

THE DIGITAL SPHINX

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THE SPHINX

An Independent Magazine For Magicians



Dante


VOLUME XLVIII
NUMBER ONE

MARCH, 1949

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S.A.M.
EDITION

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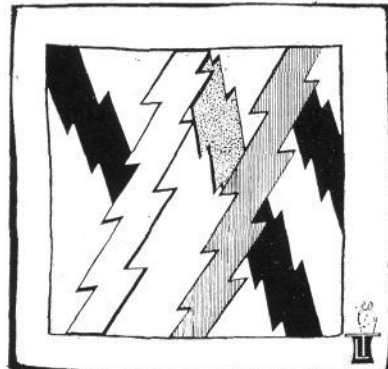
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The Cover

Forty-seven years ago Dante was selected as "the magician of the month" by *The Sphinx* and his portrait was on the cover of the magazine. In the article which mentioned he had unusual ability and was much admired he was described as "a young man born some years ago but was too young at the time to remember his age."

For many years Dante has had one of the most elaborate full evening shows of magic and illusions in the world. He has a unique personality and a completely individualistic style of performance. Whereas he has achieved fame both as a sleight-of-hand performer and illusionist it is undoubtedly true that his showmanship is his outstanding quality.

The photograph on the cover shows Dante in the performance of his version of the "Substitution Trunk" effect in which he is assisted by the glamorous Moi-Yo Miller.

This mystery has been one of his favorite illusions throughout his famous career.

Dante was born in Copenhagen, Denmark, but left there as a lad of about six. When he came to America he made his home in Chicago and lived in that city until his tours took him all over the world. His real name is Alvin Harry Jensen, but for many years he was known as Harry Jansen. Under the latter name for several years he and his partner, Halton, ran a magic shop in Chicago. For a number of seasons he toured with specialty companies and in Lyceum circuits. Later in vaudeville he was known as Herr Jansen and used the same billing when he first toured with a full show. He began using the name Dante when he took out the Thurston number two show. Later he took over the show himself and toured the world with it to great success.

Magic in Print

Cyclopedia of Magic

In its 498 pages, this book has a quantity of excellent new material and the best, in the opinion of its editor, Henry Hay, of various phases of what was written in the past. The book, designed "as a one volume library" on magic, is a marvelously comprehensive introduction to magic's history, personalities, and methods. Of course, not every sleight, trick, or performer is mentioned for that would require 50,000 pages instead of 500, and therefore the title of "Cyclopedia" was an unfortunate choice and misleading. The editor has picked out what he considered most important and then gave references to other works for those who wished to go further in a particular branch of the subject. This is an excellent book for the serious beginner for it will give him an overall view of magic and will advise him how to go on. There are several hundred illustrations. Published by David McKay.

Controlled Miracles

Bill Simon has gathered and set down 18 excellent feats of sleight-of-hand with cards, coins, and cigarettes. None of the moves is really difficult and each effect has real

subtlety. Edited by Bruce Elliott and with clear drawings by Frank Garcia, this book will appeal particularly to the close-up worker. Published by The Back Room Press.

Thanks to Leipzig!

Victor Farelli, in his usual clear and detailed manner, has written instructions for performing two of the late Nate Leipzig's card masterpieces. One is a transposition of cards and the other a mental effect. In addition there are a history of the Thirty Card Trick and a short treatise on False Counting with Cards. The material is very valuable to card performers. Illustrated with photographs. George Armstrong published the book and supplied a foreword.

John Ramsay's Routines With Cups and Balls

The brilliant work of the Scottish magician, John Ramsay, is at its height with the Cups and Balls. It is subtle, clever, mystifying and entertaining magic. In this book, Victor Farelli describes in complete detail Ramsay's routine and illustrates his text with photographs of Ramsay's hands. Cup and ball performers will need this book whether they are be-

ginners or advanced. Farelli has added to his book, a most interesting historical account of the trick and a long bibliography. John Ramsay has written the preface. Published by George Armstrong.

The Card Wizard

Bill Turner has written this 194 page book with the idea in mind of instructing those who wish to learn card tricks. However, he has a quantity of new twists and ideas which old card tricksters will find worth knowing. The many Nelson C. Hahne illustrations really are marvelous in their clarity and helpfulness. Turner's text is easy to read and to follow. Instruction by Henry Hay. Published by David McKay.

Blackstone's Tricks Anyone Can Do

Intended as a guide to simple magic, Harry Blackstone has in his 232 pages described nearly 200 tricks with cards, string, and other objects, mental feats and table magic. The choice of material is varied and interesting although card effects are in the preponderance. There is a biographical note by J. J. Proskauer and the book is illustrated. Published by Perma-books.

Deux Conférences Sur La Prestidigitation

"Two Lectures on Conjuring," by Dr. Jules Dhotel, a book of fifty-five pages (10 by 6½ inches), is divided into four parts:—The first lecture is entitled "Magic . . . This Misunderstood Art." Mainly historical. The second lecture deals with (alleged) Mediumship, Fakirism and Thought Transmission. The third section contains a detailed explanation of the tricks performed with a magic wand during the first lecture. The tricks in question are accompanied by "patter" in verse, written by the author and called "The Ballade of the Magic Wand." The final section — containing twenty-three pages — explains fifteen tricks used in the course of the second lecture: some of them are new.

Illustrated with six sketches and written in the author's usual explicit style, this work is of the greatest interest and is highly recommended to all who can read French. As only 240 copies have been printed, this book will certainly become a "collector's item." Put out by A. Mayette. —V. Farelli.

MARCH, 1949

Card in the Jug

By Geo. Johnstone

Here is an effect that in a round-about way fooled its originator.

At a recent Chicago magic club meeting I presented a group of original (I'm an optimist) tricks. The effect explained below was among them. Frankly, I didn't think too much of it and included it just as a time-killer between the super (?) effects.

After the show, to my amazement, nobody remembered any of the other effects but all wanted "in" on the bottle trick . . . So, here 'tis.

Magician calls attention to a gallon bottle sitting on his table. The mouth of the bottle is sealed by a cork. Thru the center of the cork runs a 1/2 inch wide red ribbon. Half of this ribbon hangs outside the jug while the other half dangles part way down inside the bottle. A large silk is now draped over the bottle.

Magician now goes into the audience to have a card selected and returned to the deck. The cards are then thrown at the silk-covered bottle a la card star shower. Those fortunate enough to possess a card-

shooting gun could use it here to good advantage instead of tossing the deck.

The magician now draws back the silk to reveal the chosen card dangling on the ribbon within the bottle.

The bottle can now be brought forward for those who wish to scrutinize it at a closer angle for slots or to see if the card is of the folding-up variety.

I believe the simplicity of this effect is what made me hesitant in presenting it before a group of magi. I also believe its simplicity was what fooled them. While looking for ingenious gim-cracks the only logical method was overlooked.

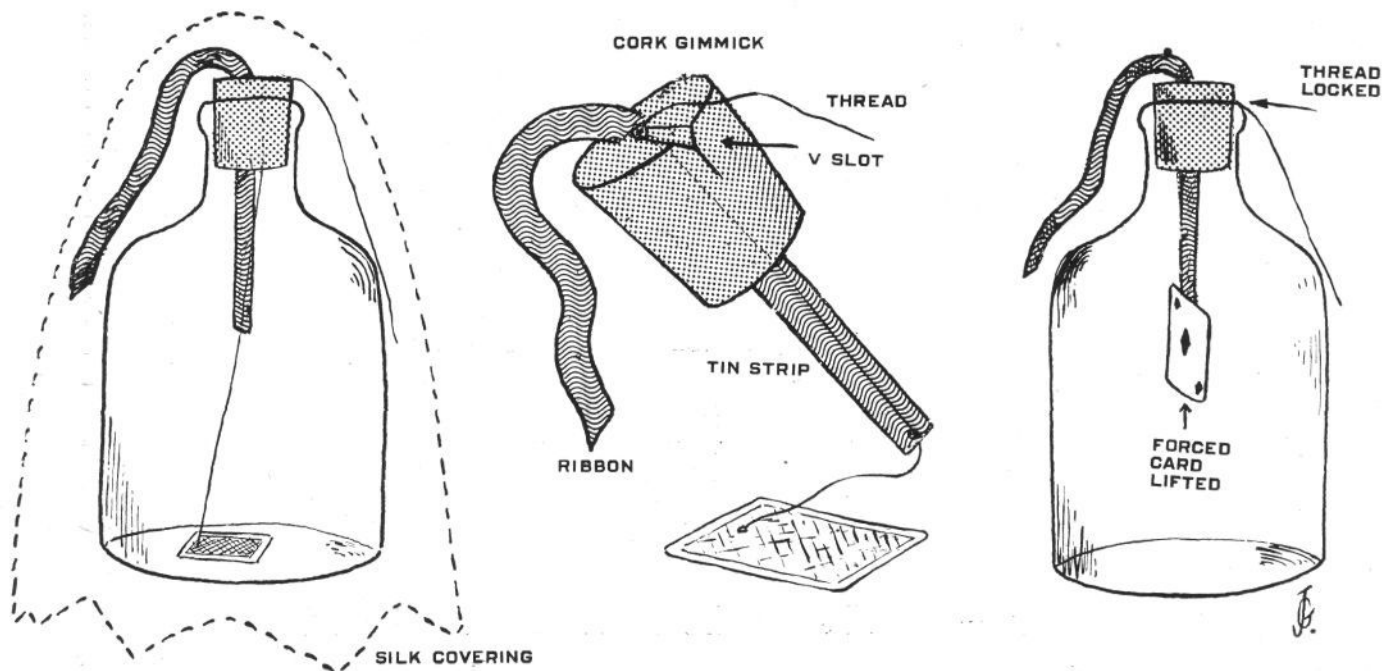
A quick survey of the illustration will explain the easily constructed gimmick. The "ribbon" that hangs into the bottle is a strip of tin painted to match the piece of real ribbon protruding from the top of the cork. A length of thread runs through a hole in the cork then down the tin "ribbon" and thru another hole at the tip of the "ribbon." This end of the thread is fastened to the back of

a card which lies on the bottom of the bottle. The other end of this thread hangs outside the bottle in the back. When magician grasps silk to draw it from the bottle he pinches silk between the neck and shoulder of the bottle, which will include the thread. Instead of lifting silk from the bottle he draws it off towards the back. When he feels a slight tug he knows that the card has reached its "locking point." (See slit in cork in illustration). The natural pressure of the cork will hold the thread stationery in the slit.

If your table top is not above the eye-level of a seated audience a tray with a slight rim will hide the card laying at the bottom of the bottle.

You will find at the finish of the trick that you may take the whole "works" down into the audience but do not let it stray from your hands.

Another thought I had but never used was to have the bottle filled with water (which will in no way hinder the action of the gimmick) to dispell any ideas that the bottle is equipped with "trap-doors."



Sorcar's Dictionary Trick

By P. C. Sorcar



Sorcar's Dictionary Trick is an adaptation of many old effects. In its new form, it is highly interesting and effective and I am doing it now-a-days with phenomenal success. The use of "Attaboy" has made it more beautiful and I think "Attaboy" was never used to any greater advantage than in this effect. Here-with, I give the complete description and full routine of the Dictionary Trick as done by me.

Presentation: After one or two tricks in which assistants are absolutely necessary, I decide, on the stage, to do a trick in which no assistant will be required. "Ladies and Gentlemen, now I wish to do some magic without any assistants on the stage. Because assistants, or confederates, can see what is happening and may tell me through some codes unknown to you." I give then silent hints and all my assistants calmly and gracefully go off the scene. But Johnny, my comedian, does not move, and he seems very much pleased. He remains stationary and sang-froid. I ask him to go. He says in reply—"I am not assistant, I am not assistant." I say—"No, you, too must go. You will see what happens and may tell me what you

see." Johnny goes out of sight but reenters with the "Attaboy." He says this wooden bell-boy cannot say anything. "Let him stay then." So saying he goes away. This is the way in which I introduce "Attaboy." I use a giant, life-size, "Attaboy" with giant (jumbo) cards, (see the picture), but you can use the regular 18 inches "Attaboy" as well. To make sure that even the wooden boy cannot see what I do. I tie a fine silk handkerchief over his eyes. Next I introduce a deck of alphabet cards, bearing all the letters from A to Z, and also a small booklet in which fifty different words are typed. Indian magicians can buy the Lexicon cards for their alphabet cards. I have made giant alphabet cards by painting A.B.C.D. etc. on the

blankface Jumbo Cards with waterproof black ink, (say Black Japan). The deck of alphabet cards are well shuffled by the audience who find that there is no trickery in them. Next I introduce the miniature dictionary—the booklet containing fifty different English words. "Ladies and gentlemen, you can well imagine how difficult it is to travel with a voluminous dictionary like Webster Unabridged Dictionary (incidentally J. M. is an editor of it). I must travel light and hence I have here a portable dictionary—it is just a booklet containing fifty different words. (See box at the bottom of the page.)

Will you kindly keep this dictionary with you sir?" So saying the booklet is given to the chief guest. Next the deck of alphabet cards is brought to the audience and one letter (say S) is forced on the audience. Next request is to give the selected letter to the chief guest and he is requested to pick up a word from the dictionary but that word must begin with the selected letter. "Ladies and Gentlemen, in my dictionary there are fifty different words in alphabetical order from A to Z and there are words like extra, enamel, enlist, hotel, humour, hero, house, horticulture, etc., so you must have at least one word that starts with the selected letter as the initial letter. Have you got it, sir. Thank you. So you have one word selected from the fifty different words I have given to you, and it is your free selection. Please remember the word and give me both the card and dictionary. Next, I require the help of this wooden boy who can neither see or say. Out of this deck, which I place in the bottom houlette I will take cards one, by one, like this, and place them in the upper houlette. Please say "stop" where ever you like." Cards are put from

Able	Fire	Illusion	Marriage	Unicorn
Book	Forest	It	Nothing	Umbrella
Cat	Goat	Jackel	Onward	Very
Camel	Going	Kind	Practice	Worst
Dog	Hotel	Killing	Private	Washington
Extra	Humour	Love	Position	X'ray
Enamel	Hero	Lust	Question	Yellow
Enlist	House	Long	Right	You
Father	Horticulture	Lantern	Table	Yes
Fury	Intelligence	Money	Stable	Zemindar

the bottom to the top houlette and as the audience says "stop" the particular card is taken out and placed, back to the audience, on the special stand. Sometimes you will find confusion in the audience, some will say stop and others will say no. In that case I ask "stop or non stop"—audience laughs at this. In this way, say, six cards are selected and placed, back to the audience in a row on the special stand supplied with Attaboy. In the regular stand you will find that six is the maximum number that can be accommodated and so there is a logic in stopping there. Next question should be this—"If you wish to change your mind and change the first card, second card, third card, or any card, please tell me." Suppose someone says third card from the left. "O.K. the

third card from the left is returned and another one selected." The proper illusion is created here. Spectators may change all the six cards on the stand but the "Attaboy," as you all know, will give you the same six cards again. Here they are completely fooled. Next, the magician asks for the word selected. The chief guest says "Stable." Magician asks, "The spelling please?" S-T-A-B-L-E comes the answer." S-T-A-B-L-E six letters, here are six, and they spell "stable"—magician holds the stand and turns it to the audience and the word "stable" is flourished to them. You will have thundering cheers after this. The assistants take the Atta-boy stand.

Secret: To my readers already acquainted with "Attaboy" I have very little to add. The dictionary contains

only one word with A.B.D.J.N.O.T.S. V and Z and hence if you can force any of the above letters you know that the corresponding word will be selected. In my show I invariably force 'S' and make the word "Stable." At the finish I compliment them for selecting the word "Stable" by showing them that there is a magic in this word itself. Take out S it is "table," then take out T it is "able." The audience enjoys this. They come there not only to be amused, baffled and entertained but also to be educated. For a change of programme I give "jackel" or "nothing" or "onward." It goes without saying that you must settle before hand what word you will use and set the letters in the "Attaboy" accordingly. From practical experience I say, it is a very nice trick.

"Come Black"

By John Giordmaine

One of the best tricks on my programme and one which seems to be very mystifying and amusing, is the combination of five tricks and a mistake, which was turned to full advantage, which also makes this trick suitable for any audience. (An assistant is used only if there are children in the audience.)

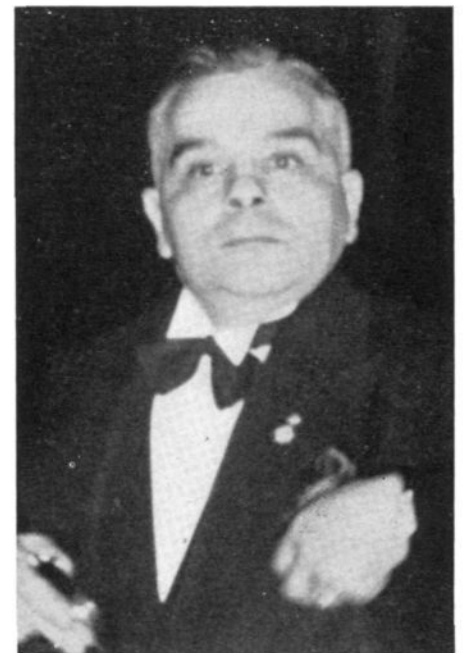
A glass of water is shown and is poured into a can. The magician now asks one of the audience to say "GO," he turns the can upside down and the water is gone, he now asks someone else from the audience to say "come back" and pretends that this last member of the audience said "come black" by mistake. The magician looks a little annoyed and says, "come black eh? All right with me, I'll try and make it black for you. I said, I'll try." Sure enough he pours the water back in the glass and it is black, he now puts the glass of black water in the hat which is on the table, and covers it with a handkerchief. Then he says "On second thought, I had better let someone hold the glass and black water and the handkerchief, while I get my magic wand." So saying, he takes the glass fully covered by the handkerchief and gets close to someone (girl preferred) from the audience (or your own assistant) and ask her to hold it, but before the assistant gets her hand up, the magician flicks the handkerchief and

shows it empty. The glass and black water are gone. He looks in the hat and says, "Here it is again." He takes it out of the hat and holds it on the palm of his hand, and covers it with a small cover, having neither top or bottom, and puts his free hand on top of the cover, as if he was going to shake a cocktail. All of a sudden he seems to be terribly surprised, because he looks at the cover in his hands, and it is absolutely empty. He looks through it, and the audience plainly can see that both glass and black water have disappeared for the second time. The magician now looks in the hat and the glass and black water are there again and he pours it out into a container to show it is real.

Secret: You probably already have guessed that several props are used, in this little playlet. Here they are. 1. "Foo Can" which has been prepared by pouring in five or six drops of india ink, just before the show starts. 2. "A Bottomless Glass" painted black on the inside up to about a half an inch from the top. This is in the hat before you start (I usually show hat empty before, and load the bottomless glass while I am performing, by "dropping" the cover "Milko Cover" in the hat and in taking it out leave the bottomless glass.) 3. "Prepared Handkerchief" with a ring sewn in the centre, so it will look as if the glass is in it

when you take it out of the hat. 4. "Prepared Cover" used in Milko trick shaped like a phantom tube, which fits on the bottomless glass.

Presentation: This is nearly all explained in the effect, but a few remarks may be of great assistance. For instance when you first show the Foo Can, turn it upside down to show it empty, the drops of ink will fall in the special compartment, keep



John Giordmaine

it in the same hand when you pour the water into it, and take the can in the other hand when you want to pour the black water out which then saves you from turning it around. When you put the black

water into the hat watch that the glasses don't touch and make a noise. When you spread the prepared handkerchief over the hat place the ring right over the bottomless glass, so you will not fumble

when you take it out. The rest is self explanatory.

Honestly, my son and I both use this trick at every show, and both think it's one of the best on the programme.

Three From Five is Nothing

By George DeMott

This trick is an elaboration into a stage effect of the old "Phantom Cards" trick, or "Three From Five Leaves Nothing," which has been kicked around for years by side-show magicians, pitchmen, and kid's magic sets. Furthermore, the routine is packed with laughs.

Make up a set of giant cards into a "Phantom Card" set with the front of one card representing four cards and on the back a face card matching one of these on the front. The other card has a face on one side only—in other words is an unprepared card.

Make up three giant cards, matching the three to be vanished so that they unfold in a long row. They can be hinged with Scotch tape to do this. On the top edge of one of the end cards, take a small V hook made from a short bent pin.

Make up two boards about the size of a school slate. One is unprepared. The other is made of light wood panelling so it is hollow. These are about one half to three quarters inch thick. Hinge them together on

one side and on the other side bore a hole through both so a cord can be run through to tie them together. The three giant cards are inside the faked board with the pin hook over the edge with the point facing outside.

One dark colored, large, bandanna handkerchief is needed, also a pistol with two blanks in it. On a side table at the side of the stage stands a glass vase of flowers, or a bottle of wine, or a lamp with glass chimney. This is arranged with the gimmick dealers sell to break the glass when a pistol is shot off.

Now to do the trick, you bring a boy on the stage and have him stand facing the audience. Show the boards and as you use both hands to push the boy around to face the audience, your right hand holding boards rests for a moment on his back. As you remove it, you jab hook into his coat and that leaves the 3 giant cards hanging down on his back in a long row—unbeknown to him or the audience. Show him the boards and have him hold them

while you run a cord through the holes and fasten them together. He now is to hold them with both hands, over his head, facing audience.

A man in audience is handed the pistol.

You now show your set of giant "Phantom Cards" as five cards. Hold them in your left hand. Square up the cards and cover them with the handkerchief. Now reach under and remove the fake card with the face on the rear towards the audience and say "one" and throw it on the table. Remove the unprepared card and show front and back and say "two." By correctly holding your fingers under the handkerchief, you can fake the shape of the supposed remaining cards. Say: "That leaves three cards still under the handkerchief."

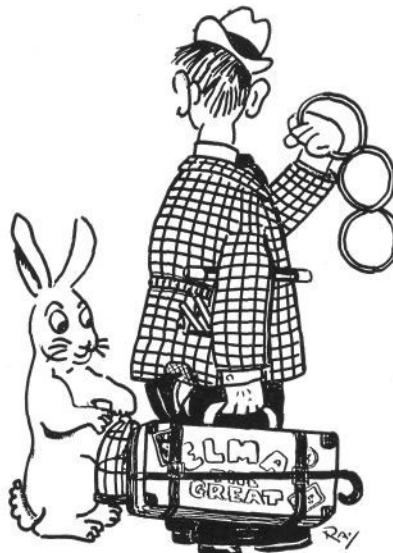
Ask the man with the gun to aim and shoot through the 'kerchief and into the boards and he will by magic shoot the three cards between the two boards.

He shoots and breaks the glass-ware on the side table which gets a big laugh. Compliment him on his poor aim and have him turn the gun over to another man to try his marksmanship. This man shoots and you show the 'kerchief empty. The cards are now supposed to be between the two boards. Ask the boy to untie the cord and open the boards. He does so but the cards are not there. The second man is blamed as being either a very poor shot also, or else too good a one entirely!

So you and the boy start to hunt the cards. Finally you swing him around so his back is toward the audience and the three cards are discovered hanging in a long row—end to end—on his back! This is a "belly laugh," as the man seemingly shot the cards out of the handkerchief in your hand, clear through the boards and clear through the boy as well!

Here is an old, old trick dressed all up into a big stage trick that audiences like.

I'M A WARNIN YA, ELMA BROWN. IF YOU KEEP THIS UP, I'M GOING TO GET A HOBBY TOO. THIS IS THE THIRD NITE, YOU'VE BEEN OUT THIS WEEK.



G. RAY TERRELL

Exchanging the Pack

By Arthur Buckley

Illusions created with playing cards may be analyzed and then classified under one or more of the following headings: mathematical formulae, prearrangement, duplication, secret marking, two-way backs, trimmed edges, mutilation, false printing, adhesives, chemicals, reflectors and/or manipulation.

Card illusions have lost a great deal of their appeal in recent years among audiences in general. The reason for this to a great extent is their mediocre or bad presentation by unskilled performers.

Card illusions have a general audience appeal when their underlying principles are cunningly concealed and their presentation is made entertaining. There are many card effects formulated on unsound methods, and this often reveals part of, if not completely, the modus operandi, and even though the performance is given by one not unskilled in manipulation, the climax suffers through this fault, the illusion being anything except convincing.

Whenever a card illusion combines sound principles and good presentation, it seldom lacks a general audience appeal. A card illusion, to be rated good, should always be clear cut, free from all confusing details, and above all possess a bewildering and startling climax.

There should not exist the remotest doubt in the minds of the audience that the cards used are free from all preparedness and the illusion brought about by the performer's unique skill alone. Otherwise their spontaneous approval will be lacking.

Whenever the performer finds it to his advantage to use prepared cards, he should allay suspicion by secretly changing the pack after its free handling for the prepared one. A little careful thinking will usually result in discovery of ways and means for an exchange to suit most any occasion. If a performer is satisfied to say, "This is an ordinary pack of cards," his assertions will seldom be convincing, though the evidence of an audience's disbelief may not to him be always apparent, and often he will have missed the chance of building a reputation as a truly remarkable magician. When an audience can and do feel con-

fident the cards in use are unprepared, the things accomplished by the use of prepared cards often seem like miracles. If you must use prepared cards, then learn to secretly exchange the pack in use for a prepared one.



There are numerous ways in which a secret exchange of packs may be accomplished, though it is impracticable to set down any fast and definite rules for making the exchange to suit all conditions because each occasion offers advantages and disadvantages not attended by the others. I shall, however, offer several methods where conditions for the exchange are defined.

The exchange as used by gamblers: If you are seated at a table and in your left coat pocket is a pack of fifty-two cards. It is desirable to exchange these fifty-two cards for the fifty-two cards the person seated opposite you at the table is shuffling. Secretly take the cards from your coat pocket in your left hand and place them in the bent left leg back of the knee where they are secretly held till the shuffle is over. Have the pack cut and the cut completed. Then without haste, with your right hand draw the shuffled pack of cards toward the edge of the table, in front of you, and while doing so, seize the pack from the left leg in the left hand, gripping it at the left end, the first and second fingers under the pack, thumb on top of the pack, and bring it up to within three inches of the top and against the edge of the table. The right hand draws the pack on the table smartly towards you. The cards passing over the pack in the left hand are dropped, and fall onto your lap as the left hand comes up with the exchanged pack and places it on the table.

If the moves are timed correctly, it appears the cards were drawn off the table into the left hand. At a later opportune moment, the cards on your lap are placed in the left pocket of your coat. Gamblers have successfully used this method of exchanging a set-up pack for the cards in play for many years, and I have never heard of anyone detecting its use. They do seem to learn their nefarious trade so much better than most magicians.

Second method that is quite excellent is to exchange the pack for another while one or several cards are in view and the center of attraction for the moment on the table. You have "forced" a card, say the six of spades. The card is drawn from the pack. In the set-up pack you desire to exchange, this card the six of spades is missing from the pack, so its presence therein later will complete the set-up. A spectator signs his name across the face of this card and then returns it to the pack and shuffles the cards very completely as instructed. Locate it by the crimp, or the forced card may be a short card to this pack, though normal to the cards of the pack in your pocket. After the discovery of the forced card push the card towards the spectator and before turning it face up gather up the cards and secretly proceed to exchange the packs, holding the attention on the as yet unrevealed card on the table.

Another method that I have found quite excellent is to force several cards and have them later returned and the pack shuffled, and then taking the pack in my left hand, deliberately walk to the person on my extreme left and taking him by the arm, with my right hand ask for his help, and while talking, promptly exchange the pack for the one in my left side pocket which is already arranged with a duplicate set of the forced cards topmost.

Third Method: Another excellent switch of packs may be accomplished by the performer while he openly places the pack of cards into his pocket and offers to find one or several previously selected cards that have been shuffled in the pack by a member of the audience. This may be accomplished by forcing several cards which are the duplic-

ate of the several top or bottom cards of the pack already in your pocket waiting to be exchanged. This, I think, is best done in the inside coat pocket rather than the pants, or outside pocket, and if you wear a vest it may be convenient for you to dispose of the first pack in your vest pocket while pretending to place the pack in your inside coat

pocket, and before you produce the last spectator's card have him remove the pack from your pocket and name his card. Then you, with the correct dramatic import, tell him to count the cards on the table and you call "Stop" at the place you know his card to be. A trial will show you this can be accomplished with your back towards the spec-

tator. If you follow this suggestion, the cards should now be in their proper set-up order, that is, you should have no fumbling to organize them into desired set-up position. And your effects that follow will appear more astonishing because the audience are convinced the pack is the same one that was so freely handled.

My Innocent Thimble "Pull"

By Carlos H. Colombi

This is not a trick, but what I would prefer to call an idea to supplant the usual "pull" for the vanish of thimbles after an habitual routine.

I have used this method of vanishing thimbles for a long time, and besides a great personal satisfaction therefrom it has received eulogies of commendation from my good friends, and amateur magicians, E. Leslie Briant and F. G. Cleaver and from Miss Graciela N. Avendaño, the only lady magician we have in Buenos Aires, who has collaborated with me in many effects published under our names in this magazine. Quite recently, I had the pleasure of demonstrating this thimble "pull" to Sam L. Horowitz during his brief stay in the Argentine Capital, and he showed much enthusiasm which leads me to the belief that readers of "The Sphinx" will be equally interested.

With this preamble, let me explain this simple, yet most effective, thimble vanish that is well worth study by those interested in this class of close-up magic.

There is on the market a diversity of "pulls" for the vanish of one, or

more, thimbles—but why not use the thimble itself as a "pull"? There is no law in Magic that prohibits such a procedure. This is what I have done, use one of my own thimbles to vanish the rest.

The thimble should be of the plastic kind, metal ones will not lend themselves to this vanish. One of the thimbles is pierced with a good sized needle, and through this minute hole a fine, strong elastic is threaded and knotted. A loop on the other end of the elastic is passed over the trouser button on the left hand side, and the thimble itself placed in the ticket pocket of the trousers on the same side. After his usual routine with four or five thimbles of different colours, and when these thimbles are on the finger tips of the right hand, the magician secures the pull in his left hand, and ostentatiously shows the thimble thus secured on his first left finger, the elastic is perfectly hidden by the palm. The thimble "pull" is then clenched in the left fist, and one by one the other thimbles are inserted into the fist in the usual way. With very slight pressure they remain quite secure, and

when the thimble "pull" is allowed to escape, the others logically go with it. If a thimble holder is placed beforehand behind the lapel of the coat, the thimbles may be reproduced.

Plastic thimbles have a propensity to warm up when carried in the pocket, and this is quite sufficient to hold others securely.

An interesting effect with this thimble "pull" may be obtained as follows. Place a green thimble on the second finger tip of the left hand, and clench the fist. Secure the red thimble "pull" on the first finger tip of the same hand, and exhibit it. Get a member of the audience to cover the left hand with a handkerchief, and at this moment release the "thimble pull" and in its place extend the second finger of the left hand under the handkerchief, requesting the spectator to take hold of the thimble. When he does so, the dirty work is done, and he is left holding the baby — in other words a green thimble instead of the red one he expected.

. . . . And this is the history of "My Innocent Thimble Pull."

The Taming of the Shmoo

By Peter Van Note (With Eric Weinberger)

While reading Eric's copy of "The Life and Times of the Shmoo" an idea struck me. I started to mention it to Eric and found he had thought of it, too. So we put our heads together—ouch! The idea? To use a shmoo in a magic trick.

For those who do not read the comic page in their papers and have never heard of that unusual creature, the shmoo — here is the



lowdown. A shmoo is a small, bowl-shaped animal, which if you treat it at all kindly will lay butter, eggs, milk and has been known on one occasion to bring forth a cheese cake. If you look at a shmoo lovingly, it keels over and dies from sheer happiness. You then can cook it in whichever manner you prefer. Roasted it tastes like pork; fried it

(Continued on page 24)

Col Ling Soo

By Douglas Craggs

There is a pleasing if fanciful story told that whenever a child of great promise is born a beneficial fairy flies over and touches it thus bestowing a special gift. It the child is to become a great singer or orator the fairy touches its throat; if a great thinker or scientist the child's brow is touched; and so on. I was thinking of this story while pondering over the many gifts showered upon Col Ling Soo by a wise Providence, and reflecting that the kind fairy must have hovered for some time and to some purpose over the little child, born Herbert J. Collings, that was to become one of the foremost magical entertainers of Great Britain. For Col Ling Soo's reputation does not rest solely upon magical skill and prowess, although it might well do so for many and varied are his contributions in the field of practical conjuring. There are and always will be scores and scores of magicians but only occasionally will there be one possessed of those sterling qualities and rare attributes which distinguish Herbert J. — for

that is how his friends always speak of him—from so many of his magical confreres.

How his interest in magic was first aroused and how, as a consequence, he became one of the founders of the Magic Circle, its first Hon. Secretary, and now ranks as a Past-President, is a story that ought to be told for it was another founder-member of the society, that stalwart amongst conjurers, Neil Weaver, that was responsible. A school dinner following a football match with another school was the occasion for Neil Weaver to show his own ability as a conjurer, thereby firing the imagination of his schoolfellow, the equally youthful Herbert J. Not many years later Herbert J. had been launched on his career as a professional magician. The lifelong friendship thus begun at school was cemented through the years and when Neil Weaver at the turn of this century first mooted the idea of a Magic Circle what was more natural than that he should

turn to Herbert J. for assistance that was readily forthcoming? It is doubtful whether anyone in those early days could have foreseen the course which Herbert J's. life would take, the heights he would scale, or the countless friends he would make. Who, for instance, could have predicted that the time would come when he would be regarded as an authority on Chinese culture?

I do not know, and as I am writing this in Central America I have no means of ascertaining, whether Herbert J's interest in Chinese art came before or after his decision to present his act as a Chinese. But I do know that his interest in China is no passing or banal phase. He has a deeply sincere love of the Chinese and has amassed a large and valuable collection of authentic Chinese robes, objects d'art and curios which is greatly sought after for the official Chinese Exhibitions which are held in London. It is a mark of the man and his stature that he is extremely modest and engagingly enthusiastic about this unusual and absorbing interest of his.

If I had to place my hand on my heart and indicate Herbert J's most outstanding gift, I should without hesitation vote for his wit, which is positively scintillating and uncanny in its rapidity and spontaneity. I know of no other British entertainer around whom so many anecdotes have circulated. When I began my own professional career Herbert J. was already a legend, albeit a very live one, and wherever I went I would meet people who were bent on quoting his latest impromptu witticisms. I refrain from citing some of the numerous examples known to me because I am conscious of the difference between the idiom of humour in our two countries, but I must mention how he delighted an old lady who enquired how he liked his tea by replying, "Weak, almost a fortnight." His devastating ability in punning and repartee has to be experienced to be believed. We once travelled together to Windsor Castle for a performance and I soon found on the journey that I had never before realized the scope for punning and humour which such a journey could provide. He is a humorist, too, who can laugh at the comedy of others as he is a willing



Col Ling Soo (Herbert J. Collings) completed fifty years as a performer on February 14th. The Magic Circle celebrated the occasion with a dinner in his honor.

and appreciative listener. His jokes and allusions have provided many entertainers with material for their acts, not always with acknowledgment or permission, but I have never detected any slackening in his output. American readers will gather from this that Col Ling Soo's Chinese performance is not a silent impersonation of an oriental conjurer but a living representation, authentic in every detail, of an affable and engaging Chinese magician, faultlessly attired, whose genial greeting, "Good evening, honourable foreign devils," at once amuses and propitiates his audience.

The history of St. George's Hall, London, could not be written without frequent reference to Herbert J. who was a frequent performer on the Maskelyne and Devant programmes there. Many of his best tricks first saw the light of day in that halcyon period of magic, and I like especially to remember his lovely Swan and Plate effect, his trick with a vase of coloured balls, and his uproarious sequences with a money order and a boy from the audience. He is, of course, probably still the greatest living exponent of Plate Spinning, an art popularised by John Nevil Maskelyne in Egyptian Hall days.

Readers may like to know something of the particular magical niche which Col Ling Soo has carved for himself in the life of Great Britain. He has followed in the great tradition of Charles Bertram and Dr. Byrd Page, who specialised in entertaining at London society functions where the performer goes as a guest and a friend. Like his famous predecessors, he has served the best interest of magic in this way and has done much to keep the art to the forefront. I am sure he has never uttered a questionable joke or lost a friend in his long professional career. That is something to say of a successful performer, for success does not always breed friends.

No account, however abbreviated, of Herbert J's life could be written without mention of his beautiful and charming wife, Hilda Bertram, a talented and artistic performer in her own right. In these days of Hollywood marriages and divorces it is grand to be able to record that here is an ideal pair of professional artists who have found serenity and happiness in family life, and have given for all to see a shining example of true felicity. Both are loved and respected throughout the professions they adorn, and my earnest hope is that they will be spared to us for many years to come.

Do You Remember When?



By Dorny

Van Hoven had an ad in "Variety" every week?

Ade Duval was one half of the Duval Brothers in lyceum and chautauqua?

Henry Clive, famous artist, was a comedy trixter in vaudeville?

Jack Norworth did magic in his swell act with Nora Bayes?

Great Leon produced a complete dinner, dishes and all, from a foul-ard?

Art and Helene Buckley saved a very bad "spook expose" from being a total loss with their phenomenal mental act in Chicago?

Fraze, one of the finest men in or out of magic, worked for Carl Rosini? Also with me?

When LaFollette headlined a big, glamorous Shubert vaudeville show?

Big time vaudeville meant two shows a day with reserved seats?

(What no pop-corn?)

When Percy Abbott only had one factory building in Col'on?

Nick Pausback, scenic artist de luxe, of Chicago was known as "Nicodemus, the Magician"?

Okito was doing the great showgraph act with Thurston?

Thurston had the writer of this column arrested in Columbus, Ohio—for bootlegging, no less?

Cardini did a "patter" act?

Chic Schoke didn't want to "throw a party"—neither do we?

Russ Walsh put out his first original idea—the Walsh Fountain Pen?

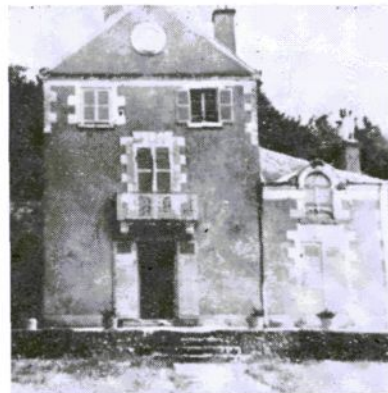
Dante was known as "Herr Jansen"?

Richard Boehlke did the "Creo" illusion?

Carter the Great was bucking Thurston?

Blackstone was "Harry Bouton"?

MAGIC QUERY



This was the home of one of the most famous magicians of all times. Can you locate it and name the magician?

(Answer on page 21)

TO-NIGHT. OPERA HOUSE

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POWELL!

✧ AND HIS ✧

✧ EXCELLENT COMPANY, ✧

✧ HEADED BY ✧

ZAZELL & VERNON,
PREMIER PANTOMIMISTS.

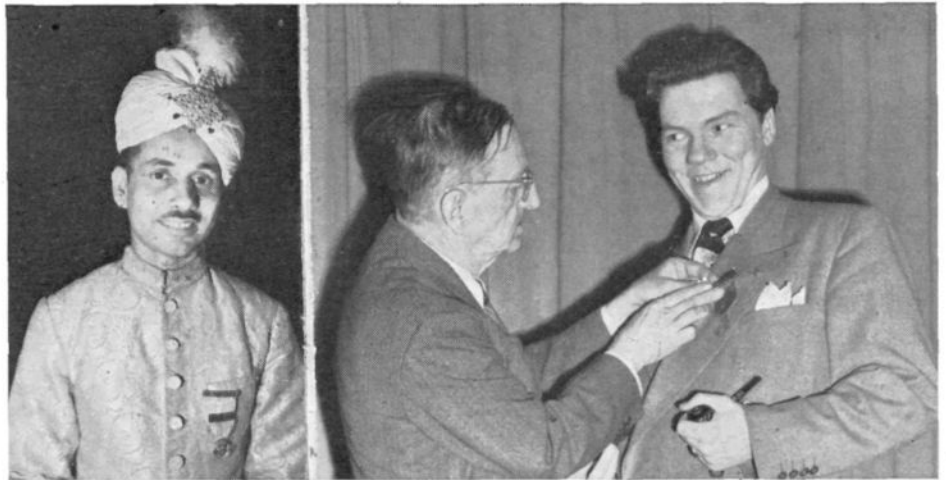


The Sphinx Awards

The Sphinx Award is the annual recognition of the best magic described in the magazine during the year. Three Awards are made: One for the best Stage Effect; one for the best Platform Effect; and one for the best Close-up Effect. The winners each year receive beautiful silver medals specially designed by the famous sculptor, the late Mark Fenderson. Embossed Certificates of Honorable Mention are given to others for their originations in magic. The Sphinx Award has been made annually, except for an interim during the war, for the past sixteen years.

The magic the Judges had under consideration was published in volume 47 of *The Sphinx* which had been published during the year of March 1948 through February 1949. The decisions were made by a panel of four judges, Ade Duval, Bill Wilson (Magini), Ladson Butler, and Elmer Applegit. The wide knowledge of the methods of magic of all the judges is well known. The judges wish it to be known that their task was no easy one because so many of the effects under consideration had great merit.

P. C. Sorcar receives the Award



Sorcar, wearing The Sphinx Award Medal with the added bar, indicating a winner for the second time. Al Munroe, magician and writer, presenting the Award Medal to Karrell Fox at the meeting of the Detroit Society of Magicians.

for the stage effect classification. This award is for his effect, Sorcar's Vanishing Lamp, described on page 7 of the March 1948 issue. The judges made this selection because of the cleverness and subtlety of the method of utilizing the lamp's light after the lamp itself is gone, and the new effect thereby produced. The Judges were well aware both the elevator and triple tubes used in the effect had been used previously in Okito's original vanishing glass of water. Mr. Sorcar, the noted Indian magician, is the first individual ever to win The Sphinx Award twice. A special gold bar, to attach to the medal he previously had won, was made and suitably engraved. Honorable Mention is given in this classification to Tan Hock Chuan for his illusion, the "Singapore Screen," described on page 265, of the December 1948 issue, and also

to the Edward M. Massey effect, the "Bastile Stock," published on page 35 of the April 1948 issue. Tan Hock Chuan previously had won the Medal.

Karrell Fox is awarded the medal for the platform effect classification. This award is for his effect, "All-thru Cane," described on page 205, of the October 1948 issue. The ingenuity he displayed in utilizing two Walsh canes—a vanishing and appearing cane—to make a new and most effective illusion is praised by the judges. Honorable Mention is given in this classification to Hatha-way for his clever comedy effect, "Blowout," published on page 121, of the July 1948 issue.

Matt Schulien is awarded the medal for the close-up classification. The award is for his effect, "Ribbon Spread Trick," which was published on page 293, of the January 1949 issue. The judges felt that the card effect was spectacular and delightfully different. Honorable Mention was given in this classification to Douglas Francis for his card effect, "Another Brainwave," published on page 237, of the November 1948 issue.

In 1950 The Sphinx Award will be made again. The winners will be selected from those whose magic is described in the pages of this present volume of *The Sphinx*, of which this is the first issue.



Bert Allerton presenting Matt Schulien with the Award Medal in Chicago. Witnesses, standing from left to right: Clint Millikan, Chick Schoke, Homar Woulffe, Dorny and Bill Salisbury. Seated next to Matt Schulien is LePaul. Photo by Jerry McDermott.

COON-DLE LITE

(GEORGE COON)

An Abbott Exclusive

Prize-Winning Trick—Originality Contest—Chicago S.A.M.—January, 1949



Dr. Harlan Tarbell termed it "Terrific" and bought one. Dorny said, "I can get plenty of real entertainment with this clever trick."

The outfit is as illustrated—a candle and a candlestick. Simple "props" indeed, but what possibilities for subtle and baffling routines. Yes, COON-DLE-LITE can be presented in a number of different ways—several are suggested in the instructions, and after working with it, you'll devise some yourself.

You have this outfit and you go through the following routine:

You place a cigarette in your mouth, search pockets for a match—and candle lights up. You blow it out, continue searching—candle again lights. You look surprised, blow it out—again candle lights. You blow it out again, then put down cigarette and start in on a trick. Candle lights and you blow it out. Do this a dozen times if you wish. A bit vexed, you remove candle from holder, and even in your hand, it lights and you blow it out. Thoroughly annoyed now, you put the candle in your outside coat pocket—and again it lights. Can't you sense the audience reaction to all this?

Positively a real flame—and each time this flame is extinguished by blowing. No chemicals—pulls of wire or thread. It's operated and controlled entirely by Magician.

A MARVEL OF INGENUITY—PRECISION MADE

COON-DLE LITE is one of the most unusual effects in Magic and will get any audience talking. Ready for immediate shipment.

Price (We Pay the Postage)

\$17.50

KNIFE THROUGH COAT

A knife is pushed through a borrowed coat, with no injury to the coat.

There are no added fakes—just the special pocket knife supplied. This is one of the best close-up effects in years. Complete with special imitation white-pearl-handled knife.

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\$1.00

THE ELUSIVE SPHERE

(CECIL KEECH)

An Abbott Exclusive

This is one trick that you must do to realize the cleverness of the idea—and the full Magic entertainment it possesses. Has all the elements of skill and yet it is purely mechanical. Self-contained and requires no skill.

You show three tubes and one bright red ball. The tubes are held so that audience can see through them. There is no loading as the tubes are placed on the table. One tube is placed over the ball, the tubes moved about to different spots, and no matter how the audience try, they cannot pick out the tube containing the ball. Each tube is shown and yet when you want the ball, just raise the tube and there it is.

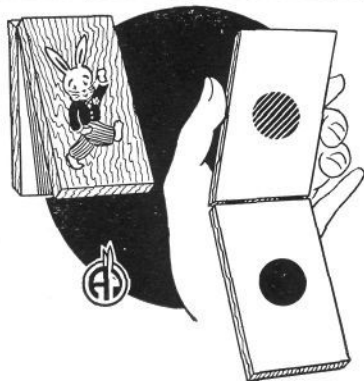
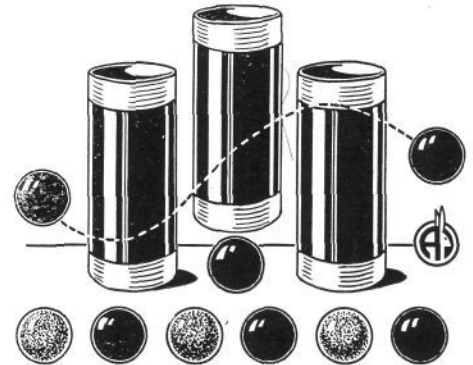
Now the ball travels from one tube to another, even without moving tubes. This routine is a real corker and will fool the smartest of Magicians. A big surprise is reached when each tube is lifted, showing a red ball from under each tube. They are again lifted and three more different colored balls appear from under tubes. It's a sock climax!

The balls are approximately 1½", made of celluloid, brightly lacquered. The tubes have been specially made for this trick from vulcanized fibre, natural finish and trimmed in color. It's a sweet outfit.

IT'S A REAL MYSTIFYING TRICK. DO IT SURROUNDED AND CLOSE-UP.

Price, complete (We Pay the Postage)

\$4.50



SPOOKY SPOTS

A clever pocket trick that you will have a lot of fun with. It's entertaining for any group.

Two hinged panels, each with a large different colored spot in the center, are shown. When the panels are closed together, then opened again, it is seen that the spots have not only changed places, but one spot has changed color; then both spots are the same color. Your audience think they're "seein' things". It's great for a vision testing gag. Self-contained and no skill.

SPOOKY SPOTS is natural wood finish outside and lacquered in brilliant colors inside. And it's small enough to fit in the palm of your hand.

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THE MOST AMAZING MAGIC RELEASE OF ALL TIME!

PREMONITION

PREMONITION

PREMONITION

ORIGINATED BY THAT MAGICAL GENIUS, EDDIE JOSEPH

(An Abbott Exclusive Release — Copyrighted and Fully Protected)



PREMONITION is an effect that is in the miracle class, one that your audiences will remember you by — a reputation builder.

Before PREMONITION was in published form, we demonstrated it first for Monk Watson of Colon, next Vernon Carr of Fort Wayne, then Robert Morehead of Battle Creek. It's no exaggeration to say that the reaction to every demonstration was the same, the consensus being, "It's impossible. It's the fairest, the most convincing, the most extraordinary effect I have ever seen." Well, these three gentlemen are now featuring PREMONITION in their programs.

It's terrific Magic and you have only to do it once — before an audience of one or 500 — and we know that you will agree. We, therefore, give our heartiest commendation to this latest Joseph fooler.

THE EFFECT: Anyone in the audience is asked to call out the name of any card. Person naming the card is asked to advance, pick up the pack which lies on the table within its case, and deal cards face up, one at a time, until he comes to his card. Assistant deals every card in the pack but fails to find the one he named. He counts the cards and there are only 51 separate cards. One card is MISSING and the missing card IS THE ONE JUST NAMED ALOUD. Magician reaches into his pocket and without the slightest delay brings out the very card named by the assistant and just found missing from the pack.

At no time does the Magician ever touch the cards. There is absolutely no force of choice. This miracle works 100%, as the element of chance plays no part in it.

Proves its merit in one show. No get-ready preparation for the next show. It's always ready. Ordinary cards are used — no fakes. PREMONITION can be mastered in five minutes and can be worked anywhere.

IT'S TERRIFIC!

To quote Gene Bulson of Fort Wayne: "I consider PREMONITION one of the finest card effects in the miracle class I have run across in years. The effect sounds impossible and to say that I am delighted with it is putting it mildly. I only hope it is not peddled around, and that the fellows who get it will spend the time necessary in learning the routine to present it properly."

Along with PREMONITION is another Joseph original —

THE BLIND MAGICIAN DOES A TRICK

The story is told of a famous Magician who lost his sight in the war and for a time thought his professional career had ended. As days went by, however, he made the surprising discovery that he was developing a sort of undefined SIXTH SENSE. In time this proved to be more potent than his original normal vision. Through this extra sense, not only could he see the VISIBLE, but the INVISIBLE as well.

The performer then proceeds to give an astounding demonstration in proof of the above. Three different methods are given, all equally good, and in two of them the performer's vision is genuinely obscured. In addition there is a "Follow-up" trick, the secret of which the author has guarded for years.

SID LORRAINE reviewed it and said in TOPS: "We followed the instructions and it did everything Mr. J. claimed. While blind-folded, the Magician discovers two freely-selected cards that are apparently hopelessly lost in the pack. No peeks as the blind-folding is accomplished by the hands of an assisting spectator. The patter theme is good and the effect truly magical."

Both effects embrace new principles in Card Magic.

Manuscript consists of 15 typescript pages, two-color cover, gold binding. No cards supplied.

Mailed the same day order is received.

We know that you have confidence in the word of Abbott, and when we say that PREMONITION is good, we mean just that. Don't order just to satisfy your curiosity — as no exchange or refunds will be made on this masterpiece of Card Magic.

Price (We Pay the Postage) **\$10.00**

ABBOTT'S NEW CLOCK VANISH

A VANISH AND REAPPEARANCE

This is an innovation in clock tricks. Outfit consists of a real alarm clock, fancy cloth, and a small cabinet.

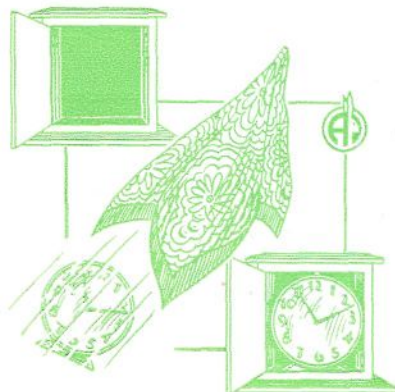
Clock is first shown inside cabinet, then removed and covered with cloth. With clock alarm ringing and with the cloth held in one hand, the door of cabinet is closed. The cloth is thrown up into the air—the ringing stops—the cloth opened out—the clock has vanished!

You'll say that this is the cleanest and most practical clock vanish that you have ever used. And as a climax, the door of the cabinet is opened SHOWING THE CLOCK INSIDE!

The clock is removed. Clock may be examined before and after the vanish. No body attachment or concealed bells. Abbott's NEW CLOCK VANISH is entirely different from any other.

Cabinet is finished in lacquer—in colors. The apparatus is most attractive.

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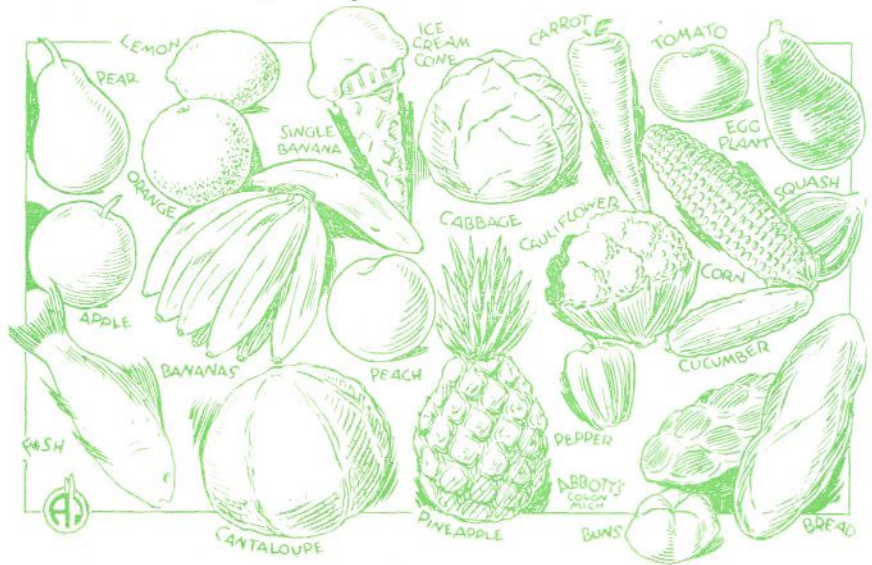
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Carefully note the extremely low price on each article.

These are life-like collapsible production articles that can be used magically in many ways. All items are correctly colored and realistically shaped. They are made of latex rubber. Easily collapsed, but open up to full size in a flash.



Bread Roll, 75c — Orange, 75c — Lemon, 75c — Cucumber, \$1.00 — Parsnip, \$1.00 — Carrot, \$1.00 — Pepper, \$1.00 — Ice Cream Cone, \$1.00 — Banana, \$1.00 — Apple, \$1.00 — Pear, \$1.00 — Peach, \$1.00 — Tomato, \$1.00 — Lime, \$1.00 — Cauliflower, \$1.50 — Lettuce, \$1.50 — Cabbage, \$1.50 — Ear of Corn, \$2.00 — Cantaloupe, \$2.00 — Squash, \$2.00 — Twisted Bread, \$2.00 — French Bread, \$2.00 — Fish, \$2.00 — Pineapple, \$2.50 — Bunch of Bananas, \$5.00 — Extra Large Melon, \$6.50. (We Pay the Postage.)

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A spectacular visible change that is a sure applause getter. An open type frame is shown on both sides, three silks, colored Red, White, and Blue, are produced at the finger tips. The three silks are draped over the lower part of frame—and without cover of any kind—and as quick as a flash—the silks change to an American silk flag.

A startling surprise—a real Magic transformation, the flag completely filling the frame, which is 13 inches wide and 18 inches high. Can be done close up and in the midst of an audience.

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You will be amazed at the elaborate display of Magic, and our local managers will be glad to help you satisfy your magical needs.

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Now in its 14th year, it has blossomed out in new dress—new cover design and the inside printed on fine book paper—and it is still the biggest buy in Magic. Every month it gives you news, gossip, tricks, advice on improving your Magic, and eight pages describing all the latest and best effects from Abbott's and other manufacturers.

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ABBOTT'S MAGIC NOVELTY CO., COLON, MICH.

ABBOTT'S SAWING A WOMAN IN HALVES

Of all the small type illusions we have originated, we are sure that this will top them all. There never has been a more sensational or more entertaining illusion than **SAWING A WOMAN IN HALF**. And now, no matter what type of Magic act or show you do, **YOU** can saw a woman in halves.

No special assistants—use a girl from the audience.

Two chairs are used to support the apparatus. A cabbage, potato, or any type of vegetable is placed in the apparatus in the same position as the girl's body. You now show the action of the saw as it passes through the girl's body, sawing the vegetable in halves. The girl now takes a reclining position and the upper part of the apparatus is fitted over her body. Members of the audience hold the girl's head and feet and one assists in the sawing.

Back and forth the saw moves as it cuts through the wood strips, in line with the body.

Down, down the saw goes through the body. The saw blade can actually be seen passing through.

The girl screams! What a howl from the onlookers as the assistant drops the saw and runs back to his seat. Another volunteer is induced to take over. "We are now reaching the spinal column," says the Magician. Imagine the suspense as the saw goes deeper and deeper until it is right through the girl.

The saw is removed, then a push on the girl's head and feet to join her together. She stands and takes a bow, none the worse for undergoing this weird experience.

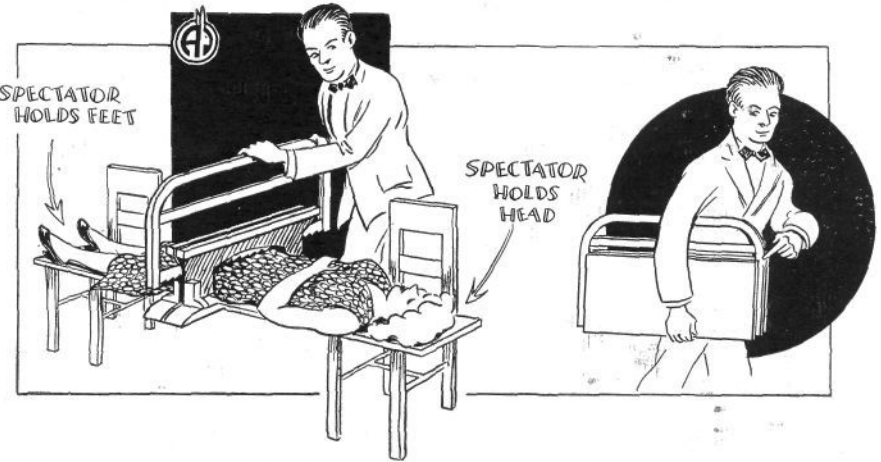
IMPORTANT POINTS: Only the middle part of girl's body is covered with the apparatus. One saw only is used. Can be done surrounded. Use any girl and volunteer assistants from the audience. The saw actually cuts through the wood sides. Vegetables can be used in place of wood strips, and audience actually see the wood strips cut as the saw passes through.

In this modern version, the bulky box or cabinet is done away with. The entire illusion, including saw, weighs less than 25 pounds. Breaks down and can be carried under the arm. A few minutes only are required to set illusion ready for performance.

Extra wood strips supplied for replacement.

The entire illusion originated by our own Recil Bordner.

This new, sensational and entertaining illusion complete ready to work at the low price of (We Pay the Postage) **\$47.50**



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By **BILL SIMON**

This 24-page offset-printed booklet of tricks and sleights is, according to the author's statement, the first of a series comprising magical effects produced through skill and subtlety. There are seventeen different items—tricks with cards, coins, cigarettes, silks—and the text gives detailed instruction not only in the working of each effect but in the sleights necessary to bring it about. Besides the author, Scarne, Bruce Elliott, Jack Miller and others have contributed to its contents. The illustrations by Frank Garcia help to make the instructions very easy to follow.

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An Abbott Exclusive

A DRINK SURPRISE

(RAVELLE AND ANDREE)

Here is a novelty trick that is one succession of surprises.

It starts in as a card trick. A chosen card is returned to the pack, the Magician announcing that he will produce a duplicate of the chosen card from another deck. He removes deck from card case, fans through and removes one card. It's the wrong card. Three times he tries, and fails each time. He says, "Perhaps if I had a drink I could do better." He reaches into the air and produces a glass. He squeezes the deck holding it over the glass and pours a real drink into the glass. This he drinks. Then the glass vanishes. And for a grand finale, the chosen card is produced from the pocket.

It's great Magic—easy to do—requires no sleights. Supplied complete.

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RAMSEY'S CUPS AND BALLS

A new English book of 104 pages, well printed and illustrated with many photographs showing the hands of the master manipulator, John Ramsey, performing the various moves of the effect. The text, except for Ramsey's brief foreword, is by Victor Farelli, one of the best of writers on magical subjects. There are eight chapters on the routine itself and as well a chronological history of the effect. Bound in cloth, gold stamped.

Price (We Pay the Postage) **\$5.00**

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ABBOTT'S MAGIC NOVELTY CO., COLON, MICH.



Swedish Convention

By Fritz Olai

From January 28th to 30th, a convention was held in Sweden under the auspices of the Swedish Magic Circle. The first evening the first public show was held at the Concert-huset and those who appeared on the bill were: Berggren, Hildini, Mills, Vernini, Edling, Makkela, Sandberg, Arnado and Lindbloom. All were well received by the enthusiastic audience. Paul Arland did a good job as compere, and Evert Myhrman was M.C. when the show was repeated on Saturday night. At the business meeting Saturday afternoon, Gustaf Lindbloom was elected president. On Sunday afternoon a competition was held in which professionals competed against professionals and amateurs against amateurs.

Pictured at the left are the prize winners in the professional class: From left to right: Danilo, third, Torello, second and Bertillo, first. Asbeck won first place in the amateur class. The convention closed with a banquet and an impromptu magic show was given under the direction of Gustaf Roxy and Fritz Olai.

Slydini's Magic Class

In the picture on the right, taken by Irving Desfor, at Slydini's first class in his new Studio of Magic in New York City are seated: Dr. Ben Braude, Sam Dreilinger, Hal Kaye, Max Katz and Nat Bernstein. Slydini, standing, is directing the proceedings.



Calcutta I. B. M. Ring



The group of Indian magicians at the left are the members of the new I.B.M. Ring in Calcutta, called the P. C. Sorcar Ring, which held its first meeting on February 20. Prof. K. L. Goswami, the oldest living full-time professional in India, has been made president. Sorcar is seated in the center of the second row and Prof. Goswami is on his right.

London Notes

By Wilfrid Jonson

Let us first congratulate Goodliffe, who announces in "Abracadabra 158" the birth of a son. But he mystifies me when he writes, "How very gratifying to reflect that my good lady presided at the birth of a child whilst in the next room I did the same at the birth of an Editorial." This seems to me to show a remarkable misunderstanding of comparative values.

Personally I have never understood why the Editors of magical papers should introduce these family details into their journals. It is quite impossible to imagine the birth of a son to the Editor of "The Times." An Editor should be simply a pen without corporeal presence, which is why Editorials are always unsigned. So, a columnist may have children while an Editor may not.

To our great delight Russell Swann is here again, accompanied by a beautiful assistant and a large supply of his favourite jam. Always a lover of luxury, Russell is determined to share our austerity with fortitude, provided he gets his jam. He is booked to appear for four weeks as the star of the lavish *Copa Revue* at the Embassy Night Club and, remembering that last time Russell Swann came for four weeks he stayed nearly two years, we have

the highest hopes of keeping him for a long while, provided the jam lasts out.

Magic lost another outstanding personality with the death of Harry Leat. He will be remembered best for the amusing books he wrote and for "Leat's Leaflets," his most outspoken house organ. He was the real pioneer in the production of illustrated silks and it is astonishing that his name is not mentioned in this connection in Rice's "Encyclopaedia." To Harry Leat we were also indebted for the first publication of the Nikola Card System at a time when the publication of books on card magic was a somewhat hazardous gamble.

Cuttings begin to arrive from South Africa about Willane, and particularly about Mrs. Lane's past exploits as an experimental parachute jumper, in the days when this was rather more of a game of chance than poker ever will be. In those days they used to first drop a dummy by parachute. If the dummy was not seen again, as frequently happened, they then dropped Mrs. Lane to find the reason why. This fearless and charming lady now assists Willane in his act, and once told me it was far more nerve racking than anything she has ever faced before.

The February issue of "Djinn" arrives with the front cover showing Thoki Yenn's famous Djinn infant admiring a bunch of roses, and the roses are perfumed. Editor Steffensen proudly says, "Djinn is making magic history," and I have not the heart to make any remarks about other magic papers that smell!

On the 14th February, 1899, just half a century ago, a young man named Herbert J. Collings made his first appearance as a professional entertainer, at a London dinner. On the 14th February, 1949, another dinner was held in London, this time by the Magic Circle, to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of this same Herbert J. Collings, still a remarkably young man. Tributes to the affection and esteem with which he is regarded by his brother magicians were paid in speeches by the Duke of Somerset, Neil Weaver, Dr. O. H. Bowen, Douglas Craggs, Cecil Lyle, Jack Forsyth, Arthur Ivey, Wilfrid Jonson, Edward Victor, Victor Peacock, Frederick C. Shuter, Dr. H. Park Shackleton, and Russell Swann, who spoke for the magicians of America. The after-dinner "self-entertainment" was contributed by Peter Newcombe, Ernest Castro, Peter Warlock, Edward Victor, Jack Salvin, Dr. H. Park Shackleton, Gil Leaney, Wilfrid Jonson, Russell Swann, Mac Wilson, and John Young. Francis White acted as M.C.

Paging Mr. Cardini! Please amend your address book. Mine is here below.—45, Kingsmead Road, Tulse Hill, London, S.W.2. England.

Paris Notes

By Victor Farelli

A few months ago, I mentioned in this column that I was anxious to ascertain if there were any magicians in Cuba. So far, no reply has been received from any one living in "la Perla de las Antillas," but Sr. D. Ernesto Rojas Benavidos, of Mexico, has written to say that in Spanish, as in English, the word America means the whole of the Western Hemisphere. From a geographer's point of view, that is correct; nevertheless, during the years that I lived in Spain and in South America, I took particular note of the fact that the inhabitants of those countries when using the word "Americano," always meant a man from South America. When referring to a citizen of the U.S.A., they invariably used the term "Norte Americano." Judging by my correspondent's letter, it appears that people

in Central America do not differentiate in the same way. And thank you very much, Don Ernesto, for that information and also for your friendly letter. (There is an S.A.M. Assembly in Havana.—Editor.)

Mr. Dariel Fitzkee, the well-known writer on Magic, contributes a long and interesting article — close on eighteen hundred words — to the January issue of "Le Magicien," now a quarterly review and still France's most elaborately produced magical periodical. The author deals, in his usual vigorous style, with American Magic, or, rather, with American present-day magicians and their failings, but wisely, I think, mentions no names. Apparently, statistics prove that record box office receipts are never made with illusion shows.

Mr. Fitzkee puts this down to bad presentation of magical entertain-

ments and to the fact that American professional performers are out-of-date both in their style and in their "répertoire." (Page 391). He adds that in his opinion the only magician about whom those hard things could not be said was Thurston, who was universally recognized as a thoroughly up-to-date illusionist. Well, as Dariel Fitzkee lives in America, he must know more about American magicians than people who do not, but I was always under the impression that there were—in addition to the late Howard Thurston—one or two really first class magicians in the States. Another of my youthful illusions destroyed! It must not be assumed, however, that Fitzkee's caustic criticism of his contemporaries is entirely destructive in its trend; he strongly advocates a more pleasing type of presentation—in line

with that adopted by successful entertainers in other branches of the show business—and he concludes his article by expressing the hope that magicians will cease their mad quest for new tricks (which are of interest only to experts), and that professional performers will concentrate on effects which appeal to members of the general public.

One of the features in the January issue of "Presti"—a Belgian magazine containing articles in French and Dutch and edited by Louis Tummings—is a Glossary of conjuring terms in French, Dutch, English and German. Judging by the numerous blank spaces in the Dutch and German columns, it would appear that there are no equivalents in those languages for many technical terms in everyday use by English-speaking and French magicians.

Regular readers (if any) of my

column will remember that the I.B.M. has founded "rings" in Paris and in Brussels. Unfortunately, this has not been done without a certain amount of opposition from magicians belonging to existing organizations. It is to be hoped that they will be able to settle their differences ere long, and live peaceably side by side. Thanks to the direct efforts of my old friend, Wm. G. Stickland—who holds high office in the I. B. M. and who is also a prominent member of the Association Française des Artistes Prestidigitateurs—"rings" are in course of formation in Trinidad and in Hong Kong. Never having been so far East, I do not know what may happen in Hong Kong, but I spent several months in Trinidad, and I am perfectly certain that there will be no opposition (local at any rate) to the foundation of a "Trinidadian Ring."

South American Notes

By E. Leslie Briant

Readers of these "Notes" will have gathered that during the past year or so we amateur magicians of the Argentine Republic have been particularly favoured in the matter of visits by North American professionals. These visits have been extremely pleasant and instructive for us, and the list of eminent magical entertainers whom we have met is getting to be formidable indeed.

We were all the more delighted, therefore, to have with us one of the amateurs, if only for a short time, in the person of Dr. Neal McCollum, D.D.S., from Kansas City, Mo., a member of the Kansas City Assembly, S.A.M., who came down with his charming wife on the "Del Mar" on a round trip of South America visiting all the principal cities of the southern continent in search of ancient ruins, archeological exploration and deep sea fishing. Dr. and Mrs. McCollum graciously threw a party for a number of our local amateurs, and were exceptionally interested in meeting Señor Carlos H. Colombi, "The Sphinx" award medallist of 1948. They both had a very workable knowledge of the Spanish language which made the visit the more interesting, and although their plane reservations permitted only a stay of five days in Buenos Aires, they were good enough to entertain a number at the Plaza Hotel where succulent Argentine beefsteaks were discussed as well as magic. Dr. and

Mrs. McCollum later left for their hop across the Andes to Santiago and Valparaiso (Chile), Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico and home to the States. Our distinguished visitor was the bearer of cordial good wishes from the S.A.M. magicians of Kansas City, and we take this opportunity of reciprocating their greetings.

Another amateur magical visitor to these shores of the River Plate recently was Mr. Philip Maggs, a member of the Wessex Magical Association (England) who brought us first hand news of the I.B.M. Convention at Bournemouth. He had with him several pieces of the latest magical apparatus from the London dealers including the new Chinese Sticks and the multiplying candles which were much admired. "Philcardo", as he is known, proved himself adept with cards and fanning, and was good enough to show us quite a number of new moves. He will probably be back again about March.

It was with much regret that we heard of the illness of Hal Havilland, professional magician on board S.S. "Brazil" on his way down from the States, which prevented him from completing the voyage as he was landed in Rio de Janeiro for hospitalization. We trust that his health will soon be restored and that he will be able to make the journey again.



Where They Are

Mardoni and Louise appeared at the Hotel Henry Grady in Atlanta, where they closed on February 17th and then went to the Club Plantation in Nashville, Tenn.

Frank Clinton, Ade Duval and Wally Dean were the first three performers on the Masters of Magic series on television, sponsored by the Polaroid Corporation. In addition to his television appearances, Duval filled theatre dates in Holyoke, Massachusetts and Montreal, Canada during the month of February.

C. Thos. Magrum opened his 1949 season at Blin College in Brenham, Texas on his tour for the Southern School Assemblies.

Loring Campbell has been filling club and school dates in the Los Angeles area.

Cardini opened at the Cotillion Room of the Hotel Pierre on March 1st.

Blackstone played the Newark Opera House in Newark the week of February 21st and then left for an engagement in Richmond, Va.

Lucille and Eddie Roberts appeared at the Cafe Lounge of the Hotel Savoy-Plaza in New York during February.

New York's elite are still flocking to the Versailles to see Dr. Jaks perform.


Palmer and Doreen played the Jamaica Theater, Jamaica, N. Y. the first week-end in March.



Magic Query Answer

"The Priory" in Saint Gervais, France was the home of Robert-Houdin. It was photographed in 1945 by Rev. Willard S. Smith.

EDITOR'S PAGE

 This is the first issue of the 48th year of continuous monthly publication of The Sphinx. A large proportion of our present subscribers had not been born when The Sphinx first began publication. On the other hand, we are particularly happy at the large number of magicians who bought the first copy and have been constant subscribers ever since. The number of periodicals on any subject that have had so long a life is few; there never has been another magazine of magic that has lasted so long. Of course, the high standard of the contributions and the interest the contributors have in the magazine, coupled with the loyalty of the subscribers and the advertisers, account for the long life of the magazine. We are grateful for all the help that has been given the magazine in the past and look forward to a continuation of the cordial cooperation from magicians all over the world.

In this first issue of a new volume, we want to thank the many magicians who have made the past volume so worthwhile. Particular appreciation is extended to our monthly news columnists, who, with their friendly reports, do so much to bring the magicians of the world together. We also would like to thank all those magicians who have already either sent in material for this volume, or have told us of their intention to do—as soon as they think of something “worthy of publication in The Sphinx.”

We are delighted with the support to the magazine, both by subscriptions and contributions, of American magicians, but we are particularly proud of the fact that magicians subscribe to the magazine and write for the magazine from every continent of the world. A study of our subscription list is a liberal education in geography.


Since Blackstone started his tour this year, reports have been coming in that it was the best show he has ever had. During his week's engagement in Newark, we had the pleasure of seeing his show, and had a chance to see that the reports were correct. We join, with the reviewer, who gave Blackstone a 21 gun salute.

A United Press item which was published widely and even reprinted in several magazines laughed at the hard work a counterfeiter expended, beside his initial investment, in order to make a few pen-

nies. It seems “the police were looking for someone who splits a dime and a penny, then glues half of one coin to half of the other and passes both as dimes.” Could it be possible some absent-minded magician has the police on the wrong scent?

Four non-magician friends regularly played cards together. One evening as a gag three of the players rang in a stacked deck on the fourth. Neither the victim nor the three conspirators noticed until after the hand was played that the switched deck had backs of different design and color from the deck which previously had been used. And the only reason that anyone noticed it then was that they got the two decks together in explaining how the gag had been worked. In line with that story is the one about the magician who did the rising card trick twice a day for a week before he noticed that the backs of the cards which came up were not at all like the cards which had been selected. And what is more, no one in any of the audiences, caught on to the fact, or else were too polite to mention it. There is no moral to either tale.

 Practically every day one television station, or another, in America has a magician on its programs. It is a new field and the companies are feeling their way—trying out this idea and that. Magicians, too, are attempting to discover the changes they must make in their programs to fit this new medium. Magicians now need every help they can get, and above all they should not be hindered. One televised magic show was advertised and the press agent, as a stunt, announced that the magician would tell all. The magician happened to be a past president of an S.A.M. Assembly and was not going to expose a trick. However, without waiting for full information, the Assembly started after the scalps of the television company and the sponsor. If over-zealous press agents find that they can get space with their false announcements and then more space in retraction, they are apt to use the stunt too often. If enough hue and cry is made about the subject of exposing in the press, it may become someone's plan to cash in on the idea. If there is no issue there is apt to be no demand. It is well to recall that in the field of publishing, many a book became a best seller after it was banned somewhere.

 There can be no honor in receiving notice for which money is paid. When anyone, provided the price is put down, can get his picture on a magazine he merely has bought advertising space. He has not been honored. Advertising pages alone are for sale in The Sphinx. No one can buy a cover, or picture, or story, in the magazine. We, of The Sphinx, feel that honor is due many magicians for what they have done and are doing for magic. We try to give recognition to these magicians by publishing their pictures on the covers or publishing articles about them. Managers and the theatrical writers have, through the years, come to rely on the fact that those magicians whom The Sphinx honors always are performers of outstanding talents and worthy of their attention.

There seems to be a successful attempt to revive vaudeville. Already a number of towns and cities have variety shows. One explanation is that television has created public interest in seeing video performers in the flesh.

Professor Shirley Quimby sent in a newspaper clipping about some scientist (not a physicist, may it be said in Quimby's behalf) who made a report on the feat of walking on hot stones as practiced by the polynesians. The stones were heated in a fire for hours before the walk was made. The scientist did not know how the feat was accomplished. Oddly enough the method has been known by other scientists for many years and there is a figure in the American Museum of Natural History in the performance of the feat. The card of explanation states that the stones used don't get hot. If someone comes along and makes a statement with enough assurance, no matter how wild it may be, he has a good chance of getting it printed and having a large proportion of the readers accept it as gospel. To me the odd part of the scientist's story about the method being unknown is that I never have heard that the polynesians were particularly secretive about it.

Among the visitors to The Sphinx office during the past month were: Jay Marshall, Wallace Lee, Dr. Jaks, Charlton Chute, Jay Palmer, Miaco, G. Ray Terrell, Eddie Roberts, Glen Towns, Bert Allerton, June Mussey, Frank Garcia, Lou Tannen, Waldo Logan, Clark Allen, Cliff Green, Milbourne Christopher, Claude Keefe and August Roty.

Squawks

Since the present season started we had a magic show here in town every third week, with the two large outfits making preparations for their annual entertainments. Feb. 19th the Yogi Magic Club held their show, with a surprisingly large audience as the local Transit strike was on. Did not see their show, but from all reports it was a smooth running affair and satisfied the cash customers. March 12th is the date of the I.B.M. all-professional show and the S.A.M. will stage their big show some time in April.

A few months ago I mentioned that Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Thompson, Jr., turned composers of popular songs and I just learned that Stasny Music Corporation in New York City has published "Do You Remember." It is a ballad. Big name bands and singers are giving it a whirl. Jim wrote the lyrics and Julia composed the melody.

A New York City friend sent me a clipping from a local paper announcing "Now You See It," a show featuring magicians on WCBS-TV. According to the plan for the program, the magicians, after demonstrating their legerdemain, will reveal to the audience how each trick is worked. (This was a publicity story and no expose was done or scheduled — Editor.) The opening show is Feb. 16, and I just saw it



Harry Houdini's picture was on the cover of The Sphinx for March 1924.

St. Louis Assembly of the S.A.M. tendered a dinner to Horace Goldin on March 5th, during his engagement at the Gayety Theatre.

John Platt, Joe Berg, Russ Walsh, Ade Duval, Joseffy and Mahendra were among those who performed on the after-meeting show of the March meeting of the Chicago Assembly, S.A.M.

Richards the Magician opened at Spokane, Washington, for a week's stand starting March 3rd. Felix Herrmann played the Hippodrome Theatre, same city, the previous week.

By Frazee

listed for this city on Feb. 23rd. The local station did not carry it last week. Another clipping mentioned Eugene E. Glove, 20 year old "Houdini" who swallows razor blades and needles as part of his art, says, "I find young people are more cautious and harder to fool. Older people are easier to impress." This article also states that he has patented two tricks which are sold to the magicians' market.

The American Weekly, which claims to have the largest circulation in the world, carried a splendid article on the activities of Lieut. Lee Allen Estes. A well-deserved tribute to a man who is responsible for the state of Kentucky having the lowest record of accidental deaths of children on the highway of any state in the union. A card from my good friends, Lucille and Eddie Roberts, comedy stars of their popular show, "What's On Your Mind," are appearing nightly at Cafe Lounge, The Savoy Plaza, in New York City.

During the transit strike which lasted ten days, we had several days without any transportation, as all of the taxis went out, too. It was rather hard on some of the boys to make their dates, but I did not hear of any one of them missing a show . . . Lincoln Hotel, 1222 Locust St., Philadelphia 7, Pa.

25 Years Ago

Dante, presenting the Thurston Second Show, was at the Dellinger Theatre, Batavia, New York on March 25th and 26th.

Dr. S. S. Baldwin died in San Francisco and was buried on March 13th.

McDonald Birch appeared in Mississippi during March on his lyceum tour.

Harold Alberto and Jean Hugard were appearing in touring companies of George Reuschling's "Rush Ling Toy" act.

Al Flosso was married on March 25th, 1924 at Williamsburg Mansion in Brooklyn, to Miss Lilly Krieger, daughter of Prof. Louis Krieger.

Carl Hertz died in Coventry, England, on March 24th.

David Bamberg was presenting his magic at the cabaret atop the Alamac Hotel in New York, probably the first time magic was presented on a cabaret show in America.

"Baffles" Brush

Charles R. Brush, better known to readers of The Sphinx as "Baffles," died at his home in Los Angeles on January 29th.

For a number of years, Baffles conducted departments in The Sphinx. First he was editor of the "Magic Department" and later editor of "Current Magic." The always witty and frequently wise comments appended to each effect of the contributors to Baffles' departments were widely quoted and they invariably began with the words, "Baffles says." He also, for years, was a columnist for the Linking Ring, as well as being a contributor to other magic periodicals. Brush was a regular attendant and most active at magic conventions. He had an enormous number of friends in magic, and had made magic a life-long hobby.

Born near Zanesville, Ohio, Mr. Brush spent his early life in this vicinity, and attended Ohio State University.

After spending a number of years with his own business in Pittsburgh, Pa., Mr. Brush and his family made their home in Canton, Ohio, where he was associated in an accounting capacity with several companies, until his resignation as president of the Weber Dental Manufacturing Company. Mr. Brush was employed by the United States Government during the latter war years, and during this time lived in Cleveland, Ohio. He transferred to Los Angeles in 1947, and lived there the remainder of his life. He is survived by his wife, Grace, and a daughter, Jane. A sister resides in Youngstown, Ohio.



1949 RED CROSS FUND

The Taming of the Shmoo

(Continued from page 10)

tastes like chicken or catfish, etc. At one time there were more shmooos on this earth than people, but the majority met untimely ends which needn't be gone into here.

But exactly what would this shmoo trick be? We had several ideas. A hat might be borrowed and a shmoo discovered inside. Rabbits beware! The hat then would be put crown up on the table and the shmoo on top of the hat. The wizard would look lovingly at the shmoo—a loving look will do wonders—and when the hat is lifted from the table, a couple of quarts of milk will be found to have appeared beneath it. The shmoo produces milk already bottled. Don't ask why, but isn't it handy? The hat is put back on the table and lifted several times, and various other dairy products are produced. The climax of the trick might be the production of a big cake.

Other ideas were to use a shmoo in connection with the Buddha Tubes or Devil's Supper tricks, or on a small scale with the Squared Circle apparatus.

Shmoo balloons are sold in toy stores and magic dealers have prop rubber milk bottles and eggs. Butter cartons can be made from cardboard in the manner of the magic reticules described by Hoffmann and Sachs. Incidentally, there is a set of a half a dozen nesting shmooos on sale in department, drug, toy stores, and elsewhere.

For our own use, Eric and I have chosen the first effect suggested, and using a balloon shmoo for the hat production. The working of the rest of the trick (or experiment if you will) can be done by standard methods.

We, of The Sphinx, are very pleased that by an overwhelming popular vote of the various Assemblies of the S.A.M., the Society's publication will continue to be published by The Sphinx. Even after the intensive campaign some of the officers waged to have the Society publish its own magazine, the idea did not seem to the majority of the members to merit approval. We are proud that the vote showed the members are happy with The Sphinx and want to continue to get the magazine. We will do all in our power to merit their confidence.

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Translated from the French by Dariel Fitzkee

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Among the features is the first explanation in English of *The Tomato Trick*, a colorful presentation of the Near East version of *The Cups and Balls*, using a carpet, a stick, 2 bowls, 3 tomatoes and 2 grotesque statuettes. Another trick, steeped in the character of the Orient, is the trick of the 5 ivory balls.

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Imagine having a card selected and returned to the pack together with a pin. When the pack is thrown against the performer's chest the selected card is found pinned to his vest!

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By FRED PETERSON

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SPECTATOR IS NOW ASKED TO CALL OUT THE NAME OF A CARD THAT MIGHT BE CONTAINED IN A PACK OF FIFTY-TWO DIFFERENT CARDS. He does so and Performer writes down the name of the card on the slip of paper. He places it in any conspicuous place. PERFORMER DOES NOT AGAIN TOUCH THIS PIECE OF PAPER AT ANY TIME.

Spectator is now invited to TAKE THE PACK FROM HIS OWN POCKET and run through the cards and find his MENTALLY SELECTED card. Also to COUNT the cards. Spectator does so and finds there are only 51 CARDS. The card he MENTALLY SELECTED IS THE IDENTICAL CARD MISSING FROM THE DECK!

Performer remarks, "The Slip of Paper on which I wrote down the NAME of your MENTALLY SELECTED CARD, is a small envelope. Will someone now pick up the paper, note the name, and TAKE OUT WHAT HE FINDS INSIDE THE ENVELOPE?"

A Spectator opens the envelope—and finds the IDENTICAL CARD which he MENTALLY SELECTED and called out near the start of the Feat!! "ASTOUNDING"—"COMPLETELY UNBELIEVABLE"—"UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE"—are a few of the startled exclamations that will be heard from the onlookers as you present this "Brain-Stunning" Mentalistic Masterpiece!

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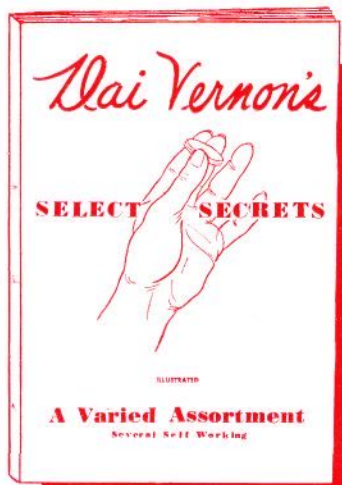
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