

**SELECTED** ⌘  
⌘ **SECRETS.**

The State Library of Victoria  
"ALMA CONJURING COLLECTION"

BY  
**DE VEGA**

*H. W. Nolan* ASM.—MCV.

FOREWORD.

In selecting these Secrets, I have endeavoured to interest the Fraternity at large. Whether you are a manipulator, impromptu or spectacular worker I trust you will find herein some secret that will add to your reputation as a magician.

The secrets are chosen from over 300 which I classified when writing "The Whirlwind of Wizardry" and while many are not complete tricks or effects in themselves they are just what adds that little extra touch of smartness to an act, or that little effect to fill up a break.

Uniform with this manuscript, I intend to publish several other booklets, viz:- "Conjuring for Children", "Thimble Tricks", "Miscellaneous Manipulations", "Pyrotechnics for Prestidigitators", "Deep Dyed Deviltry" (Spirit effects) "Ideas for Illusionists" and several others; particulars of which will be duly announced in the "Magic Wand" and "The Sphinx".

Yours fraternally,

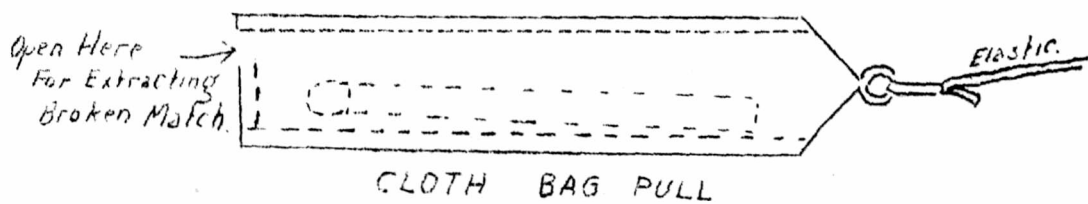
*De Vega*

THAT BROKEN MATCH.

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"ALMA CONJURING COLLECTION"

In general effect this is the old Broken Match; but with this difference. You ask someone for a pocket handkerchief which they place on the table. You also borrow a match which is marked and placed on the centre of the handkerchief; the corners are now folded over in the approved manner. The handkerchief is lifted and several spectators are allowed to feel the match through the folds of cambric. Someone is then requested to break the match into several pieces. This done, handkerchief is placed on table once more, hands casually shown empty; the folds unfolded and the match is found completely restored.

The Secret depends on a little pull which is worn in the right sleeve, to the end of which is attached a small cloth bag with a match in it. A finger ring with a small sharp hook is also worn on second or third finger. While match is being marked and placed in the handkerchief you stand with your hands behind your back. At same time get possession of the above described pull from the right sleeve and secure a corner of the little cloth bag to the sharp hook on the finger-ring. The pull of the elastic will keep it in Place. When you lift the folded handkerchief containing the match from the Table you place it over the right hand, and as you again lift the folded foulard you grasp the bag containing the Duplicate match, which is thus detached from the hook. It is this match which the spectators are allowed to feel and break. In unfolding the handkerchief and placing on table there is ample opportunity to allow the fake to return to the sleeve; and there is nothing left to tell the tale.



### SELF IGNITING DOVE PAN.

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In working the old Dove Pan did you never feel stupid - after breaking the eggs etc. into the pan - to deliberately set them on fire - would it not be much more mysterious for the contents to "accidentally" catch fire as you are warming them over the candle, being more humorous to the audience too; and gives you an opportunity for some good bye play before finally clashing on the lid.

The effect, like so many other good effects is beautifully simple; and is our old friend the fire bowl in a new guise. Take your Dove pan and have a small cup  $\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $\frac{1}{4}$ " soldered to it  $\frac{1}{3}$ " from bottom - this cup is perforated; accompanying sketch should make all clear.

To present, load this cup with a small piece of metal potassium. Your bottle contains a mixture of petrol and water and is poured over the ingredients in the usual way. See that none of this liquid comes into contact with the potassium in the cup. Light your candle; hold pan over flame to "cook" contents. While pattering tilt pan so that liquid comes into contact with the potassium and you will have a lovely burst of flame; apparently a real accident especially if you have "thrown" a "borrowed" handkerchief among the contents. However, you subdue the flames and all's well that ends well.

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### KNOTTED CHANGING SILKS.

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A Blue silk is shown with a yellow one tied round it as shown in Fig. This is held in the left hand and stroked with the right; when the silks are seen to have changed places the blue being tied round the yellow.

This is merely a variation of the well known Goldin Colour change. The blue silk being a bag lined with yellow and has a blue silk tied (and sewn) round its centre. Figures should make all clear. Note the silks are diagonal in shape and the double silk diamond shape. This takes up much less space than if they were all square; use at least 18 inch silks as it is impossible to make this effect with a smaller silk and look natural.

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## SPLINTERS! - THE VANISHING BALL.

Effect. A white ball - say the last of the 4 at fingertips - is placed in a small cup shaped receptacle attached to the wand, a sheet of paper about 6 x 8 is shown both sides. The wand with the ball balanced in the small cup is held in the left hand as in Fig.1. The small sheet of paper is lowered in front of the ball, until the bottom edge just hides the ball from view. Note the hand holds the paper by the top edge, and is obviously too far away from the ball to assist in the vanish.

Now in this condition paper spontaneously bursts into flame and the ball is gone.

Explanation:- The ball is a solid ball with a cat-gut loop:

The wand is a hollow metal tube and cup is attached to a piston which can be raised a matter of 4 or 5 inches when the piston is raised. An ornamental snake is on wand near end, this is made to slide up and down an inch or two, and attached to the piston so that when the snake is pushed up the piston and cup rises; and the body of snake needless to say is held away from spectators: the body of snake covers the slot which piston slides in.

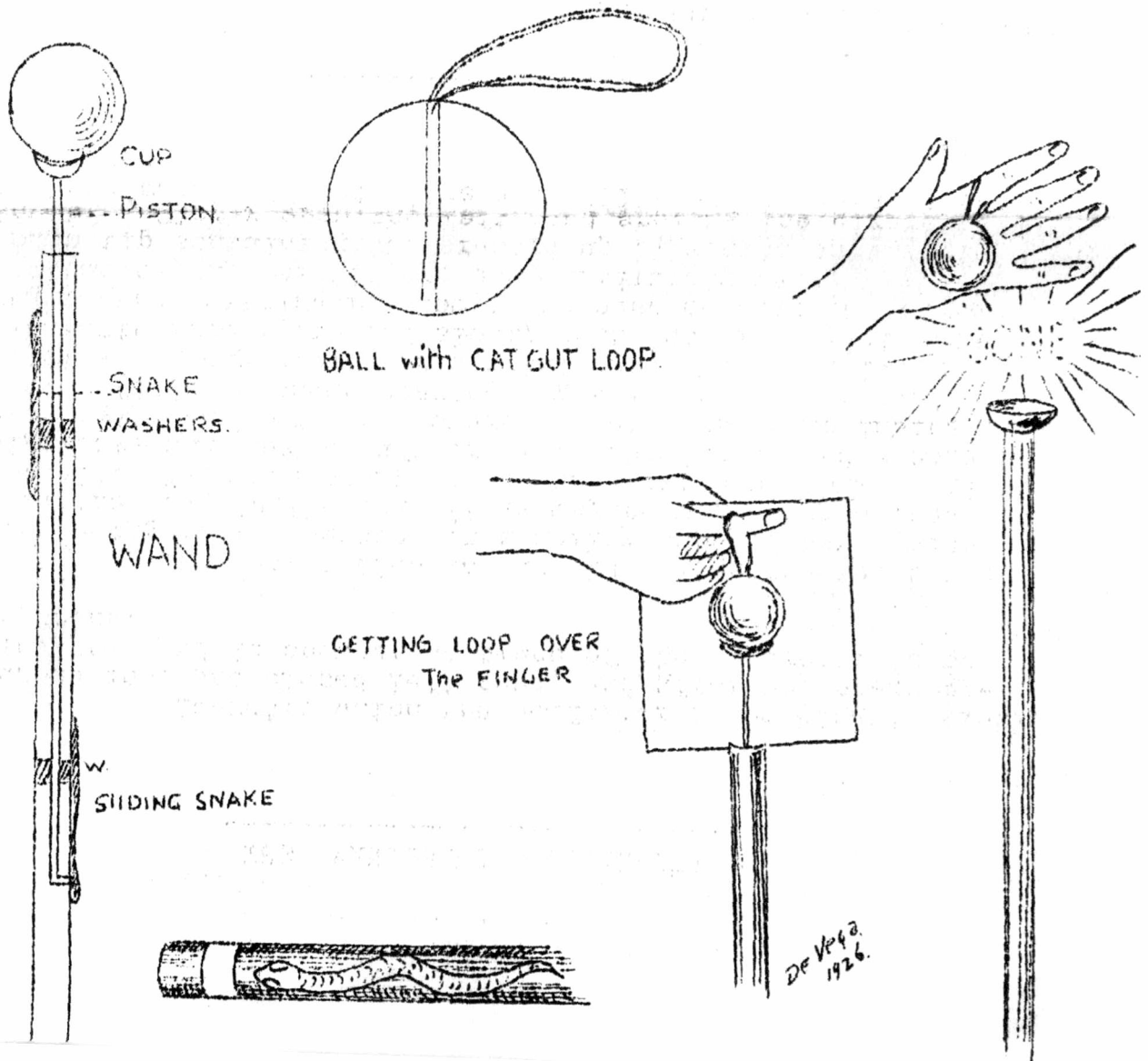
Figures should make all clear.

This wand will bear casual examination as there is neither knob or slot to be seen as is usual with piston wands:

Presentation. In whatever way you have led up to this Vanish you change ball for looped ball if not already using one: Balance ball in small cup on top of wand: show paper. Lower over ball, lift again to show ball still there; lower once more, and with thumb slowly push up snake, which causes piston to rise carrying upwards the cup and ball. Get forefinger through loop of cat-gut allowing the ball to swing behind the hand. Lower cup; Break needle shaped Flash Tube in upper corner of flash paper. There is a sheet of flame and the ball is gone, while all are watching the flame; drop hand to side disposing of the ball in the Pockette.

Those who do not feel inclined to have the special wand made; can get almost the same effect by means of an ordinary wand with a little cup to fit over the end; only this means lowering the paper well over the ball to enable one to get the loop over forefinger, which is not so clean.

Use only the needle shaped flash tubes they are easily broken and there is little or no danger of the acid coming in contact with the fingers. By the way do not try this with a celluloid or ivorine ball if it came in contact with the flame it would certainly vanish.



## THE VANISHING CIGARETTE.

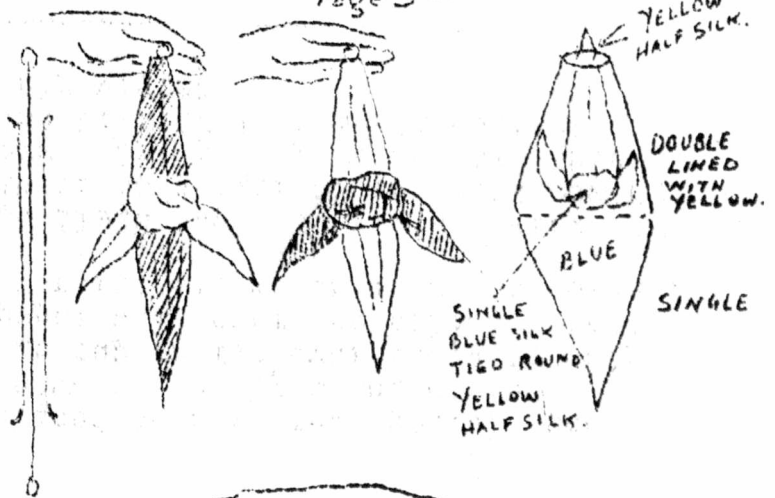
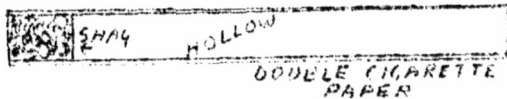
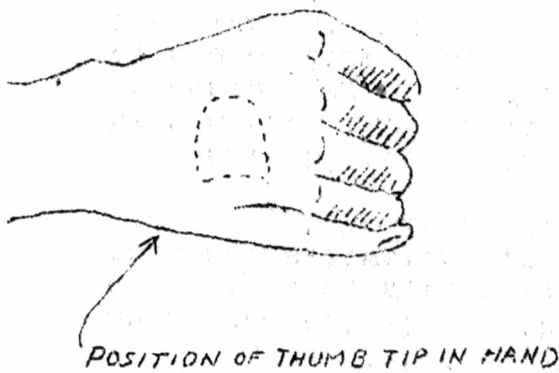
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Cigarette which the performer is smoking is slowly pushed into the closed left hand, and after necessary by-play the hand is opened; no trace of the cigarette is to be found.

The secret lies in our old friend the thumb tip. Also a cigarette composed of a hollow tube of paper with a little shag in the end (this may be made over a lead pencil). Wear the thumb tip on the left hand thumb. Light cigarette and take a puff or two. Show left hand slowly close with back of hand towards spectators thumb inside fist. Withdraw thumb leaving tip - which it is almost needless to say should be a metal one. Now take lit cigarette from mouth and slowly push into left fist with right hand forefinger; sometimes pushing with the thumb instead of the forefinger, and, ultimately carry away the thumb tip containing the crushed up cigarette on the right thumb. Slowly open the left hand showing the cigarette to have gone. By this time you will have disposed of the thumb tip.

### KNOTTED CHANGING SILKS

- Page 3 -



SHAPE OF THE KNOTTED BLUE & YELLOW SILKS

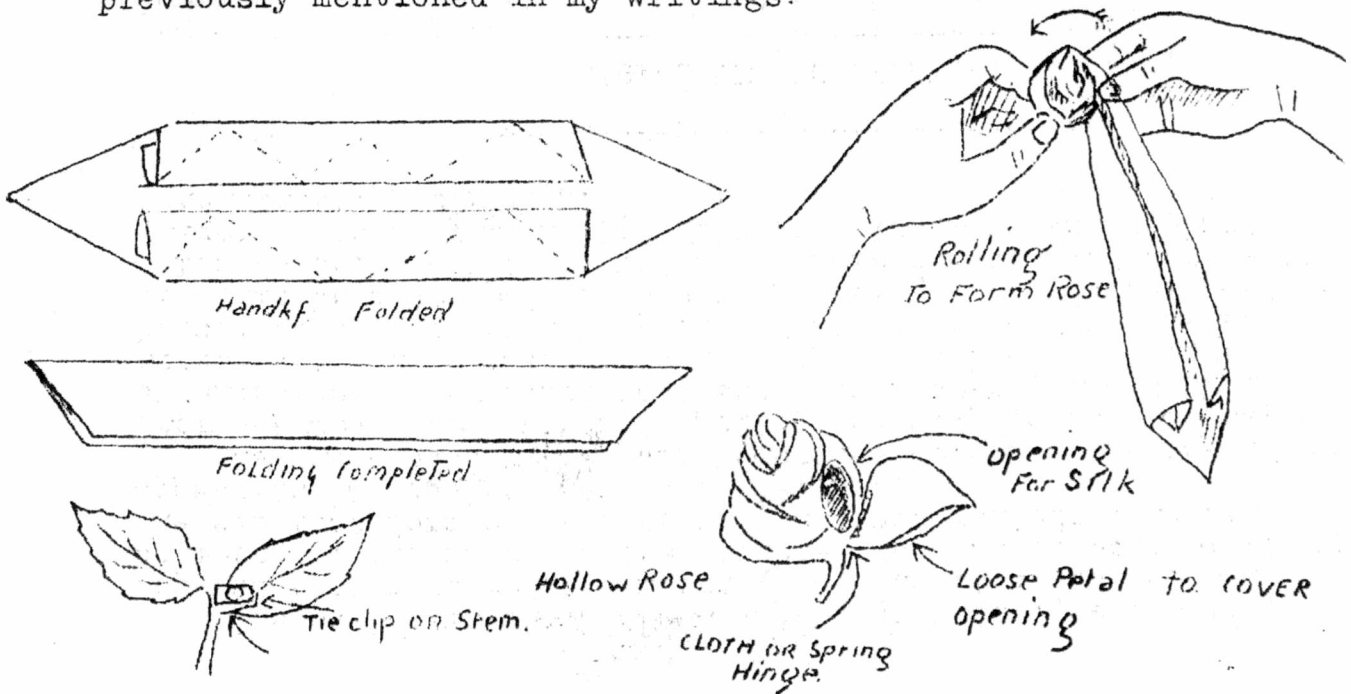
# SILK AND ROSE.

This is a delightful little effect to be worked by two performers simultaneously. A rose bush is seen on the stage from which one of the performers plucks a full blown red rose the other performer shows a red silk square. They take up their positions and slowly waving their hands the two articles change places. The performer with Rose now has in his hands the silk and the other performer - or lady assistant, the rose.

The main secret is in the folding of a handkerchief and rolling it into the form of a rose. The silk is taken and folded cornerwise as shown in Fig. until it is about 16" long by 2 inches broad. This strip is now taken and wound round and round itself until it resembles a rose; then it is secured with a little pin. When neatly made it is undetectable when placed among some other artificial flowers. It is held in place by means of a tie clip on the stem of the plant. The performer "plucks" this rose and under cover of a waving motion withdraws the pin allowing the silk to expand.

The handkerchief to rose is accomplished by means of a Hollow rose. Procure a cloth millinery flower; take to pieces and make up again with seccotine round a little tube resembling the Torpedo handkerchief Vanisher. See Fig.

The method of folding the silk to form the Rose was shown me many years ago by Mr. H. of Glasgow; whom I have previously mentioned in my writings.





## THE DUPLEX HANDKERCHIEF CASKET.

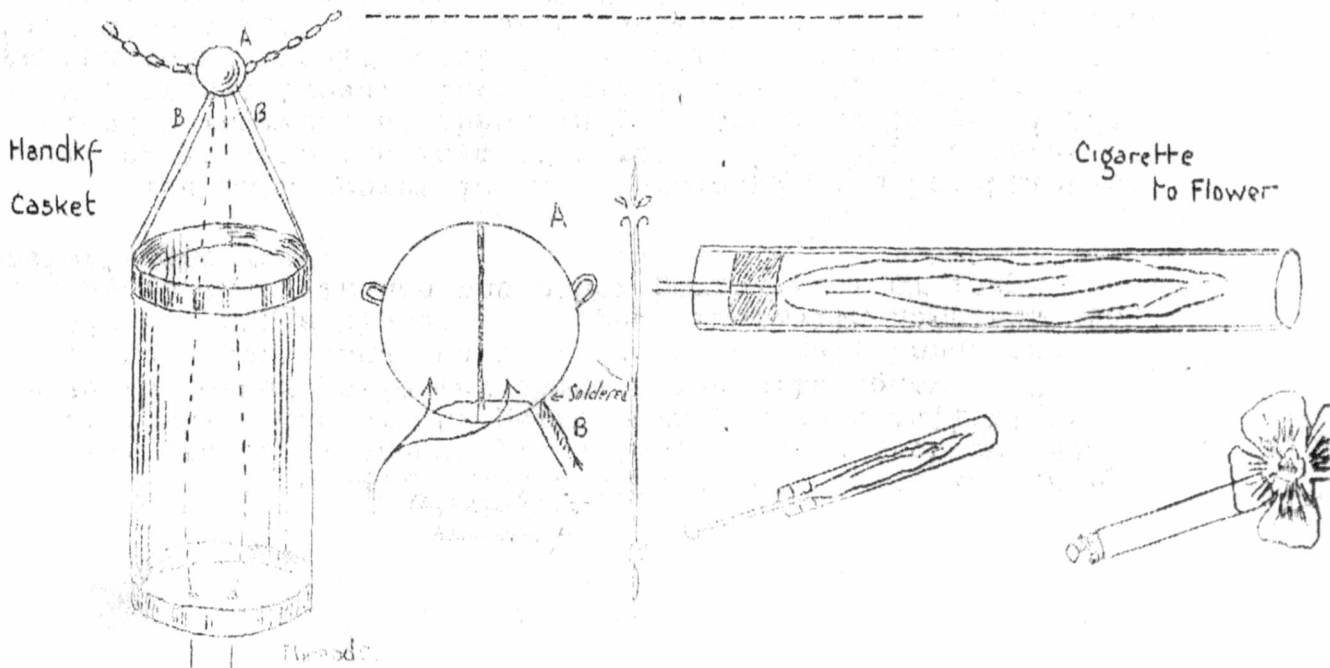
The Casket measures about 8 ins. by 3 ins., circular in shape. Top and bottom there is a metal band, and it is suspended on a stand by means of chains which are attached to a metal ball ornament. In the simplest form of presentation 2 handkerchiefs vanished visibly appear in the casket one after the other.

As the astute reader will doubtless have guessed the silks come from the metal ball which is hollow and divided into 2 compartments a handkerchief is tucked into each compartment, and a thread attached to the corner of each; threads pass down through holes in bottom of casket through eyelet in stand and off to the assistant; or could be made self contained by having a weight released in the hollow stand, in this method a pin released by performer allows weight to fall bringing the silk or silks from their place of concealment. see Figs.

## CIGARETTE TO FLOWER.

Enter smoking cigarette - take in hand; a slight wave of the arm and the cigarette becomes a flower.

This effort is entirely self-contained: The cigarette is a metal tube, and conceals a feather flower. The Feather Flower is attached to a sort of plunger which fits fairly tightly into the Tube. See Fig. attached to this plunger is a slender rod which projects from "Gold Tipped" end of cigarette on pushing this rod in with the thumb the flower is pushed out. The flower may be placed in buttonhole, the cigarette being pushed through the buttonhole and concealing behind the coat lapel.



THE SIMPLEX PIGEON PRODUCTION.

(By courtesy of the "Magic Wand")

Having produced your Ribbons and Flag without approaching any part of the person; Tables or Chairs; several pigeons are shaken from the folds of the Flag.

Fig. 1. Shows the container; this is made on the same principle as the old sweet producing bag, but of such a size as will hold three or four pigeons: The top part is ventilated with eyelet holes. There is also a ring at the bottom of the bag the use of which will be explained.

Fig. 2. shows the prepared Tray: This has a swivel hook at the front edge, to which is attached the top ring of bag. When the tray is held flat, the bag containing the pigeons will hang down perpendicularly from the front. Grasp the end of the bag and bring it up until it lies flat with the under surface of the tray. This will bring the Ring at the Bottom of the bag, to the catch at the hinder edge of tray, to which the latter is fastened. This catch is actuated by a lever attached to the handle, so as to release the bag when desired.

On top of tray is fastened the male portion of a glove fastener, the other part being sewn to a small square of leather fastened to the centre of the flag. The flag should measure about 4 ft. x 3ft. at least.

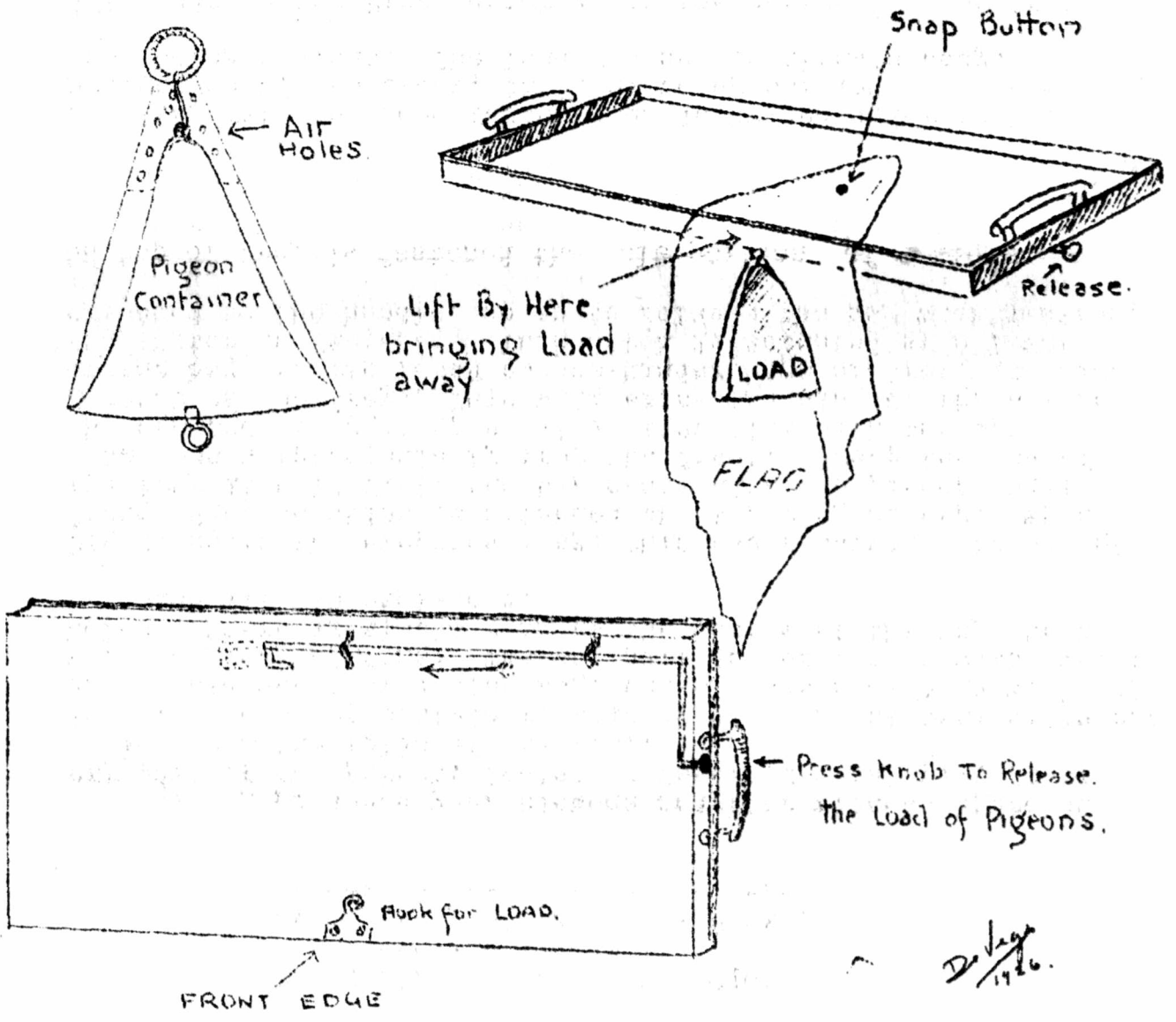
The Tray with the load fastened as described underneath is brought on by assistant, the tray being carried on edge-wise, top facing audience. The load facing assistant's body.

After displaying Flag, catch it by the centre (seeing that the clip is not covered by the folds) and place it over the tray. The assistant at the same moment brings the tray up to the Horizontal position to allow the flag to be placed over it, and releases the bolt catch controlled from the handle. The moves must be thoroughly rehearsed and well timed in order not to expose the load, which now hangs perpendicular from front edge of tray concealed by the folds of the flag.

The object of the glove fastener on tray is to prevent the flag from accidentally falling and thus exposing the load.

Sleeves now pulled well back and music stopped, flag is very deliberately lifted from tray and with the load. The pigeons are released in the same manner as the confectionary in the old effect.

The use of the Tray may be done away with and load obtained from assistant's back, or the bag may have two compartments one of which contains a small rabbit which is released on the tray - which provides a legitimate use for the tray; and before the spectators have recovered from their surprise at the appearance of bunny you have shaken from the flag a shower of fluttering pigeons.



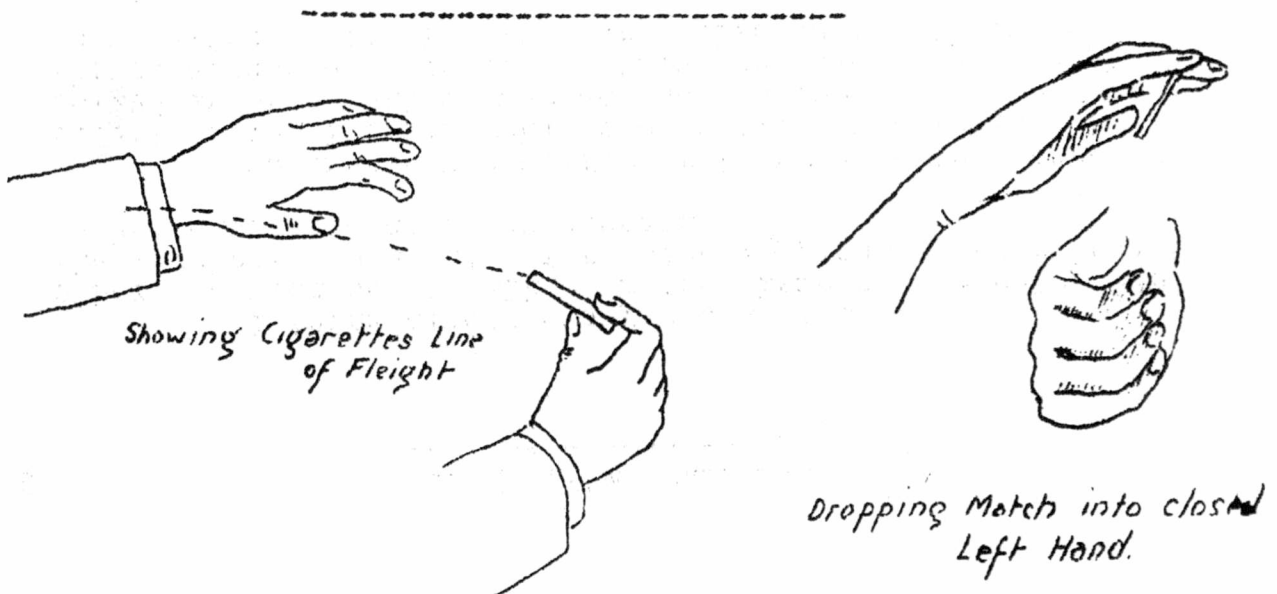
Effect - A cigarette thrown into the left hand changes to a match; the missing cigarette being produced from foot of trousers or elsewhere.

This neat little effect depends on the use of the sleeve. Those who have any doubt about "sleeving" an article; all I can say is see "JARROW" at close quarters. He is an adept at making use of the sleeve.

Stand right side towards spectators, hold left hand about level with waist, palm towards floor, then throw the cigarette from the right hand into the left hand, closing the left hand round it, with the thumb push the cigarette out at top of fist a la method of the rising cards: at same time finger-palming a match in the right hand. Remove cigarette from top of left hand and resume original position.

Once more throw the cigarette towards the left hand, but this time let it go up the left sleeve, although you close the left hand as if it contained the cigarette. Make one or two passes over the closed left hand; with the right, dropping the finger palmed match into left fist as it passes over same. Open left hand, show match in place of cigarette.

Strike match and while doing so allow left hand to fall to side. Cigarette will fall into the hand from sleeve. Raise foot and produce the cigarette from foot of trouser leg. Light and smoke as if nothing unusual had taken place.



## SILK FROM CANDLE.

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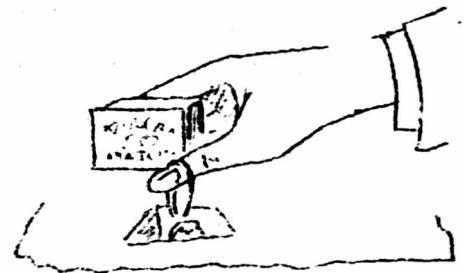
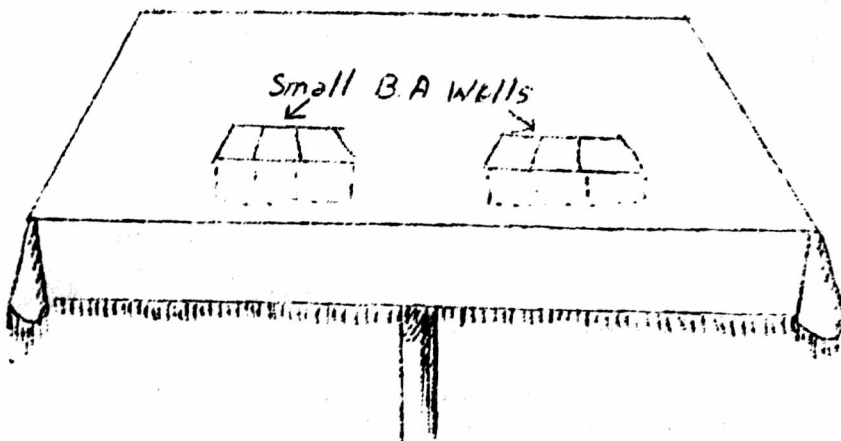
I think almost every conjurer at some time or other has produced a silk from the flame of a candle, via the matchbox. Wouldn't it be nice to produce any colour selected or several in succession.

To enable the performer to produce the above effect, several handkerchiefs of different colours are rolled in the usual manner and have a loop of gut or waxed thread attached to them. In this condition they are placed in a series of little black art wells on the table top.

After lighting candle, in the act of placing matchbox on table in front of well containing selected coloured silk, you get your thumb through the loop; bringing away the silk, which is ultimately produced from the flame; in placing the materialized silk on the table you may obtain a second one and so on, as long as supply lasts.

Hands may be shown back and front if desired, by means of the usual looped ball sleights, although I do not approve of this; it is not magic but manipulation.

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*Lifting Silk from well.*

*Remember to Turn Hand*

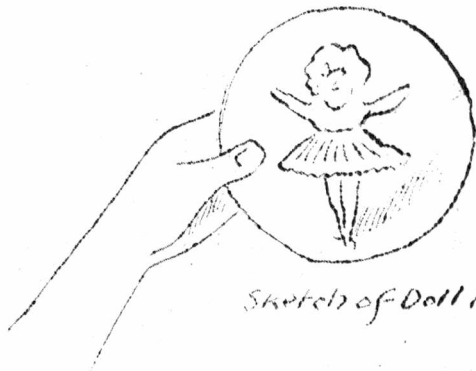
*so that back faces audience  
in raising hand from table. 12*

3 sets of wooden needlework hoops are used, or if expense is no object 3 sets of tambourine rings. Each set of hoops has a sheet of white paper stretched across it as in the familiar Tambourine production. Now you may either hold the rings in your left hand or suspend from a stand on table, steadying it with the left hand while you proceed to paint or sketch the objects you intend to materialize, say a little statue of Father Xmas; or a Cupid Doll; a bouquet of Flowers and a Tumbler of Milk. First you sketch and colour doll, then burst the paper with your right hand, producing from it the real article. The next hoop is taken and drawing of flowers executed. These are materialized in the same way. The third set of hoops are now fixed in position, and a sketch of a Tumbler of Milk or - something stronger - drawn, and upon the right hand being thrust through the paper, the glass of liquid is produced.

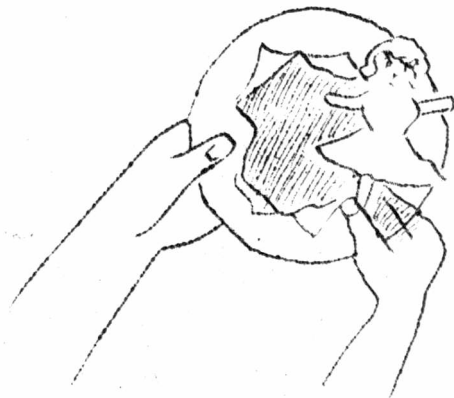
The explanation of above consists in the secret use of three fakes; of the shape shown in accompanying drawing. The second finger of left hand is slipped through the flesh coloured ring and the fake with its load allowed to lie along the back of the hand. In this way the left hand either holds or supports the hoop while sketch is being executed, it will be seen that the mere bending inward of the fingers brings the load exactly behind the circle of paper. The right hand has only to burst paper; take the load from clips and produce.

In experimenting with above, I found it best to have the loads with their fakes in three separate pockets in the left coat tail the openings a little below the top of the profonde; the discarded fakes being dropped into the profonde itself. Of course other places of concealment could be used such as behind a chair etc.

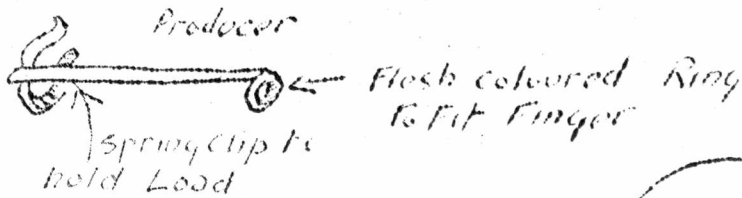
The glass containing the liquid has a glass disc on top; in place of the usual rubber cover. This does away with the necessity of removing cover but requires more careful handling and is not practical for loading from the pocket; but for general use I suggest glass  $3/4$  full of liquid (white or wine coloured) with a disc permanently cemented to top; the effect is the same and saves a lot of trouble - and perhaps mess. Of course, if desired, the usual rubber cover could be used and retained in the hand, but I'm afraid moves would be anything but clean.



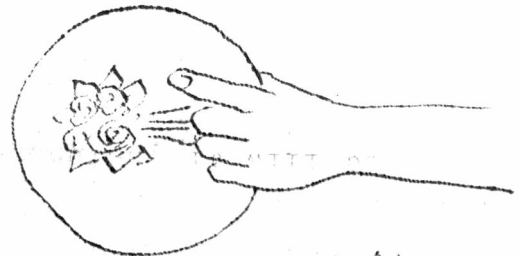
Sketch of Doll Made.



Producing Actual Doll.



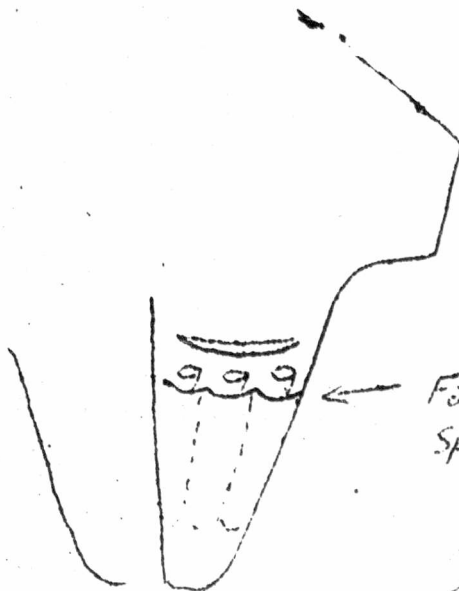
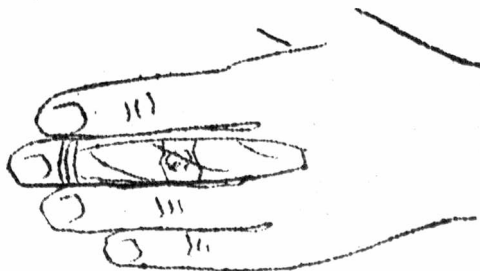
Fake in Position, Load Behind hand.



Loading Position For producing.

**IMPROMPTU METHOD**

Rubber band Round Finger; Cigars, Pencils, or other small articles may be tucked under Band.



Fakes in Special Pockets

De Vries  
1926

FOUR ACES AND :---!!!

In this effect the four aces are taken from a pack of playing cards; placed in an envelope which is sealed. The envelope is now deposited on a small stand where everyone can see it.

Three ordinary school slates are shown; cleaned and marked by a voluntary assistant. The slates in this condition are left in charge of the assistant while performer explains what is about to take place - merely stating that the cards will leave the envelope and be found between the previously examined slates.

A lighted candle is now brought into contact with the envelope - there is a flash; and in place of the four aces there is a grinning devil's head; The assistant is requested to separate the slates; and upon doing so the missing aces are found adhering to one of them accompanied with a message of good luck written in chalk.

The envelope into which the four aces are placed is changed for one containing a devil's head; (Dennison's cut-out for Hallowe'en). The envelope is made of Black Flash Paper (you will find complete instructions for the manufacture of this given under Flash Paper Secrets - described later). I suggest making a dozen or more of these envelopes, and using the ordinary card change; or the envelope may be switched if you do not wish to make up so many.

The four duplicate aces - for of course there are duplicates - have been previously stuck to one of the slates with a dab of wax and sufficient space left to allow of a short message being written. The necessary moves to show slate unprepared are fully described in "Jardine Ellis' Secrets" pages 16 - 21.

The ordinary slate with flap may be employed instead, or the Stanley Collin's method may be used; but for convincing presentation, I have never come across a method to equal that of the late Jardine Ellis. It will certainly repay the performer who takes the trouble to master the moves.



This combination in my opinion lifts the four ace experiment from the rut of an ordinary card experiment and makes the spirit message more entertaining, while the unexpected appearance of the head of Mephistopheles just gives the sudden surprise that is needed to rouse the audience before the climax.

The head cut out should be soaked in a solution of Alum to prevent any chance of it catching fire when the envelope is ignited.

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### A BUBBLE BLOWING SECRET.

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The following secret toughens the bubbles so that they will stand much more handling than the ordinary Castile Soap solution.

Shave some laundry soap - a piece about an inch square into a pint of hot-water. When this is quite dissolved add one dessertspoonful of Gum Arabic and stir till melted, then one teaspoonful of Glycerine, and lastly another pint of cold water. The cold water is necessary because otherwise the bubbles would be inclined to break, but very hot water must be used in the first place to dissolve the soap. The glycerine makes the bubbles more brilliant while the Gum Arabic gives them elasticity.



*FOUR ACES AND?*

*Sketch showing type of  
Stand used. & the  
Damon's Cut out*



WINE AND WATER SUPREME!

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In this version of the wine and water, the effect is varied just at the point; where an element of surprise is appreciated. The usual effect is Red Wine, Water, Red Wine, Water and so on. Only in the earlier explanations does one find a variety of drinks poured from the decanter. The effect of the present form is as follows:-

From a plain glass jug of water (the mouth of which may be wiped) the performer pours in succession, Wine; Water; Wine; Water; Green Chartreuse; Water. All are drinkable with the exception of glass No. 5 the drink for an Irishman: the contents of the glasses are returned to the jug whereupon all change to water as at the commencement.

The preparation of the jug and glasses is as follows:-

- Jug: 1 pint Water; to which is added as much Saliclate of Soda as will cover a 2/- piece, also 10 to 15 drops of Liquor Potassæ.
- Glass No. 1. 2 drops of Tincture of Iron (Steel Drops)
- Glass No. 2. Empty.
- Glass No. 3. A few drops of Phenol-phathaleine dissolved in alcohol.
- Glass No. 4. Empty.
- Glass No. 5. 2 Teaspoonfuls of a saturated solution of Sulphate of Copper.
- Glass No. 6. A teaspoonful of strong tartaric acid solution.

The above quantities may require to be altered slightly in different districts; it will depend on the water supply, as different filter beds affect the chemicals.

If you should find the last change to water inclined to be slow use Oxalic Acid in place of the Tartaric,

but remember it is POISONOUS. I think if you have any doubt about the last change, it is better to make a habit of using the Oxalic Acid than change from one to the other. I do not believe in changing from a drinkable solution to a poisonous one, in the same effect; sometime you may forget which chemical you are employing with serious results. But why taste or drink the last glass at all; it is not pleasant at the best, and adds nothing to the effect.

The introduction of the "drink for an Irishman" gives scope for some new and humorous patter but I will not go into that here as this is a book of secrets.

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### THE VERNON BANK NOTE TRICK.

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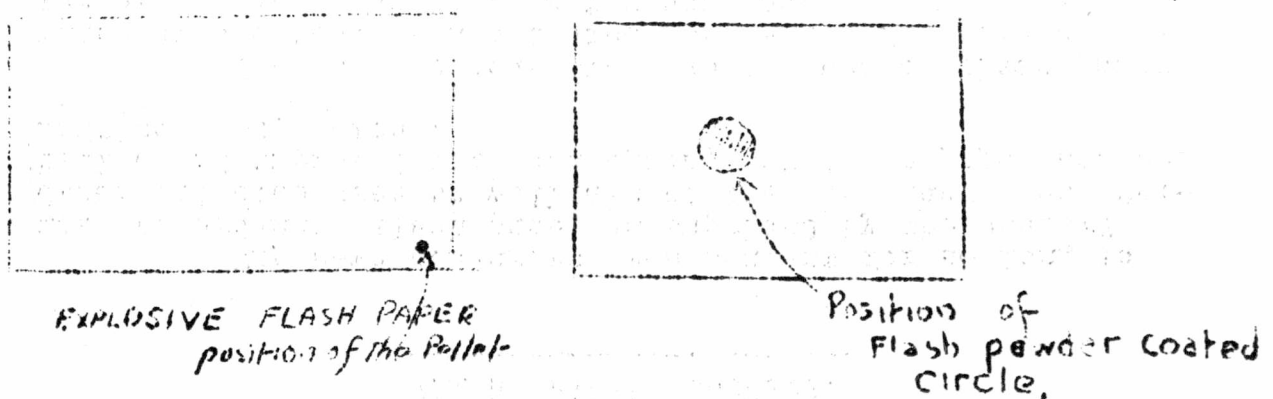
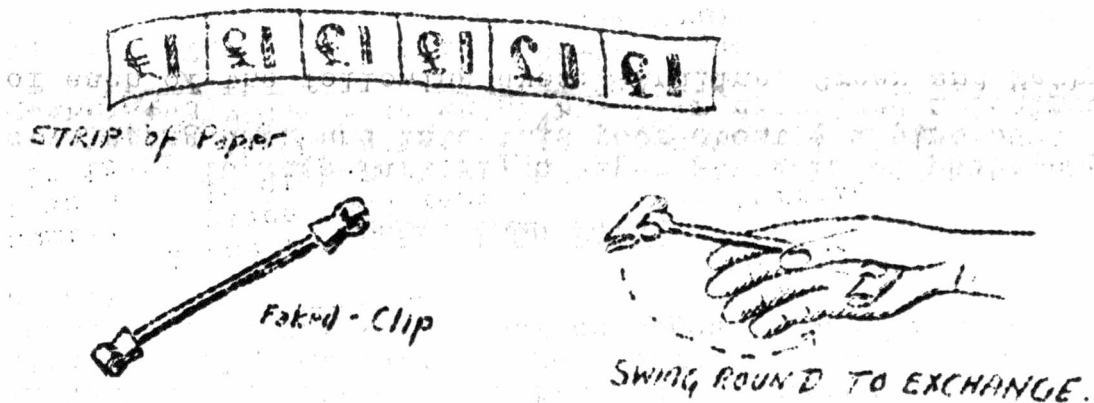
A one pound Treasury note is borrowed, torn into a number of pieces and restored; not as the original note, but as a strip of paper 15 inches long by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches, printed on it is £1. £1. £1. £1. £1. £1. This is torn into six parts, and offered to the owner; performer appears surprised at it being rejected; (good scope for patter here) remarking that he is offering him 6 to 1. However the lender does not see it in this light, so performer has to get to work once more burning the pieces and showing his hands unmistakably empty; from the ashes he produces the original note, the number of which is verified.

Of course the borrowed note is not torn but is exchanged for a "home made one." The method I suggest for this is to have a little rod with a clip at the end. Note is borrowed, number noted; and folded several times, then fixed by the lender in the small clip, performer stating that he does not handle it at all. This small rod and clip has a duplicate clip with the imitation note in it. This normally lies in the palm of the hand, and after genuine note is placed in the exposed clip the performer on way back to platform, reverses the ends; bringing the genuine note into the palm of the hand. Imitation note is taken from clip, unfolded and number read out!!! (If you have a memory like mine omit this part of the effect). The note is now torn into a number of pieces.

The slip of paper with the £1 repeated several times on it is concealed in a thumb tip worn on the left hand. The torn pieces are exchanged for the strip of paper and in replacing the thumb tip, on top of the torn pieces insert the borrowed note: thus your hands only contain the strip of paper. After sufficient by-play with this paper you burn same and under cover of rubbing the ashes you extract the genuine note from the thumb tip; replacing the tip; open the note and have the number checked.

The effect is Mr. Harry Vernon's, and arose during a discussion on new effects at a meeting of the S.C.A. The novel points appealed to me, so we set about to work it out and the above is the result.

In U.S.A. use \$5 note and strip marked \$1 five times.



FLASH PAPER SECRETS.

## FLASH PAPER SECRETS.

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Why have conjurers been content for so long to use the ordinary flash paper as supplied by the dealer? Other articles used by wielders of the wand have been overhauled and improved time and again; but flash paper has been left severely alone.

I do not advocate the manufacture of flash paper, which at the best is not a nice job, and a far more satisfactory article can be bought ready made; but the "raw material" may be improved in many ways. For instance who has not wished at some time or other for a piece of dark flash paper, when covering writing on a sheet of paper as in Noakes Spirit Message Frame or to conceal from view the pips of a playing card. I have already given an example of the uses of dark flash paper on pages 15 and 16 of this booklet.

### DARK FLASH PAPER.

To make Dark Flash Paper get a large photographic developing dish and into this pour about  $\frac{1}{2}$  a pint of Methylated Spirits in which has been dissolved a teaspoonful of each of the following dyes: Aniline, Green and Methyl Violet. This gives a much darker shade of paper than if black dye were used. Black (Nigrosin) gives a grey shade of paper.

Sheets of ordinary flash paper are soaked in above preparation for about 10 minutes, then thoroughly rinsed under the tap and allowed to dry.

The process in no wise affects the combustion of the paper and although not actually black is quite opaque.

### BRILLIANT FLASH PAPER.

This paper on being ignited vanishes with a dazzling white flash. To make, rinse some sheets of the flash paper in a weak solution of gum, and dust with Magnesium Powder or photographic flash powder. The latter with an aluminium base is preferable as it is a much finer powder. When dry the metallic coating is invisible.

Supposing you intend to vanish a coin from the paper (usual fold). Take your paper and with a brush and some thick paste make a circle on the paper corresponding in size with the coin you intend to use. - The paste must be put on very thinly. - Dust on the flash powder, shake off all loose

powder, when dry. This circle is practically invisible when paper is casually shown; but before you flash off paper, after extracting the coin, you should hold the folded paper between the flame of a candle and the spectators. The coated part of the paper will show as a dark circle which is a perfect resemblance to the coin.

When the paper is flashed off; it burns with the usual coloured flame, until it comes to the powder - then there is a dazzling flash - apparently consuming the coin.

#### EXPLOSIVE FLASH PAPER.

Doubtless everyone is familiar with the "crack-shot pictures" which when touched with a lighted cigarette a line of fire runs across the picture and terminates with a bang; If not Standard Firework Co. Huddersfield can supply them in packets.

To prepare this variety of flash paper, take the little pellets of fulminate taken from the back of the pictures; (I do not propose to go into the manufacture of the explosive here, as it is a dangerous mixture and not worth while trying to make it). Secure this little pellet to the piece of flash paper with a touch of gum: and all is ready.

Again we will take for example the vanish of a coin. Paper flashes off as usual; but when the flame comes to the explosive, there is a decided report which adds greatly to the effect: Caps used for toy pistols are useless for the above.

#### COLOURED FLASH PAPER.

If you wish to colour flash paper yourself, procure that which has not an already coloured flame; and soak in a solution of the following chemicals for the various colours. Strength of solution should be about 1 teaspoonful of powder to 1 gill of water.

Red: Soak in solution of Nitrate of Strontium.  
 Green: " " " " Chlorate of Barium.  
 Blue: " " " " Nitrate of Copper.  
 Yellow: " " " " Oxalate of Soda.

## THE MECHANICAL DEVIL'S WHISPER.

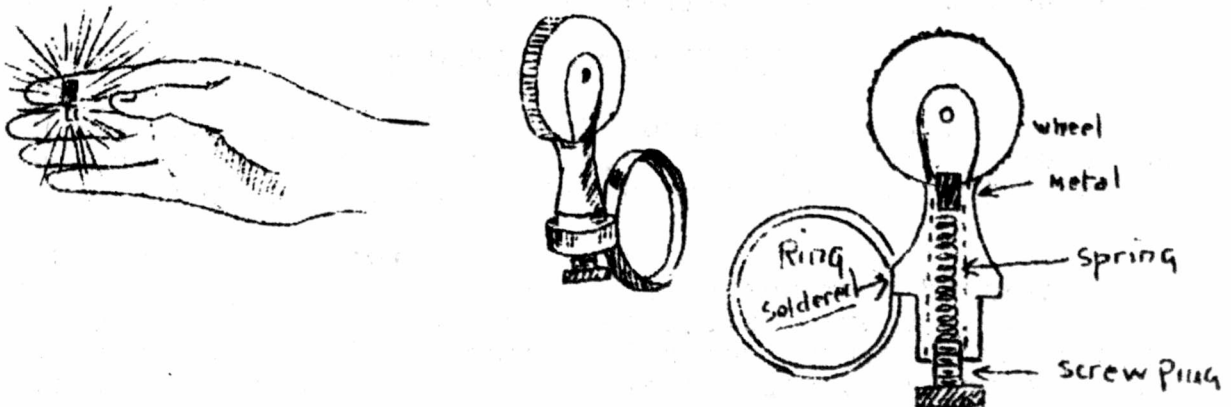
(By Courtesy of the Magic Wand)

The effect of the "Devil's Whisper" is well known, as is that of my improvement, which I sold as "Satan's Announcement". To those who do not care to handle the extremely sensitive chemicals used in the manufacture of the original article I offer this substitute; which, while not giving the report of the chemical compound; produces a very mysterious flash at the finger tips; and has the advantage of being perfectly safe and harmless. Another advantage is that it will not deteriorate with exposure to the air.

The accompanying illustration shows the construction of the appliance more clearly than words can describe it.

It is the lighting portion taken from a pocket lighter; made smaller and soldered to a flesh coloured finger ring at the angle shown in sketch. The fake is slipped over the second finger when it is required, and the thumb being drawn across the small wheel causes a series of vivid sparks to appear at the finger tips. When sparks become weak a new flint may be easily inserted.

It will be obvious that this fake will lend itself to many uses. Those who are interested in the Genuine Devil's Whisper will find it explained in minute detail further on.



Members of the fraternity are doubtless aware that the above title applies to the explosion at the finger-tips; which very effectively takes the place of the revolver.

Mr. George Johnston first presented the formula to the profession in Stanyons "Magic" for March 1907 under the title of "A New Faust Flash".

In this form the chemicals are mixed on a small square of flash paper an ordinary B.B. shot added; and the whole screwed up; forming a throw-down Cracker of a very "touchy" variety. Next we find it described in detail in Stanyon's "Fire & Chemical Magic" (Third Series) as "The Devil's Whisper" or Explosion at the finger tips. While Mr. Stanyon gives explicit directions for the handling of the chemicals but leaves one with a quality of the loose powder to handle, which in my opinion leads to carelessness. At first only a small pinch is mixed and used as directed and when as the performer gains confidence and mixes more, then sooner or later there is bound to be an accident. Already there have been some serious accidents with this explosive; one recorded in the "Magic World" wherein an amateur lost a finger; and only last season through the "Sphinx" we hear of a performer in the United States losing his hand. Many other minor accidents have taken place. The pity is that all these accidents could have been avoided if reasonable care had been exercised in the handling of the chemicals. My advice is; in experimenting or using chemicals, especially explosives, be methodical and keep strictly to the directions. Such a simple action as placing a stopper in the wrong bottle may be attended with serious results; one cannot be too careful.

However, I will get ahead with the explanation. After experimenting with the compound for some time, I hit upon a plan which made the "whispers" tolerably safe. These I sold as "Satan's Announcement"! In this form the explosive pellets could be handled or even carried in the pocket. Houdini and Chris Van Bern were the only performers with whom I shared the secret, which later I explained in the "Magic Circular" and now for the first time I make the secret really public property; but remember these are not childrens throw-down crackers, to be banged off by every purchaser of a shilling book on magic, and even as I describe, the mixture is far too dangerous to be played with.



The Chemicals are:-

Amorphous Phosphorus (Red).  
Chlorate of Potash (Pulverised).

Keep these well apart AT ALL TIMES; (I keep my supply in separate bottles at different ends of my hamper) and on no account use the same lifter to measure with. Do not be tempted to mix more than I state. Keep to the actual directions and there is little or no danger. Some readers may think this is overdone, but remember in this case it is too late to be sorry, so SAFETY FIRST. Keep your face well away while mixing. Get a couple of sheets of tissue paper; fold them into a little pad about 4 inches square. Take another piece about 8 x 6 in. fold into a strip about 3 in. by  $\frac{1}{2}$ ", smocking down any sharp corners. Get 2 strips of card 3 in. by  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. as lifters. Write potash on one and Phos. on the other, and on no account use them to lift a chemical other than that marked on them. Next cut a sheet of tissue paper into 1" squares. Now get a small lump of coal and grind it to a coarse powder about  $\frac{1}{32}$  of an inch in size. Now comes the mixing. Lift as much Amor;Phos. as would cover a 3d piece (or Dime) not heaped; and place on pad. With the OTHER lifter take the same quantity of potash and place beside the phosphorus. Again take as much potash as cover a 3d piece and place on pad; this gives you twice as much potash as phosphorus. With the paper mix the two chemicals together until they combine in a greyish powder, using no pressure; but merely a smoothing movement moving the powders to and fro. Any pressure will explode the mixture. Do not mix more than I state, it will save no time or labour, as the mixture will not keep for any length of time.

Presuming you have correctly mixed the chemicals, take your little squares of paper, place them in a row and put a little coal grit on each paper. Next place on each paper on top of the coal grit as much of the mixture as would equal in size the head of a match. USING THE PAPER LIFTER. You will find the quantities given will make about two dozen "whispers". Lift the papers carefully and screw each one into a little pellet, which in size will be less than a pea, and trim off the ends of the paper; you will now be able to handle these with reasonable care, without them going off.

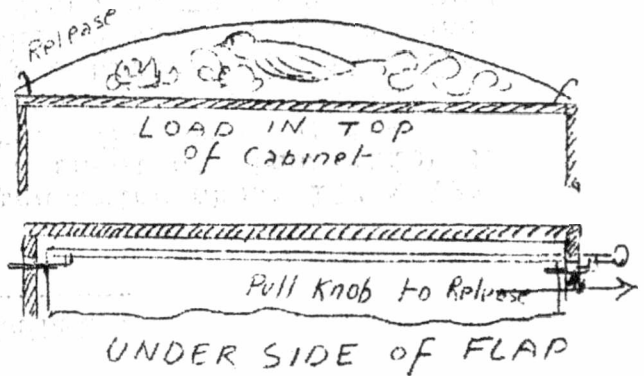
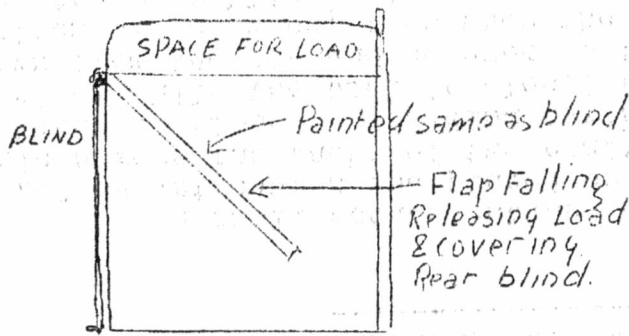
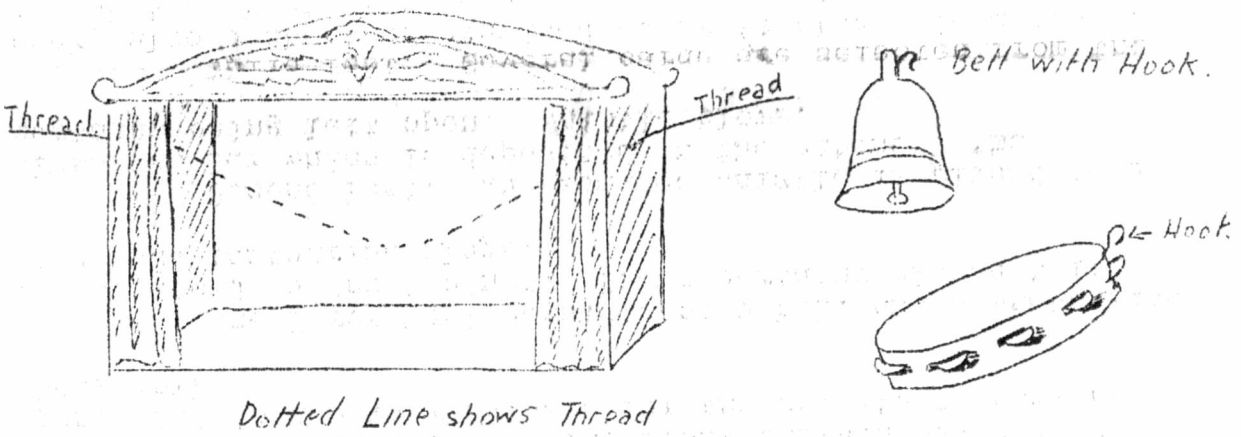
When I made these at first I added Stearine grated to a fine powder adding a pinch to each pellet. The idea being that the waxy substance would "set" the mixture and prevent it rubbing and thus decreasing the liability to

explode. The heat of the fingers in screwing up the pellets being sufficient to bind all together. In practice, however, I later found this could be dispensed with, so have not included it in the Formula.

When you wish to use, take a "whisper" between the thumb and second finger. Press firmly; then snap the fingers with as much force as you can command. You may feel a slight stinging sensation in the fingers, but not nearly so bad as in the old method with the loose powder.

Readers who have been looking for a new and wonderful secret, may be disappointed, but let them try the old method with the loose explosive then revert to the pellets, and they will find the advantage of the present form, and, I think, will agree that the "Devil's Whisper" has at last really been made into a practical accessory, that can be used in any place, and at any time, without danger.

CABINET OF WONDERS



## CABINET OF WONDERS.

A small wooden cabinet measuring about 12" x 12" x 20" is introduced and placed on a sheet of glass which is laid across the backs of two chairs. The front of the cabinet is closed by sliding curtains which meet at the centre; while the back is closed by a blind which is pulled down from the top and secured to the bottom. Top, ends and bottom are of wood, thus when the front curtains are opened and the rear blind raised, it is possible for all to see right through the Cabinet. The cabinet being shown the rear blind is pulled down. The front curtain being left open. All is now in readiness for the spirits to commence their work.

The First Test consists of a bell and a tambourine being placed in the Cabinet. Front curtains closed bell rings and tambourine plays.

Second Test. An examined whistle is placed in a glass tumbler which is deposited in the cabinet, the curtains being left open. Whistle blows.

Third Test. Several cards are selected from the pack, also a sheet of examined paper is placed in a frame. A packet of Photographic post cards is given to one of the spectators to select one. Frame placed in cabinet and in front of it the glass containing the cards. The selected cards rise one by one from the glass; while an enlarged reproduction of the selected photograph appears on the paper in the frame. The entire manifestations are visible to all; the curtains again being left open.

Fourth Test. Cabinet shown empty. Rear curtain or blind raised and lowered again, front curtains closed. When again opened the cabinet is filled with real flowers and a pair of pigeons.

The illustrations show in detail the construction of the cabinet. The arched top conceals the load of flowers, some genuine, others of the spring variety, to increase the display. The doves are also concealed in the same enclosure which must be provided with air holes. The base of top is hinged to rear edge, and secured with a catch; which when released allow it to fall down; covering the blind at the back, and being painted the same colour is apparently still the blind, the load being dropped to the bottom of cabinet.

Test No. 1 is accomplished by means of a thread which runs through the cabinet from side to side; and is operated by an assistant stationed in the wings or behind the screen.

The Bell and Tambourine are provided with small hooks which the performer hooks over the thread. Thus at the given signal, by assistant pulling the thread bell and tambourine are caused to play.

Test No. 2. is our old friend the duplicate whistle in the sleeve blown by pressure of the arm on a rubber bulb.

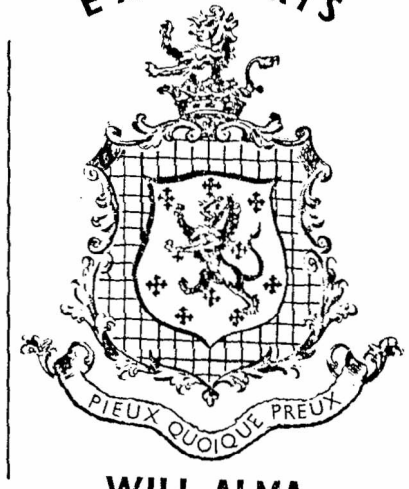
Test No. 3. is explained by the use of the mechanical pack so far as the rising cards are concerned and Gamages "Mystographs" account for the photograph slowly developing in full view, in the frame. The reason for working the rising cards in conjunction with this effect is; I have found Mystographs rather slow when worked alone, and the rising of the cards from the pack occupy the attention while the picture is appearing.

Test No. 4. I have already explained. When put over with good showmanship, this combination of effects is very convincing. Of course other effects could be added at the discretion of the performer.

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*Harry W. Nolan* H.S.M.M.C.V.  
 #945 High Street Reservoir N.Y. Picture  
 1940

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