the watch is made to disclose the numbers thrown by a pair of dice, the dice are either loaded, and thus bound to indicate certain given numbers, or a box is used in which a pair of previously-arranged dice take the place, to the eyes of the audience, of the pair just thrown.

CHAPTER V.

Tricks with Rings.

The Flying Ring.—The majority of ring tricks depend upon the substitution at some period of the trick of a dummy ring for a borrowed one, which must be so nearly alike as not to be distinguishable by the eye of the spectator. This desideratum is secured by using wedding-rings, which, being always made plain, are all sufficiently alike for this purpose. You may account for your preference of wedding-rings by remarking that they are found to be imbued with a mesmeric virtue which renders them peculiarly suitable for magical experiments; or give any other reason, however absurd, so long as it is sufficiently remote from the true one. As, however, many ladies have a sort of superstitious objection to remove their wedding-rings, even for a temporary purpose, it will be well to provide yourself with an extra one of your own, so as to meet a possible failure in borrowing.

There is a little appliance, exceedingly simple in its character, which may be used with advantage in many ring tricks. It consists of a plain gold or gilt ring, attached to a short piece of white or grey sewing-silk. This again is attached to a piece of cord elastic, fastened to the inside of the coat sleeve of the performer, in such manner that, when the arm is allowed to hang down, the ring falls about a couple of inches short of the edge of the cuff. Some, in place of the elastic, use a watch barrel, attached in like manner; but the cheaper apparatus, if properly arranged, is equally effective. It is obvious that if a ring so prepared be taken in the fingers of the hand to whose sleeve it is attached, it will, on being released, instantly fly up the sleeve. This renders it a useful auxiliary in any trick in which

the sudden disappearance of such a ring is an element, and a little ingenuity will discover numerous modes of making it so available.

One of the simplest modes of using it is as follows: Producing a small piece of paper, to which you direct particular attention, you state that a wedding-ring wrapped up therein cannot be again extracted without your permission. A wedding-ring is borrowed in order to test your assertion, and you meanwhile get in readiness the flying ring, which is attached, we will suppose, to your left sleeve. Receiving the borrowed ring in your right hand, you apparently transfer it to the other hand (really palming it between the second and third fingers, and at the same moment exhibiting your own ring), and immediately afterwards drop the borrowed ring into the *pochette* on that side. You must take care so to stand that the back of your left hand may be towards the spectators, that the thread, lying along the inside of your hand, may not be seen. Spreading the paper on the table, and placing the ring upon it, you fold the paper over it, beginning with the side away from you, and pressing it so as to show the shape of the ring through it. As you fold down a second angle of the paper you release the ring, which forthwith flies up your sleeve. You continue to fold the paper, and repeating your assertion that no one can take the ring out without your permission, hand it to a spectator, in order that he may make the attempt. On opening the paper he finds that you were very safe in asserting that he could not take the ring out of it, inasmuch as the ring is no longer in it.

Having gained possession of the borrowed ring, you may reproduce it in a variety of different ways, according to your own fancy and invention. For instance, you may, retiring for a moment, bring forward the "snuff-box vase" described at page 76, meanwhile wrapping the ring in a piece of paper similar to that you have already used, and placing it in one of the boxes contained in the vase. Bringing the vase forward to the audience, you open it in such manner as to exhibit the other box, in which, after it has been duly examined, you request one of the audience to place the empty paper. Closing the vase, and placing it on the table, you fire your pistol at it, or merely touch it with your wand, and order the ring to return to the paper. You now open the vase at the compartment containing the first box. Drawing particular attention to the fact that you have

not even touched the box, you again offer it for inspection. The folded paper, which the audience take to be the same, is duly found therein, and, on being opened, is shown to contain the borrowed ring.

A similar effect, on a smaller scale, may be produced by privately placing the paper containing the ring in the inner compartment of the "plug-box" (described at page 51), and requesting one of the audience to place the original folded paper in the outer compartment.

To Pass a Ring from the one Hand to either Finger of the other Hand.—This is a very old and simple trick, but it has puzzled many, and comes in appropriately in this place, as affording another illustration of the use of the "flying ring." The only additional preparation consists of a little hook, such as is used to fasten ladies' dresses, sewn to the trouser of the performer just level with the fingers of his right hand when hanging by his side, but a little behind the thigh, so as to be covered by the coat-tail. Borrowing a wedding-ring, the performer receives it in his right hand, immediately transferring it in appearance (as in the last trick) to his left hand. Showing in place of it the flying ring, which is already in his left hand, he drops the right hand to his side, and slips the borrowed ring on the little hook. Then remarking, "You all see this ring, which I have just borrowed. I will make it invisibly pass to my right hand, and on to whichever finger of that hand you may please to select." Here he waves his right hand with an indicative gesture, thus indirectly showing that he has nothing therein, and again lets the hand fall carelessly by his side. As soon as the finger is chosen, he slips the borrowed ring upon the end of that particular finger, immediately closing the hand so as to conceal it, and holds out the hand at arm's length in front of him. Then saying, "One, two, three! Pass!" he releases the flying ring, and, opening both hands, shows that the left is empty, and that the borrowed ring has passed to the selected finger of the right hand.

The hook may, if preferred, be dispensed with, the ring being simply dropped into the *pochette* on the right side, and again taken from thence when required.

To Pass a Ring through a Pocket-handkerchief.—This is but a juvenile trick, but we insert it for the sake of completeness. It is performed by the aid of a piece of wire, sharpened to a point at each end, and bent into the form of a ring. The performer, having this palmed in his right hand, borrows a wedding-ring and a handkerchief (silk for preference). Holding the borrowed ring between the fingers of his right hand, he throws the handkerchief over it, and immediately seizes with the left hand, through the handkerchief, apparently the borrowed ring, but really the sham ring, which he adroitly substitutes. He now requests one of the spectators to take hold of the ring in like manner, taking care to make him hold it in such a way that he may not be able to feel the opening between the points, which would betray the secret. The ring being thus held, and the handkerchief hanging down around it, a second spectator is requested, for greater security, to tie a piece of tape or string tightly round the handkerchief an inch or two below the ring. The performer then takes the handkerchief into his own hand, and, throwing the loose part of the handkerchief over his right hand, so as to conceal his mode of operation, slightly straightens the sham ring, and works one of the points through the handkerchief, so getting it out, and rubbing the handkerchief with his finger and thumb in order to obliterate the hole made by the wire in its passage. He now palms the sham ring, and produces the real one, which has all along remained in his right hand, requesting the person who tied the knot to ascertain for himself that it has not been tampered with.

To Pass a Ring through the Table.—This also is a juvenile trick, but a very good one. The necessary apparatus consists of an ordinary glass tumbler, and a handkerchief to the middle of which is attached, by means of a piece of sewing-silk about four inches in length, a substitute ring of your own. Borrowing a ring from one of the company, you announce that it will at your command pass through the table; but as the process, being magical, is necessarily invisible, you must first cover it over. Holding the handkerchief by two of the corners, you carelessly shake it out (taking care to keep the side on which is the suspended ring towards yourself), and wrapping in it apparently the borrowed, but really the suspended

ring, you hand it to one of the company, requesting him to grasp the ring through the handkerchief, and to hold it securely.

A word of caution may here be given, which will be found more or less applicable to all magical performances. Have the room in which you perform as brilliantly lighted as you please, but take care so to arrange the lights, or so to place yourself, that all the lights may be in front of you, and none behind you. The trick we are now describing affords a practical illustration of the necessity for this. If you have any light behind you, the handkerchief, as you shake it to show that it is not prepared, will appear semi-transparent, and the spectators will be able to see the suspended ring dangling behind it. For a similar reason, you should always endeavour to have a dark background for your performances, as any thread, or the like, which you may have occasion to secretly use will then be invisible at a short distance, while against a light background —*e.g.*, a muslin curtain or white wall-paper—it would be instantly noticeable.

But to return to our trick: we left one of the spectators tightly holding the suspended ring, covered by the folds of the handkerchief. Your next step is to request the audience to choose at what particular spot in the table the ring shall pass through it. When they have made the selection, you place the tumbler upon the spot chosen, and request the person having charge of the ring to hold his hand immediately over the glass, around which you drape the folds of the handkerchief. "Now," you say, "will you be kind enough, sir, to drop the ring in the glass." He lets go, and the ring falls with an audible "ting" into the glass. "Are you all satisfied," you ask, "that the ring is now in the glass?" The reply will generally be in the affirmative; but, if any one is sceptical, you invite him to shake the glass, still covered by the handkerchief, when the ring is heard to rattle within it.

Your next step is to borrow a hat, which you take in the hand which still retains the genuine ring, holding it in such manner that the tips of the fingers are just inside the hat, the ring being concealed beneath them. In this condition you can freely exhibit the inside of the hat, which is seen to be perfectly empty. You now place the hat under the table, mouth upwards, relaxing as you do so the

pressure of the fingers, and allowing the coin to slide gently down into the crown. Leaving the hat under the table, which should be so placed that the spectators cannot, as they stand or sit, see quite into the crown, you take hold of the extreme edge of the handkerchief, and saying, "One, two, three! Pass!" jerk it away, and request some one to pick up the hat, and return the borrowed ring to the owner.

We have given the trick in its simplest form, but it is obvious that it is capable of any amount of variation as regards the circumstances under which the vanished ring is again found. The "plug-box" (page 51) or the "nest of boxes" (page 56) may be here made available, the performer placing the ring where it is to be afterwards found, during his momentary absence in search of the necessary apparatus.

To Pass a Ring invisibly upon the Middle of a Wooden Wand, the Ends being held by two of the Spectators.—In this trick, the handkerchief prepared (with the ring attached) for the purpose of the last illusion may be again employed, though some use for the present purpose a handkerchief with a ring stitched in one corner. In our own opinion, the suspended ring is preferable, and we shall describe the trick accordingly. The only other requisite will be the magic wand, or any short stick or rod of such diameter that a finger-ring may slip easily upon it. Having borrowed a ring, you proceed to wrap it (in reality the substitute) in the handkerchief, and hand it to some one to hold. The borrowed ring, of course, remains in your hand. Picking up with your other hand your wand, you transfer it to the hand containing the ring. Taking hold of it by the extreme end, you pass the ring over it, which a very little practice will enable you to do without the smallest difficulty. You then say, "I am about to order the ring which Mr. So-and-so is holding, to leave the handkerchief, and pass on to this wand. For greater security, I will ask two of the gentlemen present to hold the ends. Will some one volunteer for the purpose?" Two candidates having come forward, you place yourself facing the person who is holding the ring in the handkerchief, at the same time sliding your hand with the ring to the centre of the wand, and holding the latter in a hori-

zontal position across your body. You now invite the two volunteers each to take hold of one end, pretending to be very particular that the wand should be perfectly horizontal, this giving you an excuse for keeping your hand upon it, sliding it backwards and forwards, and raising now one end, now the other, till the level is such as to satisfy your correct eye. When at last you are satisfied, you ask the person in charge of the ring to step forward, so as to bring it immediately above the wand, over which you immediately spread the pocket-handkerchief, letting the edges fall on either side of the wand. As soon as the wand is covered, you can of course remove your hand. Then, taking hold of one corner of the handkerchief, you request the holder of the ring to let go at the word "Three," and saying, "One, two, three—Pass!" draw away the handkerchief sharply, which, brushing against the genuine ring, will set it revolving rapidly, as though it had just passed on to the wand.

Some professors introduce the "flying ring" in the performance of this trick, thus dispensing altogether with the handkerchief. The slight variations in working thereby rendered necessary will readily suggest themselves without further explanation.

THE MAGIC BALL AND RINGS.—This is a recent improvement on the trick last described. The performer borrows three rings, which in this instance, as the trick does not depend upon a substitution, may be of any pattern. They should not, however, be too large, for which reason ladies' rings are preferable. These he places, or requests the owners to place, in the "Davenport cabinet" (*see* page 54), the "watch-box" (*see* page 78), or any other apparatus which will enable him secretly to get possession of them. He then brings in and hands for inspection an ebony ball, an inch and a half to two inches in diameter (through which is bored a hole of three-eighths of an inch in diameter), and a brass rod about two feet in length, with a knob at each end, and of such a thickness as to pass freely through the ball. Both are closely scrutinized, and admitted to be fair and solid. In sight of all he unscrews one of the knobs, and places the ball upon the rod, throwing a handkerchief over it, and requesting two of the audience to hold the ends. Passing his hand under the handkerchief, he orders the ball to drop into his hand, when his command is instantly obeyed.

He next orders the rings to pass from the cabinet, and to take the place of the ball on the brass rod. On removing the handkerchief, the rings are seen on the rod, and the cabinet, on examination, is found empty.

The secret consists in the use of *two* balls, one of which (that handed round for inspection) has no speciality. The other is divided into two parts, the section being vertically through the bore. (*See* Fig. 106.) These two parts fit closely together, and being (as is also the solid ball) carved in concentric circles parallel to the opening, the division is not readily noticeable. The two halves, *a* and *b*, are hollowed out to contain the rings, each having three slots or mortices cut at right angles to the direction of the hole through the ball. When the performer retires to fetch the ball and rod, he places the borrowed rings in these slots. When the two halves of the ball are brought together, the rings will encircle the hole through the centre, and the rod, when passed through the ball, will pass through the rings also. The performer places the trick ball, thus prepared, under his waistband, or in one of his *pochettes,* and, returning, hands for inspection the brass rod and the solid ball. While these are being examined, he palms the trick ball, and in passing over the rod apparently the ball which has just been examined, adroitly substitutes that which contains the rings. After having thrown the handkerchief over the rod, he passes under it his hand, still containing the solid ball. It is an easy matter to pull asunder the hollow ball, and this in turn is palmed, and the solid ball passed to the end of the fingers, before the performer, again uncovering his hand, which he brings out palm downward, carelessly throws down the solid ball, as being that which he has just taken off the rod. This is the only part of the trick which requires any special dexterity, and any difficulty which may be at first found will quickly disappear with a little practice.

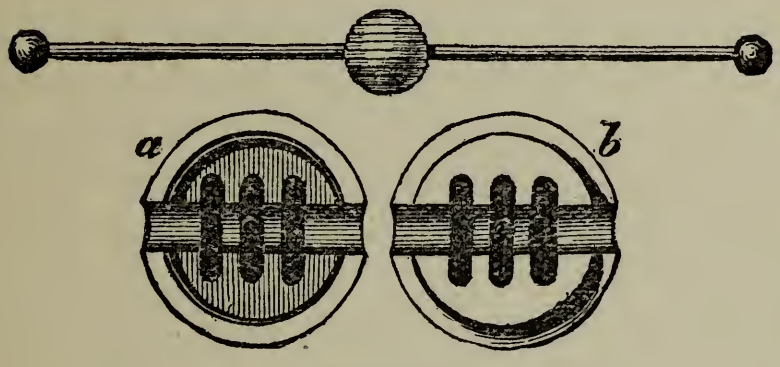


FIG. 106.

When the ball comes apart, the rings are, of course, left on the rod.

A further improvement may be made in the trick by using a sword with a rapier blade in place of the brass rod. The trick is not only more effective in appearance, as the sword appears to cut through the ball, but the tapering shape of the blade makes the trick much easier to perform, as you have only to draw the ball down towards the hilt, when the swell of the blade will force the two halves of the ball apart, leaving them naturally in your hand. It is best in this case simultaneously to let the solid ball drop from your palm to the floor. This draws all eyes downwards, and gives you ample opportunity to drop the halves of the trick ball into your secret pocket. In this form of the trick you, of course, hold the sword yourself in the ordinary manner, and you may, if you prefer it, dispense with the handkerchief, using your hand only to mask the operation, at once stepping forward, as the ball drops to the ground, and saying, "Will the owners be kind enough to identify their rings?"

To Pass a Borrowed Ring into an Egg.—This is an effective conclusion to a ring trick. The necessary apparatus consists of two wooden egg-cups, inside one of which, at the bottom, is cut a mortice or slot just large enough to receive one-half the circumference of a lady's ring, and to hold it in an upright position. The second egg-cup has no speciality, being, in fact, merely a dummy, designed to be handed to the audience for inspection. An ordinary button-hook, or a piece of wire bent into the shape of a button-hook, completes the preparations.

We will assume that the performer has, in the course of one or other of the tricks already described, secretly obtained possession of a borrowed ring, which the audience believe still to remain in some place or apparatus in which they have seen it deposited. The operator, retiring for an instant, returns with a plate of eggs in one hand, and the dummy egg-cup in the other. The special egg-cup, with the ring already in the mortice, is meanwhile placed either under his waistband, or in one or other of his *pochettes*, so as to be instantly get-at-able when required. Placing the eggs on the table, he hands round the egg-cup for inspection, that all may observe that

it is wholly without preparation, and in turning to place the egg-cup on the table, he substitutes for it the one which contains the ring, but which the audience naturally believe to be that which they have just examined.

Bringing forward the plate of eggs, the performer requests the company to choose whichever they please. While they are making their selection, he carefully turns back his sleeves, showing indirectly that his hands are empty. Taking the chosen egg with the tips of his fingers, and showing it on all sides, to prove that there is no preparation about it, he says, "Now, ladies and gentlemen, you have seen me place the ring which this lady has kindly lent me in 'so-and-so'" (according to the place where it is supposed to be). "You have selected, of your own free choice, this particular egg among half-a-dozen others. I am about to command the ring to leave the place where it now is, and to pass into the very centre of this egg. If you think the egg is prepared in any way, it is open to you even now to choose another. You are all satisfied that the egg has not been tampered with? Well, then, just observe still that I have nothing in my hands. I have merely to say, 'One, two, three! Pass!' The ring is now in the egg." At the word, "Pass," the performer taps one end of the egg with his wand, just hard enough to crack it slightly. "Dear me," he says; "I did not intend to hit quite so hard; but it is of no consequence." Stepping to the table, he places the egg, *with the cracked end downwards,* in the prepared egg-cup, using just sufficient pressure to force the egg well down upon the ring, the projecting portion of which is thereby forced into the egg. The egg being already cracked, a very slight pressure is sufficient. Bringing forward the egg in the cup, the hook already mentioned, and a table-napkin, he taps the top of the egg smartly with his wand, so as to crack it, and, offering the hook to the owner of the ring, requests her to see whether her property is not in the egg. The ring is immediately fished out, and being wiped upon the napkin, is recognized as that which was borrowed. The apparatus in which it was originally placed is, on being examined, found empty.

THE MAGIC ROSE.—This little apparatus affords the means for a graceful termination of a ring trick. A ring having been made to

disappear in any of the modes before described, the operator, retiring for a moment, returns with a rose-bud in his hand. Advancing to the owner of the ring, he requests her to breathe on the flower. As she does so, the bud is seen slowly to open, and in the centre of the new-blown flower is found the missing article.

The idea of the flower, warmed into bloom under a fair lady's breath, is so poetical that it seems quite a pity to be obliged to confess that the rose is an artificial one, made chiefly of tin, and that its petals, normally held open by the action of a spring, are, when the flower is first brought on, kept closed by a sliding ring or collar upon the stalk, again re-opening as this collar is drawn back by the magician's fingers.

CHAPTER VI.

Tricks with Handkerchiefs.

We have already discussed a good many tricks in which handkerchiefs are employed in one way or another. The present chapter will be devoted to those feats in which the handkerchief forms the sole or principal object of the illusion. Where practicable, the handkerchief used should always be a borrowed one (so as to exclude the idea of preparation); and in borrowing it will occasionally be necessary to use a little tact in order to make certain of getting the right article for your purpose, without admitting, by asking specially for any particular kind of handkerchief, the limited extent of your powers. Thus, whenever the trick depends upon the substitution of a handkerchief of your own, it is necessary that the borrowed handkerchief should be of a plain white, so as not to have too marked an individuality, and of a small size, so as to be easily palmed or otherwise concealed. These desiderata you may secure, without disclosing that they are desiderata, by asking if a *lady* will oblige you with a handkerchief, ladies' handkerchiefs being invariably white, and of small size. If a lace handkerchief (which would be inconveniently distinguishable from your substitute) is offered, you may pretend to fear the risk of injuring the lace, and on that account to prefer a less valuable article. In "knot" tricks, on the contrary, you should, if possible, use a silk handkerchief, which, from its softer nature, will be found more tractable than cambric.

We will begin by describing a couple of little "flourishes," which may be incidentally introduced in the performance of more ambitious tricks, and which will sometimes be found useful in occupying the attention of the audience for a moment or two while some neces-

sary arrangement is being made behind the scenes for the purpose of the principal illusion. The first we will call—

THE HANDKERCHIEF THAT CANNOT BE TIED IN A KNOT.—The performer, having borrowed a handkerchief, pulls it this way and that, as if to ascertain its fitness for the purpose of the trick. Finally twisting the handkerchief into a sort of loose rope, he throws the two ends one over the other, as in the ordinary mode of tying, and pulls smartly; but instead of a knot appearing, as would naturally be expected, in the middle of the handkerchief, it is pulled out quite straight. "This is a very curious handkerchief," he remarks; "I can't make a knot in it." The process is again and again repeated, but always with the same result.

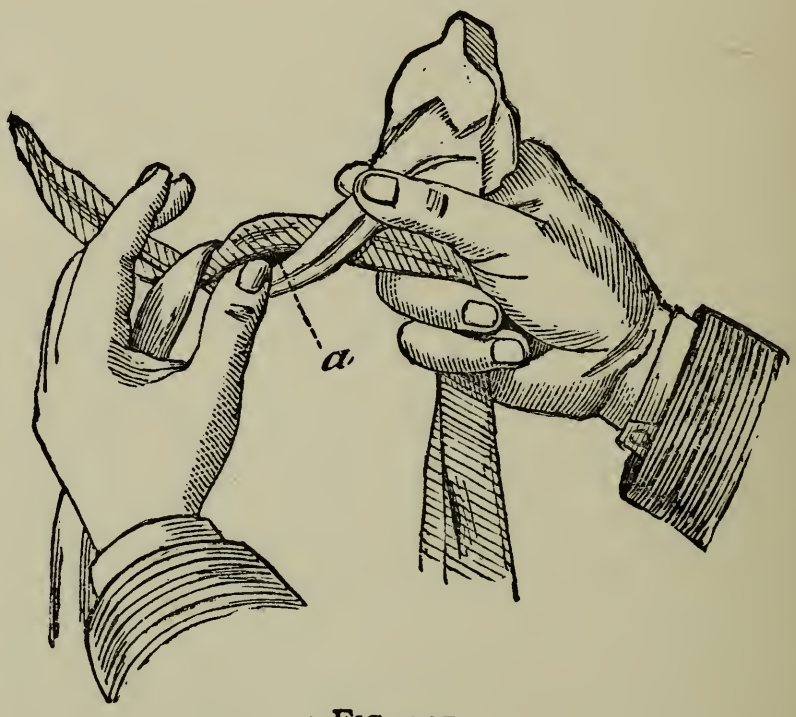


FIG. 107.

The secret is as follows:—The performer, before pulling the knot tight, slips his left thumb, as shown in Fig. 107, beneath such portion of the "tie" as is a continuation of the end held in the same hand. The necessary arrangement of the hands and handkerchief, though difficult to explain in writing, will be found quite clear upon a careful examination of the figure.

THE HANDKERCHIEF THAT WILL NOT BURN.—This may be used either separately or in conjunction with the foregoing. The performer, taking the handkerchief, asks if it will burn. The owner naturally answers that she has no doubt it will. "Suppose we try," says the performer; and taking the handkerchief by two of its cor-

ners, he draws it three or four times obliquely upwards across the flame of a lighted candle, without its receiving the slightest injury.

There is really no mystery whatever about this, although, to those who have never tried it, it appears very surprising, and the spectators are generally persuaded that you have somehow substituted another handkerchief, made incombustible by chemical means. The performer has only to take care not to allow the handkerchief to rest motionless while in contact with the flame. In the act of drawing the handkerchief over the candle, the contact of any given part with the flame is so momentary, that it is barely warmed in its passage. You must, however, take care not to attempt this trick with a handkerchief which has been scented, as any remains of spirit about it would cause it to ignite instantly, and place you in a rather awkward position.

Where a substitute handkerchief has to be burnt in the course of a trick, it is by no means a bad plan to exhibit with the substitute (which the audience take to be the original) this phenomenon of supposed incombustibility, and appearing to grow careless from repeated success, at last to allow the handkerchief to catch fire. If you can by such means induce the audience to believe, for the time being, that the burning was an accident, you will the more astonish them by the subsequent restoration.

THE VANISHING KNOTS.—For this trick you must use a silk handkerchief. Twisting it rope-fashion, and grasping it by the middle with both hands, you request one of the spectators to tie the two ends together. He does so, but you tell him that he has not tied them half tight enough, and you yourself pull them still tighter. A second and a third knot are made in the same way, the handkerchief being drawn tighter by yourself after each knot is made. Finally, taking the handkerchief, and covering the knots with the loose part, you hand it to some one to hold. Breathing on it, you request him to shake out the handkerchief, when all the knots are found to have disappeared.

When the performer apparently tightens the knot, he in reality only strains one end of the handkerchief, grasping it above and below the knot. This pulls that end of the handkerchief out of its twisted

condition in the knot into a straight line, round which the other end of the handkerchief remains twisted; in other words, converts the knot into a slip-knot. After each successive knot he still straightens this same end of the handkerchief. This end, being thus made straight, would naturally be left longer than the other which is twisted round and round it. This tendency the performer counteracts by drawing it partially back through the slip-knot at each pretended tightening. When he finally covers over the knots, which he does with the left hand, he holds the straightened portion of the handkerchief, immediately behind the knots, between the first finger and thumb of the right hand, and therewith, in the act of covering over the knots, draws this straightened portion completely out of the slip-knot.

Some performers (among whom we may mention Herrmann) make this feat still more effective by borrowing half-a-dozen handkerchiefs, and allowing them all to be tied end to end by the spectators. After each knot the professor pretends to examine it, asking, "What kind of a knot do you call this, sir?" and meanwhile pulls it into the required condition. The joined handkerchiefs are then placed one upon the other on a chair or in a hat, and are immediately afterwards shown to be separate.

The student must be on his guard against one particular kind of knot, which cannot be pulled into the condition above-named. We allude to the very common mode of tying, in which the two ends to be tied are placed side by side, and tied simultaneously in a single knot. The employment of this kind of knot may generally be avoided by holding the two ends to be tied at a tolerably wide angle, so that they cannot very well be drawn parallel. If, however, a spectator appears determined to tie this particular knot, it is better to allow him to do so, and then remark, "As the knots are tied by yourselves, ladies and gentlemen, you can have little doubt that they are all fair. However, for the greater satisfaction of all present, I will ask some gentleman to be good enough to untie one of them, which will give a fair criterion of the time it would take, in a natural way, to get rid of the remainder." So saying, you hand the knot in question to be untied, and in subsequently giving the ends to be again joined, select a more accommodating person to tie them.

As the tricks which follow mainly depend upon the substitution of a second handkerchief, we shall in the first place describe two or three modes of effecting the necessary exchange, with and without the aid of apparatus.

To Exchange a borrowed Handkerchief for a Substitute.—Have the substitute handkerchief tucked under your waistcoat, at the left side, so as to be out of sight, but within easy reach of your hand. Receive the borrowed handkerchief in your right hand, and as you 'left wheel' to your table to place it thereon, tuck it under your waistband on the right side, and at the same moment pull out with the other hand the substitute, and throw the latter on the table. The substitute handkerchief (which the audience take to be the real one) being thus left in full view, you may, without exciting any suspicion, retire with the genuine one, and dispose of it as may be necessary for the purpose of your trick.

You may, however, sometimes desire merely to gain possession of a borrowed handkerchief, or to place it within reach of your assistant, without yourself leaving the apartment. In this case the substitute may be placed as before, but on your *right* side. Receiving the borrowed handkerchief in your right hand, you hold it loosely hanging down between the second and third, or third and fourth fingers. This leaves the thumb and first finger free, and with these you quickly pull down, as you turn to go to your table, the substitute. You thus have both handkerchiefs held openly in the same hand; but both being of like appearance, the audience take them to be one only. Passing behind your table, you let fall the borrowed handkerchief upon the *servante*, and throw the substitute upon the table.

A very audacious and generally successful mode of effecting the change is as follows: Taking the handkerchief, and pressing it into a moderately small compass, the performer says, "Now I am going to make this handkerchief disappear. There are plenty of ways of doing it. I'll show you one or two. This is Professor De Jones's method. He just turns round, *so*, to put the handkerchief on the table" (performer turns accordingly), "but meanwhile the handkerchief is gone. Ah, you were too sharp for me! You saw me poke it up my sleeve? Quite right, here it is. I see Professor De

Jones's method wouldn't have any chance with *you*. This is Professor De Smith's method." He turns as before. "The handkerchief is gone again. Not far, though, for here it is" (turning back breast of coat and showing handkerchief). "Professor De Robinson does it like this." (He turns away for an instant, and tucks handkerchief under waistband.) "Here it is, you see, under the waistcoat." (Pulls it out again.) "Now, you may very well imagine that, if I had intended to have used any of these methods myself, I shouldn't have explained them. You will find that my plan is quite a different one. When I want to get rid of a handkerchief, I just take it to the candle, and set it on fire, so" (holds handkerchief over candle, and sets light to it); or, "I place it in such and such a piece of apparatus," etc., etc.

On the first two occasions of showing where the handkerchief is placed, the performer really does exhibit the genuine article; but at the third pretended feint, though he really does tuck it under his waistband, he pulls out again, not the same handkerchief, but a substitute, placed there beforehand. The action is so natural, and so much in harmony with his previous acts, that not one in a hundred will suspect that he has thereby really changed the handkerchief.

The mode of exchange last described, ingenious as it is, has one serious drawback—viz., that it gives the audience a clue which it is better that they should not have, and suggests suspicions and conjectures which, but for such a clue, they would never have thought of. To an acute mind, even such a slight hint as this will suggest enough to destroy half the effect of any subsequent trick in which a similar process of disappearance or exchange is employed, and even in the case of less intelligent spectators it will tend to diminish the *prestige* of the performer, by showing by what shallow artifices an illusion may be produced.

There are two or three pieces of apparatus for effecting the exchange of a handkerchief by mechanical means. A very good one is that known as "The Washerwoman's Bottle," in conjunction with which we will take the opportunity of describing the very effective trick known as

The Locked and Corded Box.—The "Washerwoman's

Bottle" is a simple and inexpensive piece of apparatus, of frequent use in handkerchief tricks. In appearance it is an ordinary black bottle, save that it has a rather shorter neck and wider mouth than the generality of such vessels. In reality it is made of tin, japanned black, and is divided by a vertical partition, commencing just below the mouth, into two compartments. One of these has a bottom, but the other has none, forming, in fact, a mere passage *through* the bottle. In the bottomed compartment is placed beforehand a piece of cambric, or dummy handkerchief, also about a glassful of port wine, or some other liquor of similar colour.

The performer borrows a lady's handkerchief. Pretending that he is obliged to fetch some other article for the purpose of the trick, he says, as if struck by a sudden thought, "But I mustn't run away with the handkerchief, or you might fancy that I had tampered with it in some way. Where shall I put it? Ah! the very thing. Here's a bottle belonging to my washerwoman, which she left behind her the last time she came. It's sure to be clean, for she is a most particular old lady. We often hear of a lady carrying a bottle in her handkerchief, why not a handkerchief in a bottle? First, madam, please see that I have not exchanged the handkerchief. Right, is it? Well, then, here goes for the bottle." Standing behind his table, in full view of the spectators, he stuffs the borrowed handkerchief into the bottle, ramming it down with his wand. In so doing, he grasps the bottle with his left hand around its base, which he rests on the edge of the table nearest to himself, in such manner that about half the bottom projects over the edge. When he places the handkerchief in the bottle, he places it in the open compartment, and pushes it with his wand right through the bottle into his left hand, if he desires to obtain personal possession of it, or lets it fall on the *servante*, if it is to be carried off by his assistant. We will assume, for our present purpose, that he simply pushes it into his left hand, whence it is easy to get rid of it into the *pochette* on the same side. He now places the bottle in the centre of the table, but in doing so hears, or pretends to hear, a sound of liquid therein. "I hope the bottle was empty," he remarks, "I never thought about that." He shakes the bottle. and the liquid therein is distinctly audible. "Good gracious!" he exclaims, "I'm afraid I have ruined the hand-

kerchief." He now pours the liquid into a glass, and then, putting his fingers inside the bottle, he pulls out the prepared piece of cambric, which, of course, is wet and stained. Leaving it hanging from the neck of the bottle, he advances to the owner, and expresses his regret at the accident; but the audience, who begin to suspect that the pretended mistake is really a part of the trick, insist that the handkerchief shall be restored in its original condition. The performer feigns embarrassment, but at last says, "Well, ladies and gentlemen, I cannot dispute the justice of your observations. The handkerchief certainly ought to be returned clean as at first, and as my washerwoman has been the cause of the mischief, she is the proper person to repair it. Will you excuse my stopping the entertainment for an hour or two, while I go to fetch her? You object to the delay? Well, then, I will bring her here by spiritualistic means, *à la* Mrs. Guppy. Pardon me one moment." He retires, and returns with a square box and the magic pistol. Placing the box on the table, and making a few mysterious passes over it with his wand, he says, in his deepest tones, "Spirit of Mrs. Tubbs, I command you to pass into this box, there to remain until you have repaired the damage which your carelessness has caused." Then taking the saturated cambric from the bottle, he crams it into the pistol, and, retiring to the farthest portion of the stage, fires at the box. Laying down the pistol, and taking p the box, he advances to the owner of the handkerchief, and, offering her the key, begs her to unlock it. She does so, expecting to find her handkerchief, but finds instead a second box. This, and four or five others in succession, are opened, and in the innermost is found the handkerchief, folded and ironed, as if newly returned from the wash.

With the reader's present knowledge, it would be almost superfluous to tell him that the operator avails himself of his momentary absence to damp and fold the handkerchief, and to press it with a cold iron. (If a hot one can be obtained, so much the better, but there is no absolute necessity for it.) Having done this, he places it in the square nest of boxes (see page 56), and closing them returns to the audience. The magic pistol has already been described (page 75). Where an assistant is employed, the performer merely pushes the handkerchief through the bottle on to the *servante*, as already

mentioned, and the assistant, passing behind the table on some pretext or other, carries it off, and places it in the nest of boxes, while the audience are occupied by the pretended discovery of wine in the bottle. The trick in this form appears even more surprising, inasmuch as the performer does not leave the stage at all, and the box is brought in and placed on the table by a person who, to all appearance, has never had the handkerchief, even for a moment, in his possession.

In order still further to heighten the effect of the trick, the handkerchief is sometimes caused to reappear in the innermost of a nest of boxes which has throughout the entertainment been hung up in full view of the audience, and the outermost of which is carefully corded and sealed. The performer in this case, after firing at the supposed box (for the audience are, of course, ignorant that there are more than one), directs his assistant to take it down from its elevated position, and to place it on the table. Cutting the cords, and opening the box, he produces from it another, corded like the first. From this second box, he produces another smaller box, of an ornamental character (the square nest of boxes above mentioned). This he hands to the owner of the handkerchief, with a request that she will open it, and the result is as already described.

The trick in this form is one of the very best exhibited on the stage, and yet, as indeed are most of the best feats, it is performed by the simplest possible means. The outer box is an ordinary deal box, *bonâ fide* sealed and corded, but the second, though equally genuine in appearance, has no bottom, and the cord, though apparently quite complete, does not cross beneath the box, which is, in fact, nothing more than a wooden shell, or cover, with a lid to it. When the performer takes out this second box and places it on the table, he tilts it forward for a moment, and in that moment slips the nest of boxes (which is placed in readiness on the *servante*), underneath it, immediately afterwards raising the lid, and taking out the nest, as if it had all along been contained therein.

It only remains to explain the mode by which the nest of boxes, with the handkerchief therein, is placed upon the *servante*. Some performers employ the rather too transparent expedient of making the assistant bring in, then and there, a small round table, behind which, on a *servante* of its own, is placed the closed nest of

boxes. A better plan, where the size of the nest permits, is to have it placed open, before the performance commences, on the *servante* of the centre table. It is then an easy matter for the performer or his assistant (as the case may be) to slip in the folded handkerchief, and close the boxes, the remainder of the trick proceeding as already described.

Some performers use for the purpose of this trick a special mechanical table, which, by means of a lifting apparatus, itself introduces the nest of boxes through a trap into the bottomless box, without the necessity of tilting the latter.

THE REVERSIBLE CANISTER.—This is another piece of apparatus more particularly designed for changing a handkerchief, though equally available for many other exchanges. In appearance it is an ordinary cylindrical canister, closed with a cap, and similar in shape to those in which tea is kept, but of smaller size, being only five to six inches in height. In reality, however, that which appears to be the body of the canister is a mere tube, within which slides up and down an inner canister, which is made double-headed, *i.e.*, like two shallow canisters placed bottom to bottom. (*See* Fig. 108.) The pattern of the outer tube is alike at top and bottom, so that whether the combined canister is as shown in the figure, with compartment *a* uppermost, or turned upside down, with compartment *b* pushed into view, the appearance to the eye of the spectator is the same. The canister is prepared by placing beforehand in one or other of the compartments, say *b*, a piece of cambric, as much like a lady's handkerchief as possible. Compartment *a* is then pushed upwards, as shown in the figure. Borrowing a handkerchief, the performer requests the owner to place it for safe keeping in the canister, which he brings forward for that purpose. As he turns to replace it on the table, he takes advantage of the moment during which his back is towards the spectators to push down *a* (thus pushing out *b* at the opposite end of the tube), and at the same time to turn over the canister, which, when

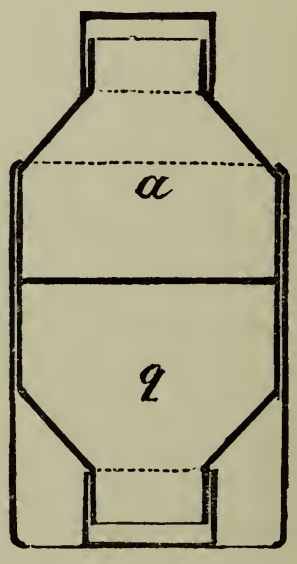


FIG. 108.

placed on the table, will still look as shown in the figure, but will have, in reality, *b* uppermost. Presently taking out the prepared cambric, which the spectators take to be the handkerchief, he burns or otherwise disposes of it, to be subsequently reproduced by the simple process of again reversing the canister.

This is a simple and inexpensive piece of apparatus, but it will not bear examination, and the process of reversing is a little awkward. For these reasons it is rarely employed by professional performers, who for the same purpose more generally use what is known as

THE BURNING GLOBE.—This is a hollow brass globe of four to six inches in diameter, mounted on a foot of about the same height, and surmounted by a cap or lid, so that it forms, in fact, a spherical canister. A raised band, also of brass, passes horizontally round the globe; and this, which is apparently a mere ornament, is really designed to conceal the fact that the globe is divided into two separate hemispheres, revolving one upon the other. Within this external globe is an inner one, divided into two compartments, each having a separate opening, and so contrived that each of these openings in turn is made to correspond with the opening of the external globe, according as the upper hemisphere of the latter is moved round from right to left, or *vice versâ*. The globe is, like the canister, prepared by placing a substitute handkerchief, or piece of cambric, in one or other of the inner compartments, and then bringing the other compartment into correspondence with the external opening. A borrowed handkerchief being openly placed in the empty compartment, the performer, by merely giving a half turn to the foot of the apparatus, brings the compartment containing the substitute uppermost, the action being so little noticeable that it may be used with impunity before the very eyes of the audience.

THE TRANSFORMED HANDKERCHIEF.—This is one of Herrmann's favourite tricks, and affords a very good example of his style of working. The performer comes forward, requesting the loan of a lady's handkerchief. While it is being procured, he produces from the hair or whiskers of one of the spectators a lemon, which he carelessly thrusts under somebody's nose in order to prove its genuineness,

(This lemon, which, of course, was palmed, is a prepared one, from which the pulp has been scooped out, and which contains a substitute handkerchief, so cannot be handed for examination.) Turning for an instant towards the stage, he tosses the lemon to his assistant, who catches it, and places it on the table. The momentary turn from the audience enables him to get from under his waistband, and to palm, a little bundle of pieces of cambric, each about four inches square. Taking the borrowed handkerchief, he rolls it into a ball between his hands, and hands it (apparently) to some one to hold, in reality substituting the torn pieces of cambric. He then turns, and takes a few paces towards his table, meanwhile tucking the handkerchief under his waistcoat, and taking therefrom in place of it a strip of cambric, about four or five feet long and four inches wide, rolled up into a small compass. This he palms. Suddenly turning back, he exclaims, "My dear sir, what *are* you doing with that handkerchief? I never told you to do that!" The innocent holder looks up in astonishment, but the performer continues, "Will you have the kindness to open the handkerchief?" He does so, and finds it in pieces. After a little chaff about making him pay for the damage, the performer says, "Well, I suppose I must show you how to restore it." Here he again takes the pieces, and folds them together, saying, "See, you must take them as I do, and rub them very gently with the left hand." Substituting the prepared slip, he hands it to him; but, when he begins to rub, exclaims again, "Dear me, dear me! what are you doing now? I told you the *left* hand. You are making matters worse than ever." The handkerchief is now found in a long strip. The performer endeavours to induce the owner to accept it in this shape, which he assures her is the newest style; but she naturally objects, and begs that it may be restored to its original condition. For that purpose, the performer, rolling the slip into a ball, places it in his magic pistol (*see* page 74), and rams it down with his wand. Appearing to reflect for a moment, he says, "Where shall I fire it? Ah! suppose I aim at that lemon on the table?" "Bang!" goes the pistol, and the performer, taking a knife, cuts the lemon all round (flinging the rind carelessly on the stage), and produces the substitute handkerchief (professedly the original). He comes forward to the audience with it, and, after thanking

the owner, makes a gesture of returning it; but, as if struck by a sudden thought, checks himself, and says, "I'm afraid it smells rather strong of the lemon. Will you allow me to scent it for you? I have some capital Eau de Cologne here." Going back to his table, he places the handkerchief on a plate, and pours scent on it, turning as he does so to the owner, and saying, "Please tell me when you think there is enough." While his back is turned, the attendant, who has been standing by holding a lighted candle, with a mischievous wink at the company, tilts the candle, and sets the handkerchief on fire. The performer apologizes for his assistant's stupidity, but appeals to the company to bear witness that it was no fault of his, and bringing forward the plate, with the handkerchief still blazing, offers it to the owner. She, of course, declines to take it, and the performer, remarking, "You don't like it in this condition; well, then, suppose I put it in paper for you," places the plate on the floor, telling the assistant to put it on the table, and runs off to get the paper. The attendant tries to lift off the plate, but finds that it burns his fingers. However, after several attempts, getting the plate a little nearer to the table at each, he manages to place it on the table. This little by-play amuses the audience, and gives the performer the few moments which he requires for his preparations behind the scenes. Coming forward with a sheet of clean white paper, he wraps therein the still blazing handkerchief, crushing it together so as to extinguish the flames. He offers the packet so made to the lady, who, believing that it contains nothing but ashes, declines to receive it, when the professor, tearing the paper apart, pulls out the handkerchief perfectly restored, while the burnt fragments have vanished.

The effect last mentioned is produced by the use of a double paper, pasted together round three of its sides, and thus forming a kind of bag in the centre. In this bag the performer, during his momentary absence from the stage, places the genuine handkerchief, folded so as to occupy as little space as possible. The handkerchief, therefore, lies between the two thicknesses of the paper, and when the rolled up packet is torn open from outside, may be removed without disturbing the burnt fragments, which still remain inside the paper.

Where it is necessary, as for the purpose of this trick, to introduce some article into a lemon, the necessary preparation should be made

as follows:—A lemon with a thick hard rind should be selected, and a plug-shaped piece, about an inch and a half in diameter, should be scooped with a sharp knife out of one end. The pulp may now be removed, leaving the rind a mere shell, while the piece originally cut out will form a kind of stopper, which may be secured in its place by thrusting a hair-pin or piece of wire through the fruit and plug from side to side, and nipping off the ends flush with the outer surface. When the performer exhibits the lemon, he takes care to have the cut end inwards towards his palm; so that the circular mark is concealed by the fingers, and when he desires to produce the handkerchief he cuts the opposite end.

THE HANDKERCHIEF CUT UP, BURNT, AND FINALLY FOUND IN A CANDLE.—We have already described one or two modes in which a handkerchief, after being apparently cut up, or burnt, may be reproduced in its original condition. This is another and very effective form of the same trick.

Having borrowed a white handkerchief, you exchange it, by one or other of the means already described, for a substitute of similar appearance, and place the latter on the table. You then remember that, as you are about to burn the handkerchief, you will want a candle. You call to your attendant, but he, previously instructed, does not answer, and after a momentary pause you determine to fetch it yourself. You have, however, no sooner left the stage, than you meet the defaulter, and angrily remarking, in a stage whisper, so that the audience may hear, that he is never at hand when you want him, or making some similar observation, you order him to bring a lighted candle. Your absence is only momentary, but it has enabled you to throw him the real handkerchief, which he forthwith rolls up, and places inside a candle made hollow for the purpose; which he then places in a candlestick, lights, and brings on the stage. You have meanwhile taken up the substitute handkerchief, and advanced to the audience, getting ready the while in your palm a small piece of cambric, about six inches in diameter. Taking the handkerchief by the centre, in the same hand, you pull out between the first finger and thumb a portion of the piece of cambric, which is naturally taken to be a part of the handkerchief. Handing to one of the spec-

tators a pair of scissors, you request him to cut off a small portion of the handkerchief. He cuts off a piece of the cambric. Holding this piece in the one hand, and taking the remainder, with the substitute handkerchief hanging down below it, in the other, you offer to teach the company your patent method of mending handkerchiefs, requiring neither thimble, needle, nor thread. Applying the cut edges to the candle, you set them on fire, rubbing them together. Finally, blowing out the flame, and throwing the handkerchief over the hand that holds the pieces, you palm them, and immediately afterwards show the handkerchief (*i.e.*, the substitute) completely restored.

The mode of procedure so far is pretty well known, and it is highly probable that one or more of the audience will be acquainted with it. Accordingly, you may safely expect to perceive in some quarter or other, knowing glances, or confidential communications as to "how it's done." Noticing, or pretending to notice this, you say, "Ah, I see there is a gentleman there who thinks he has found me out. You fancy, no doubt, sir, that I have performed this trick in the old fashion, by cutting a piece of cambric which does not form part of the handkerchief. Why, my dear sir, the trick in that form is as old as—your grandmother. But it is my own fault; I quite forgot to show you that the handkerchief was really cut. It is my rule never to perform the same trick twice over, but I feel so hurt at your unkind suspicion that I must break my rule for once, and this time you shall cut the handkerchief yourself." You offer him the scissors, and holding up the handkerchief (which the audience naturally believe to be the genuine one) by the middle, you allow him to cut a piece fairly out of it, immediately afterwards spreading it out, and showing that a large hole is made in the centre. Again, you hold the edges to the candle, but this time, as if by accident, you let the flames fairly catch hold of the handkerchief, which you are compelled to drop upon a plate or tray, and to let it burn itself out. For a moment, you feign to be embarrassed, and the audience are half inclined to believe that you have made a mistake, and your trick has failed; but you quickly recover your confidence, and remark, "This is not precisely what I intended, ladies and gentlemen. I am afraid I have made a little mistake, but fortunately it is easily remedied. The fact is, I forgot to pronounce the magic word at the right

moment, and the handkerchief has in consequence stopped short at the first stage of transmigration. To make it pass into the second stage, that of renewed existence, I must again employ the agency of fire. See, I place the ashes in my magic pistol, and ram them down with the mystic wand. Now what shall I aim at? Ah! the candle on the table! A capital mark, and as it has been before you throughout the trick, you know that it cannot have undergone any preparation." (You fire, aiming at the candle.) "Did you see it pass? No. It has done so, nevertheless; but I must have put in a little too much powder, for it has gone right into the candle." (You bring the candle forward.) "Will some one oblige me by seeing if it is really in the candle." The candle is broken in half, and the handkerchief is found embedded therein.

The candle used for the purpose of the above trick is sometimes a genuine wax or composite candle, but more often a mere pasteboard tube, previously cut half asunder in the middle (so as to break without difficulty), and then covered with glazed white paper, in imitation of a candle, a genuine candle-end being inserted at the top. If a candle of this latter description is used, the performer must himself break it, as a spectator doing so would at once discover that it was a prepared article.

Before quitting the subject of handkerchiefs burnt and restored, we may mention a little appliance called the "handkerchief table," which is designed for this purpose. It is precisely the same in make and operation as the table or tripod, described at page 139, for burning and restoring a card, but a little larger. To those acquainted with the card tripod, the use and effect of the handkerchief table will be sufficiently obvious, without any special explanation.

The Shower of Sweets.—This is a trick which is sure to be well received by a juvenile audience. The performer comes forward with an ordinary plate or salver, which he hands for examination, and then places on the table. He next borrows a handkerchief. Laying it flat over the plate, he lifts it up by nipping the middle with his finger and thumb, letting the four corners hang down. He then strokes down the handkerchief with the other hand, under the pretence of mesmerising it, when a shower of burnt almonds, chocolate

creams, acidulated drops, etc., pours down upon the plate. Again he strokes the handkerchief, and again the shower pours down; and the plate, being by this time full, is handed round to the company to prove that in the quality of the sweets, at any rate, there is "no deception."

The secret lies in the use of a small bag, of cambric or fine calico, shaped like an inverted letter V. The edges are turned in at the mouth, and through each hem is passed a straight piece of watch-spring or whalebone, one a little longer than the other. The natural tendency of these is to lie side by side, keeping the mouth of the bag closed; but if pressure be simultaneously applied to both ends of the springs, the longer one assumes the shape of a semicircle, thereby opening the bag. Through the opposite end of the bag is passed a pointed wire hook. The bag is beforehand filled with nuts or bon-bons, and hung by the hook to the edge of the table on the side away from the spectators. Though the bag is mouth downwards, the action of the spring keeps it closed, and nothing can fall out. When the operator, standing behind the table, draws the handkerchief over the plate, he allows a portion of the hinder edge to hang over the edge of the table nearest to himself. When he picks up the handkerchief, which he does with his finger and thumb, he takes hold, through the handkerchief, of the upper part of the bag. The bag is thus lifted up within the handkerchief, but is concealed by the folds of the latter hanging down around it. The movement of the hand in stroking down the handkerchief presses the springs, and the bag opens, again closing as soon as the pressure is relaxed. When all the contents have fallen, the performer drops the handkerchief, bag and all, on the table, while he advances to the audience with the results of the trick, and, on again picking up the handkerchief, lets fall the empty bag upon the *servante,* or slips it into his pocket.

It will be observed that, in the form of the trick above described, the use of both hands is necessary—one to hold the handkerchief, while the other, stroking it down, presses the springs, and causes the bag to open. There is an improved form of the bag, used, and, we believe, invented by Robert-Houdin, which enables the performer, holding the handkerchief at arm's length, to perform the trick by mere word of command, without using the left hand at all. The

bag is in this case of the form shown in Fig. 109. No springs are used, but the bag, when filled, is closed by folding down the flap, and hooking the little ring over the hook, the bag thereby assuming the appearance shown in Fig. 110. It is picked up within the handkerchief as described in the case of the spring bag; but when it is desired to produce the sweets, a slight inclination of the hook to the left (effected by a barely perceptible movement of the thumb and finger) causes the ring to slip off and the flap to fall down, as in Fig. 109, releasing the whole contents of the bag.

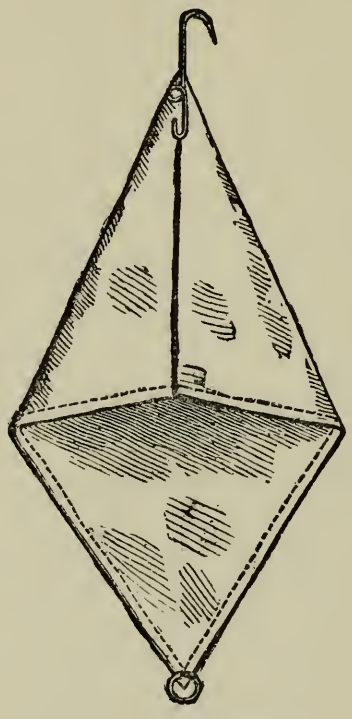


FIG 109.

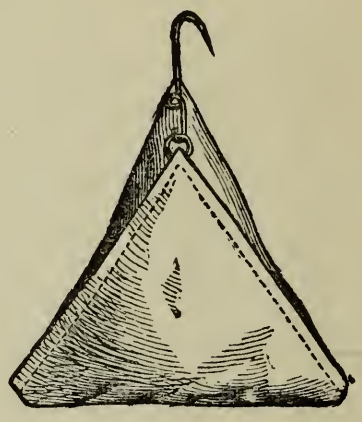


FIG. 110.

The trick may be still further improved by having two similar bags stitched back to back, each with its own ring and hook. In this case an inclination to the left releases one hook, and an inclination to the right the other. The two bags may be filled with bonbons of different colours or descriptions, or the one may be filled with bonbons and the other with grey peas. In this case you may introduce the trick by some observations upon the singular effects of the human breath, and how greatly such effects vary in different persons. A handkerchief is borrowed, and a lady and gentleman are requested each to hold a plate. The lady is requested to breathe on the handkerchief, and a shower of bonbons falls on her plate. The gentleman breathes in his turn, and retires, amid derisive applause, with a plate of peas.

While upon the subject of the mysterious production of sweets, we may incidentally mention another piece of apparatus designed for this purpose. This is a wand, made to correspond in general appearance with that habitually used by the performer. Internally, it is a

hollow tube, with a stiff wire running throughout its whole length. One end of this wire is fixed to a moveable cap, which covers the upper end of the wand, while the other terminates in a sort of little wooden plug, which closes the opening at the other end. A spiral spring within the upper end of the wand tends to force the cap upwards, and so to keep the opposite end closed; but if pressure be applied to the cap, the plug is forced outwards, and the tube thereby opened. *See* Fig. 111, in which *a* represents the wand in its normal condition (*i.e.*, closed), while *b* represents it with the cap pressed downwards, and the opposite end consequently open.

FIG. 111.

To prepare the wand for use, the cap is pressed and the valve opened. The wand is then filled with very minute sweetmeats, of the description known among juveniles as "hundreds and thousands;" after which the pressure on the cap is removed, and the plug allowed to retire into its place. The wand, thus prepared, is at the proper moment brought forward in place of the ordinary wand, which in its present condition it exactly resembles. The performer then declares his intention of passing a shower of sweets into the pocket of a spectator, and, having first shown it empty, touches the inside with the wand, at the same moment pressing the cap, when the sweets within escape into the pocket.

THE FEATHERS FROM AN EMPTY HANDKERCHIEF.—This is a very simple illusion, but has nevertheless been a favourite with many noted *prestidigitateurs*. Its effect is as follows:—The performer comes forward with a large handkerchief, or small shawl, which he shakes about in all directions, to show that it is empty. Throwing it over the left hand, he with the other grasps it by the middle, and removing the hand over which it was thrown, lets it hang perpendicularly down. To all appearance it is still empty; but on being shaken it is seen to contain some solid object. With a twist of the wrist, the performer turns the handkerchief and its contents upwards.

The handkerchief naturally falls down over the coat-sleeve, leaving exposed a handsome military plume. The performer grasps, with the left hand, the stem of this plume and the centre of the handkerchief, immediately drawing away the right arm from beneath it. Again the handkerchief on being waved about is seen to contain something, which being held upright, the handkerchief falls down as before, and a second plume is revealed. The operation is again and again repeated with a like result, till fifteen or twenty plumes have been produced; the handkerchief being at any moment handed for examination.

The explanation lies in the fact that the plumes, which may be compressed into a very small compass, are laid beforehand along the arms of the performer, who puts on his coat over them. The stems of the plumes are nearest to the hands. When the handkerchief is thrown over either hand, the other hand catches hold through it of the stem of one of the feathers. This hand now remains stationary, while the other arm is drawn from under the handkerchief. The fact that the plumes come out of the sleeves is thus much less patent than if the opposite hand made the motion and drew the feather out. The plumes on being drawn out expand considerably; so much so, indeed, that it is hard to believe that the quantity with which the stage is strewn could possibly have been concealed about the person of the performer.

Some performers have in addition a bundle of plumes fastened together by a thread, and laid along the inside of the trousers and waistcoat, in such manner that the stems are just within the breast of the latter. After having exhausted his sleeves, the operator, holding the handkerchief (by two of its corners) across his chest, to show that it is quite empty, catches hold, with the second and third fingers, of the stem of the bundle within the waistcoat, and moving the handkerchief with a quick sidelong motion from left to right, or *vice versâ*, draws out the feathers behind it, and immediately breaking the thread, shakes them out in a shower on the stage.

There is another form of the same trick, in which the handkerchief plays only a secondary part, but, from its near relation to that last described, we insert it in this place. It is generally called

THE FLYING PLUME.—For this trick you require two plumes, as nearly as possible alike in appearance. To the stem of each should be attached a loop of string or ribbon, two or three inches in length. You must also have a japanned tin tube, of about twenty inches long, and three in diameter. On either end is fitted a cap, of about two inches in depth. One of these caps is perfectly plain, but within the other is an inner cap, made after the fashion of the middle compartment of the snuff-box vase (*see* page 76). The relative tightness of the inner and outer caps is such that, if in removing the outer one with the finger and thumb some slight degree of lateral pressure is exerted, it nips the inner cap, which comes off with it; but if the outer cap is removed without pressure, the inner cap remains on the tube, forming a false top to it. Within this inner cap, which is internally about an inch and a half deep, is glued a short end of a third plume, similar in colour and appearance to the two others. The interior of the tube is divided into two parts by a longitudinal division, also of tin, running diagonally nearly from end to end. The tube is thus divided into two wedge-shaped compartments, the cap at one end giving access to the one, and the cap at the other end to the other; each being large enough to contain a plume. (*See* Fig. 112, representing a section of the entire tube, and Fig. 113, giving a slightly enlarged view of the ends.) The tube is prepared beforehand by filling the compartment which is closed by the double cap with bonbons of various kinds; the other compartment being left empty. One of the plumes is concealed in the left sleeve of the performer, as in the last trick.

FIG. 112.

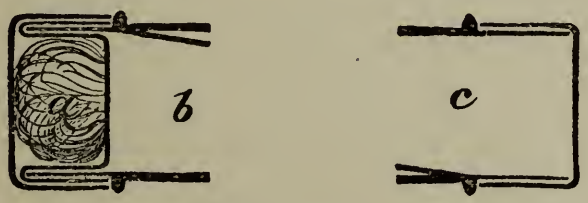


FIG. 113.

These preparations having been duly made beforehand, you come forward with a small shawl, or large handkerchief, the tube, and the second plume. Laying the tube and plume upon the table, you

request the audience to satisfy themselves that the shawl contains nothing. You then ask some one to step forward and take care of the shawl, which you meanwhile carelessly throw over your left hand, immediately after taking hold of its centre with your right, as before described, and drawing the left arm away. It is needless to remark, to those who have followed the explanation of the last trick, that the hidden plume is thereby brought under the shawl, though, being held by the loop of ribbon, there is nothing to betray its presence. You hand the shawl in this condition to the person who has volunteered to hold it, requesting him to keep it at arm's length, still hanging down. Next taking up the tube, you open it at the plain or unprepared end, and holding it mouth downwards, show that it is (apparently) empty; then ostentatiously place the plume therein, and put the cap on.

In returning to your table you take the opportunity to reverse the tube, and to lay it down in such a manner that the opposite end (*i.e.*, that with the false top) may be turned towards the audience. Some performers do this by letting the tube fall, as if by accident, but this is, in our opinion, a clumsy and inartistic proceeding. By gesticulating a little with the tube, in announcing what you are about to do, so that the audience may, little by little, become less certain as to which end you have just opened, and by carelessly transferring the tube from the one hand to the other just as you lay it on the table, you may make the change with scarcely a chance of detection, even by the keenest observer. You then say, "I shall now, ladies and gentlemen, make the plume which you have just seen me place in this tube travel into the shawl which that gentleman is holding, while the tube will be completely filled with objects of interest for the juvenile spectators." Here you may possibly hear, or if not, you pretend to hear, a murmur to the effect that the feather has already left the tube. "Pardon me," you say, "the plume has not yet left the tube, neither will it do so until I give the command," and so saying, you take off the cap, leaving on the false top. The audience see the little bit of feather within, which they naturally take to be the end of the genuine plume. Again you replace the cap; and after going through some appropriate magical ceremony, again remove it, but this time carrying off the false top with it. (It should have been

mentioned that the tube is japanned in such manner that the eye cannot detect any difference whether the false top is on or off.) Placing the cap, with the false top within it, on the table, you come forward and pour the sweets from the tube, while the shawl is on examination found to contain the plume.

Some performers, for the purpose of this trick, use a tube with a false top, as above described, but open from end to end, without the diagonal partition above mentioned. Before placing the plume in the tube, which they do standing behind the table, they secretly remove the cap at the lower end, and allow the plume to fall through on the *servante*, where it remains. In this case, there is no production of sweets, but the plume having been produced from the shawl, the performer removes both caps, and hands the empty tube for examination.

THE MAGIC LAUNDRY.—There is very little brilliancy, either of invention or of manipulation, in this trick, but it is nevertheless generally very well received.

The performer requests the loan of half-a-dozen handkerchiefs, taking care to accept white handkerchiefs only. These he collects in a wooden box, having somewhat the appearance of a good-sized tea caddy. Having got the required number, he places the box upon his table, and invites the attention of the audience to an ordinary tin or wooden pail. This he fills with water, and placing it in front of the stage, takes the handkerchiefs out of the box, and drops them in, stirring them about with his wand; and making as much fun as he can by his pretended anxiety that they shall be thoroughly washed. Having kept this up as long as the audience appear to be amused thereby, he wrings out the handkerchiefs one by one, and throws them into a little shallow metal tub or pan (japanned, and about four inches in depth), which his assistant at this moment brings forward for that purpose, together with a cover after the manner of a sauce-pan-lid, and a pistol, both of which he places carelessly on the table. Having placed the handkerchiefs in this little tub, the performer announces that having washed them, he will now proceed to dry them, for which purpose he pours over them a little spirits of wine, to which he sets fire. After letting them blaze for a moment or two

he claps on the cover. "Your handkerchiefs are now dried, ladies and gentlemen," he says, "but I have still to fold and iron them. It does not take very long, as you will see." Taking up the pistol, he fires at the tub, and immediately removing the cover, comes forward to the audience, and requests them to identify their handkerchiefs, which are seen neatly folded, and apparently just washed and ironed, within it.

The intelligent reader will have already guessed that the trick depends upon a substitution of handkerchiefs. The box in which the genuine handkerchiefs are received has within it a moveable flap, between which and the back of the box the substitutes are placed. When the required number has been collected, this flap is let fall, releasing the substitute handkerchiefs, and at the same time covering the genuine ones. The substitutes having been dropped into the pail of water, the assistant carries off the box, and behind the scenes damps and folds the borrowed handkerchiefs, pressing them flat with a hot iron, if available; if not, with a cold one. The tub or pan which is used for the conclusion of the trick has an inner lining of such a size as to fit tightly within it, but about an inch less in depth. The lid again fits within this after the manner of a saucepan lid, but not quite so tightly as the lining itself fits within the outer pan. The folded handkerchiefs are placed within this lining, and the lid placed on, or rather in it—the two together as brought forward having the appearance of a lid only. When the performer claps the lid on the pan, the lining is thereby introduced, but when he again removes it, the lining is left in, exposing the folded handkerchiefs, while the substitutes remain concealed between the true and false bottoms of the pan.

The performer, of necessity, accepts white handkerchiefs only, as a coloured one would betray the secret, from the absence of its "double" among the substitutes. Some performers, in order to obviate the suspicion which might be suggested by an evident preference of white handkerchiefs, arrange that a coloured one, of which they possess a duplicate, shall be offered by a confederate among the audience. This certainly heightens the effect of the trick, as it seems to negative the idea of substitution, and though in general we deprecate, as belonging to a low class of art, the employment of con-

federates, this is just the case in which the use of such an expedient may for once be deemed admissible.

THE EGG AND THE HANDKERCHIEF.—For this capital feat, which is generally identified with the name of Colonel Stodare, the following are the requirements:—A glass goblet, two small handkerchiefs (generally of plain crimson silk, and about sixteen inches square), a larger silk handkerchief—to which is attached, by a silk thread of about four inches in length, a blown egg-shell—and a hollow metal egg made of zinc, enamelled white, with an oval opening on one side of it measuring about an inch and a half by one inch, or a little more.

The performer comes forward, having in his right hand the goblet and one of the red silk handkerchiefs. The larger silk handkerchief is thrown with apparent carelessness over the other hand, and upon it rests the blown egg, so placed that the thread may be out of sight, while beneath the egg, concealed in a fold of the handkerchief, lies the second red handkerchief, rolled up into as small a compass as possible. The metal egg is, meanwhile, placed in the left-hand secret pocket of the performer, who introduces the trick as follows: "I have here, ladies and gentlemen, a drinking-glass, a couple of silk handkerchiefs, and an egg, all, as you will perceive, of the most ordinary description." He passes quickly in front of the audience, as though tendering the articles for examination (taking care, however, to keep his right arm advanced towards the spectators, so that the glass and small silk handkerchief may bear the brunt of inspection), and finally places the glass and small handkerchief on a table or chair in full view. "Pray observe," he continues, "that not one of the articles is removed from your sight, even for one moment. Now, please follow me closely. I will place the egg in the glass, and cover it over with this handkerchief." This he does by one movement, for as the egg is already lying on the handkerchief, a mere turn of the wrist places the egg in the glass, and at the same time lets fall the handkerchief over it; and at the same time the smaller handkerchief, which was concealed in the larger, is released, and falls into the glass with the egg. "You have all seen me place the egg in the glass" (at the same time shaking the glass, to show by the sound

that the egg is still there), "which I will not again touch. I shall now take this small handkerchief" (the one which has remained on the table), "and standing as far as possible away, I shall command the handkerchief to dissolve and pass into the glass, and the egg which is now in the glass to come into my hands." So saying, he holds up the handkerchief, in such manner as to show indirectly that he has nothing else in his hands. Taking a few steps, as though merely to get further from the glass, and holding the handkerchief hanging down between the finger and thumb of the right hand, he drops the other hand to his side, and secretly takes from his pocket the hollow egg, which he palms, keeping the opening outwards. He then, standing with his left side towards the spectators, joins his open hands, as in Fig. 114, the handkerchief hanging down between them. Requesting the audience to watch him narrowly, that they may be quite sure that there is no deception, he begins to wave his joined hands slowly up and down, the second and third fingers of the right hand (which, it will be remembered, is away from the audience) meanwhile gradually working the handkerchief into the hollow of the egg. He every now and then pauses, to show that the handkerchief is gradually diminishing, and at last when it is wholly worked into the egg, opens his hands, and shows the egg lying in his palm, taking care, of course, that the opening is undermost. To all appearance, the handkerchief has changed into an egg. "Here is the egg," he remarks; "let us see if the handkerchief also has obeyed my bidding." So saying, he lays the egg, still with the opening downwards, upon the table, and taking hold with the finger and thumb of the handkerchief which covers the glass, lifts it daintily up, carrying with it, concealed in its folds, the

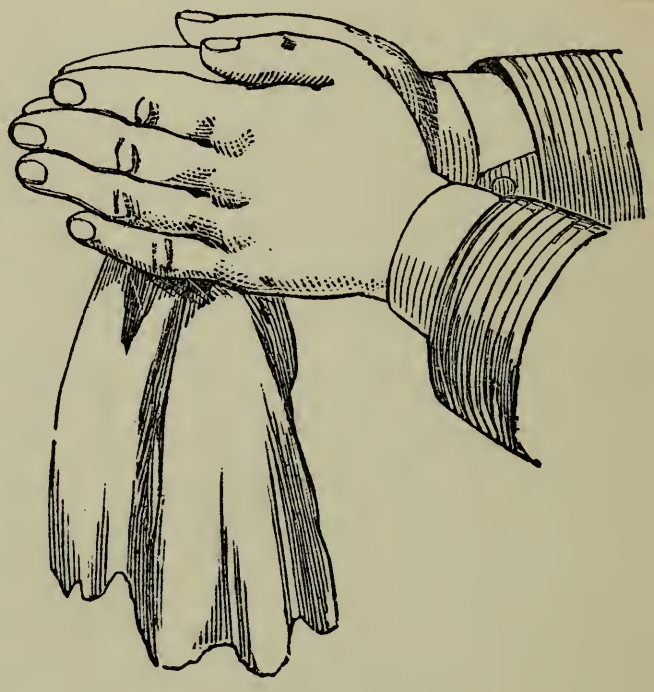


FIG. 114.

egg-shell attached thereto, and leaving the duplicate red handkerchief lying in the glass.

It may sometimes, though not very often, occur that one or other of the spectators, suspecting some peculiarity about the egg, may ask to be permitted to examine it. This, of course, you cannot permit, while to refuse would destroy half the prestige of the illusion. Fortunately, there is a way out of the difficulty which absolutely enhances the effect of the trick. "You would like to see the egg," you reply; "by all means. It is a special feature of my entertainment that all articles used therein will bear the strictest examination. Here is the egg. During these few words, you have taken up the sham egg with the fingers of your right hand, taking care, of course, to keep the opening away from the audience, and have thence apparently transferred it to your left, with which hand you offer it to the too curious spectator. It is hardly necessary to remark, that in the apparent transfer of the egg to the left hand, you have really palmed it in your right; and as you extend the left hand to the spectator, you quietly drop it from the right into the *pochette* on that side. The inquirer holds out his hand to receive it. "Pray examine it closely," you say, opening your empty hand over his own. "What! you have not got it? Ah, that is *your* fault; you were not quick enough. I always find that this experiment makes the egg excessively volatile." This unexpected *dénouement* never fails to raise a laugh against the individual who has sought to embarrass you, while the impromptu disappearance of the egg will be regarded by many as the most marvellous portion of the trick. The same expedient will be equally available to prevent the examination, at an awkward moment, of other small articles.

There is another method, in which the trick is performed with handkerchiefs borrowed from the audience. In this case, *two* metal eggs, like that above described, are used, the blown egg being dispensed with. The performer commences the trick by borrowing two handkerchiefs, a lady's handkerchief, and a larger one, preferably of silk. These he places on his table, secretly exchanging the smaller one for a substitute of his own, and retires for a moment to fetch a glass. He takes advantage of his momentary absence to insert the handkerchief of which he has gained possession into one of the hollow

eggs, and returns with this egg lying (the opening downwards) on his left palm, the other hand holding the glass, while the second hollow egg is concealed in his left *pochette*. Coming forward to the audience, he picks up, in passing, the larger handkerchief from the table, and handing the glass, as forming the principal portion of the apparatus, for examination, throws the handkerchief over the hand which holds the egg, showing by its outline beneath the silk that it has not been removed, and meanwhile drawing out with the finger and thumb of the concealed hand the handkerchief hidden therein; which is thus ready to be placed in the glass along with the egg, under cover of the larger handkerchief. The rest of the trick proceeds as already described, save that in this instance, the egg not being attached to the outer handkerchief, it is necessary to clip it with the fingers through the handkerchief when the latter is removed. To do this easily and effectually, it is well, in placing the egg in the glass, to place it with the opening upwards, the edges of the opening giving a readier hold than the unbroken surface of the opposite side.

THE HAND BOX, FOR VANISHING A HANDKERCHIEF.—While discussing the subject of handkerchief tricks, we must not omit to mention the "hand box," a clever little contrivance for causing the disappearance of a handkerchief. It consists of a little tin box, of the size and shape of the heel of a gentleman's boot, closed on all sides, save that which answers to the front portion of the heel, which is left open. (*See* Fig. 115.) To one of its sides is riveted or soldered a steel spring, about an inch in length. The free end of this spring forms with the side of the box a sort of clip, by means of which the box can be attached (as shown in the Figure) to the fleshy part of the hand, the opening being towards the fingers. Being within the hand, it is of course unseen by the audience. The manner of its use is much the same as that of the hollow egg

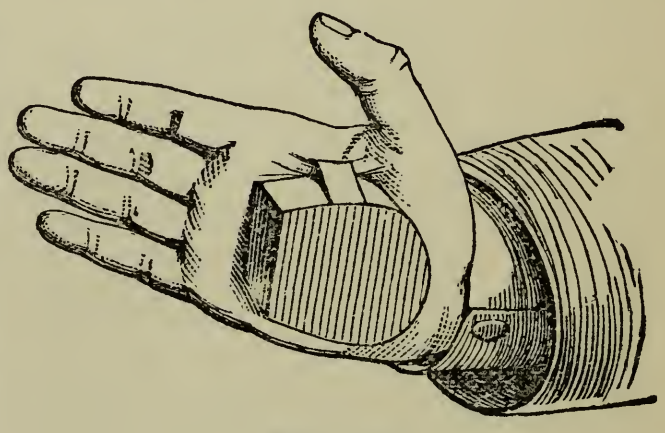


FIG. 115.

described in the last trick, save that the hand box is never exhibited. As soon as the handkerchief is fairly worked in, the left hand is closed, as if containing it; the effect being to the audience as if the handkerchief was merely rolled up and placed in the left hand. On opening the hand, the handkerchief is found to have disappeared, the performer having meanwhile plenty of opportunity to drop the concealed handkerchief, box and all, into the *pochette* on his right-hand side.

The hand box may be made available in a variety of ways, as follows: The performer having borrowed a handkerchief, secretly changes it for a substitute, which he leaves in full view on the table. Having made what disposition he pleases of the original, he returns, meanwhile placing the hand box in position, and causing by its means the disappearance of the substitute, orders the borrowed article to be found in such place as he may think proper.