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# ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FOOTLIGHTS

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METHODS EMPLOYED BY  
THE MODERN SPIRITUALIST, PSYCHIC WORKER,  
CLAIRVOYANT AND CRYSTAL GAZER

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BY DR. X

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On The Other Side  
of the  
Footlights

AN EXPOSE OF ROUTINES, APPARATUS AND  
DECEPTIONS RESORTED TO BY MEDIUMS,  
CLAIRVOYANTS, FORTUNE TELLERS  
AND CRYSTAL GAZERS IN DE-  
LUDING THE PUBLIC



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## DEDICATION

To the Memory of Harry Kellar, The Dean  
of Magic, Known and Beloved by Magicians  
and Laymen Throughout the World, This  
Work is Dedicated.





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## INTRODUCTION

THIS manuscript was compiled primarily for the benefit of uninformed magicians, enabling them to adopt the various tricks and effects for their own amusement, or to detect fraudulent mediums in the presentation of alleged spiritualistic communications, etc., etc.

Should it fall into the hands of ones that have been duped by the trickster, who plays upon their superstition, making use of facts secured in regard to past history, family connections and similar information, for pecuniary profit, I trust it will in the future save them from these vultures whose only creed is "Get The Money," regardless of methods employed or resultant consequences to their victims.

A word as to spiritism or spiritualism—supposedly a communication by divers ways and means between the living and the dead—a creed or religion that has grown by leaps and bounds since the world's war, due largely no doubt to the receptive mood of widows, bereaved mothers and sisters when the merest opportunity presents itself for a possible communion with their beloved ones. I do not make bold to state that all mediums are frauds; no doubt there are a few really sincere, endeavoring to the best of their ability (but without results) to pierce the veil separating us from that unknown beyond. However, any worker who receives messages, answer questions through a "control" and otherwise, or causes seemingly supernatural occurrences to take place, emphatically does resort to fraud or trickery.

You may say that spiritism does and must exist: that

brilliant scholars such as Sir Conan Doyle and Sir Oliver Lodge, whose expressions of belief refute the testimony of magicians and other investigators who are equally positive it does not exist. How intelligent, clear thinking men as the above can be converted to the doctrine of spiritism is a problem for someone besides myself to solve. If sincere, a plausible solution would be that they have either allowed their sensitive, highly trained minds to receive impressions which have no foundation or actual existence; or are the pawns of some clever deceptionists, having been convinced of the genuineness of seances undertaken and further, that they themselves actually receive messages from the dead.

As this is being written the author-spiritist, Conan Doyle has started a campaign in our country, preaching the gospel of spiritualism and annexing American dollars in large amounts, which action classifies him in my mind as on the doubtful list. A future paragraph dwells upon attendant finances in connection with this religion or "fad." Once again it appears a case of belief and coin going hand in hand.

Ask any well informed magician whether or not he believes in spiritism. He will laugh at you. The majority of fraudulent mediums are crude in their demonstrations as compared to the modern magician or entertainer, who produces the same and more impressive results upon the open, lighted stage, while the "spook" worker is in most instances protected by a curtain of darkness. I myself have never witnessed anything but trickery in seances; I have yet to meet the magician who could not explain the methods of trickery or articles of apparatus, etc., employed at seances where he sat in attendance. Mr. Harry Houdini, at a banquet recently given in his honor by the Chicago Assembly, Society of American Magicians, in a most wonderful and highly interesting speech told those present of having witnessed over one hundred seances while in

Europe, and in each instance had detected trickery or fraud being employed, although a few workers were exceptionally clever. He has investigated every medium of note in this country with similar results and, in addition, to satisfy himself beyond peradventure of doubt in regard to communication with this world after death, made compacts between his most devoted friends that each would endeavor to get in touch with the other in the event of their decease. Two comrades have departed on the great unknown journey, one his life-long friend and late secretary, John Sargent, whose last words to Mr. Houdini were: "Harry, remember the sign." The agreed sign has not been received, nor a message of any character, to establish the fact of active or communicative life beyond the grave.

These many visits of Mr. Houdini were not made as a skeptic; neither was the thought of expose uppermost, but in full faith to determine to his own satisfaction if amongst the mediums one was actually capable of proving beyond doubt that those in this life are able to get in touch with our dead.

Mr. David P. Abbott of Omaha, Nebraska, is a well known student of psychology and an ardent investigator in matters pertaining to spiritism. His investigations covered a large territory, for when publicity was awarded mediums or clairvoyants, these individuals were visited and methods of operation studied. The above gentleman is also author of an interesting book wherein he exposes the routines employed by mediums, which, however, have since been superseded by others more intricate and clever, as will be the case after those explained herein become more universally familiar to the public.

The best arguments to advance against the theory of spiritism are these: Why are the converts thereto so exceedingly small in number compared with any other religion? Why

are such a chosen few capable of satisfactorily or convincingly conducting a seance? Why is there always a subscription, donation, or whatever you desire to term it, collected or in some manner extracted from the purse? There is always a source of revenue connected with the work regardless of the place or manner exhibited.

Women are more susceptible to the wiles of the faker than are males, though many of the latter, especially among the foreign element, are believers in spiritism, fortune telling, etc. The fortune teller, in most sections of the country, due to police activity, is almost extinct, but in former years conducted a prosperous business. Their methods of procedure were almost identical with those of the magician or spiritualist. I have interrogated many women who visited these fortune tellers and to demonstrate how easily the mind forgets errors and small details, remembering only truths or pertinent facts, can state that over ninety per cent could give no coherent detail of a visit or conversation until lead over it step by step. When relating their experiences the major portion would say they called on "so and so" and when ushered into the presence of the seer he called out the correct name and make known what was on their mind. My first query was: "Didn't you write your name and a question, or sign your name to some paper before being ushered into the presence of the fortune teller?" Invariably the answer was "no" and in a few instances this was correct, the information having been pumped by an apparently prospective caller like themselves, who in reality was an assistant of the faker and to whom it was conveyed before being ushered into the interior sanctum. After leading a party over the journey, step by step, from time of starting up the stairs, or in some instances from the instant of departing from home, recalling every move possible, it was generally remembered that they had written their name and

asked a question but had put it in a pocketbook, a glove, etc., "where there was absolutely no chance of the man seeing it." After reading this volume you will realize that such a procedure was all the prognosticator required, but this really had been a mere matter of detail and was entirely forgotten or covered up when unexpectedly called by name and some truths or near truths conveyed. Such a visitor is subject to nervousness, due to the unfamiliar surroundings; wondering what information will be gleaned; whether the fortune teller can read minds; the appearance he will present and fleeting thoughts of what possibly others have related regarding his prowess—a condition of mind known to and relied upon by the faker—his two chief assets being nerve and an understanding of human nature.

Next time a visit to a fortune teller or to a spiritualistic seance is contemplated, if by chance you number a magician amongst your acquaintances, request his company; if versed in the art of magic, as he should be, the solution of various demonstrations can easily be secured. Perchance there is a magicians' fraternity in your community; if so, the members thereof will be glad to aid and enlighten you along these lines. One of the paramount duties of the Society of American Magicians, which is proud to be under the leadership of Mr. Harry Houdini, President of the New York Parent Assembly, is to expose fraudulent mediums and fake fortune tellers; this body or one of its branch assemblies in the United States is always willing to extend every courtesy possible, perhaps saving yourself or friends from the clutches of the faker, a personage often very fluent and convincing in conversation, quick witted and ever on the alert to make capital of each arising situation.

All statements to the contrary, nearly everyone loves the mysterious and enjoys being deceived, to a certain extent; if such were not the case a majority of spiritualists, clairvoyants,

fortune tellers, etc., would be out of business, but, strange as it may seem, it is extremely difficult to convince the average person that he has been duped or tricked; many conclusive arguments will be advanced that it was an utter impossibility; that the person visited had never seen him before, nevertheless he was the recipient of numerous truthful statements pertaining to intimate family history, individual self and absolute possible prophesies affecting the future.

Here is where another hidden angle of the case enters: A hustling, up-to-date spiritualist does not work alone, but has several accomplices or "cappers"—these lead in the victims and you may be sure that having lured a prospect to the "chief" the personal history of this party has been pretty well "booked." A record, termed "The Blue Book," contains a history of valuable information in regard to those having been lined up by spiritualists, which data is available to the fraternity throughout the country. Perhaps some innocent looking, elderly lady met you several times at the grave of your soldier son, we will say, for example, and in time told of her own loss and how she communicated with this deceased person through the aid of a certain spiritualist, whose great achievements are extolled. At once curiosity is aroused and the chances are almost 100 per cent of a visit being paid in company with your acquaintance of the cemetery, or through her introduction, in which event you will be told a lot of facts about yourself and family, secured from the day you were first "spotted" as a prospective customer by the "capper." Not realizing that the woman could possibly be in league with the faker, and when confronted with so much truth about herself, it is small wonder that the mind is easily swayed. Further calls will undoubtedly be made, various information imparted and perhaps the privilege of witnessing your deceased son "materialized" and the carrying on of a conversation with him, through the



medium. During this time you will incidentally be making donations, perhaps large ones, for what mother, after being convinced of the genuineness of the medium, would not give almost any earthly possession to hold communication with her departed daughter, son or husband. This is only one of multitudinous artifices adopted, and if not led into the folds as a believer in this manner, you will be landed in another, as the methods of procedure vary according to the most vulnerable approach offered by different individuals, such as playing on the sympathy, vanity, knowledge, etc.—any course that offers the least resistance to advances of the wily faker.

The cappers mentioned above also greatly assist at seances, aiding in working up enthusiasm and partial hysteria, likewise preventing interference with the worker from those who might become imbued with curiosity as to various actions or details of some presented phenomena.

Probably a volume could be written on this phase of the situation alone, but we will advance to the actual inside workings of the professional and allow the reader to learn what a very simple matter it is to get possession of desired information in various ways “even when you carry the slip of paper in your glove.” Manifestations that appear supernatural to the uninitiated, when witnessed with the clarity of vision obtained through true and definite knowledge, stripped of the glamour of heavily perfumed, costly draped and semi-darkened rooms, stand forth as mere human deceptions or cleverly constructed pieces of apparatus.

The history of slate writing, as used by fortune tellers, etc., has been well covered in previous works, therefore, in this respect, will confine myself merely to the more later and convincing methods—ones causing even an intelligent person to cast aside the thought of trickery. In other psychic effects the field has not been entirely covered; only the more essential

and commonly used tricks or effects have been explained ; some possess certain special devices which are capitalized and every year sees the introduction of new or the arrangement of old ones ; when a system of fraud or article of use is exposed it is supplanted by another and better.

In conclusion: Should you at some time have frequented a seance, either through idle curiosity, or in good faith, remember if you can the demonstrations enacted, then after reading this volume visualize again the occurrences: How simple it all was and how easily to be accomplished through the methods explained in the following pages.

DR. X.

April 14, 1922.

## ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FOOTLIGHTS

### ROPE TIES:

**U**NDER this caption but little space will be consumed, due to the fact that escapes from ropes, handcuffs and other restraints have been thoroughly explained in various magic books; further, in these modern days it is a ruse but little adopted by spiritualists, though the Davenport Brothers of bygone fame specialized in different methods of escape, the rapidity with which executed being attributed to aid lent by invisible spirit hands. Occasionally a modern worker resorts to ties, thereby enhancing the effect to be produced.

All these methods of trussing up or tying certain portions of the body are in effect nothing but trick ties. Slack is secured here and there, or a tie cannot be accomplished without leaving a slip-knot at the conclusion, and the more material employed, the easier the escape. Hempen rope is never used, but a variety of stiff cord, with which it is almost impossible to secure a hard knot; it is easy to slip a knot along same and it can be stretched enough to gain the necessary slack when the form of tie so requires.

That this is trickery or that mere human traits enter into the execution of releases can best be verified by calling attention to escapes presented before the public by our late Harry Kellar, Harry Houdini, Hardeen, The Great Blackstone and other lesser lights too numerous to mention. These gentlemen have submitted to ties that would make the Davenport Brothers blush with shame at their accomplishments; the

work was done on a lighted stage, likewise the escape, which took but a few minutes at the most to effect.

Therefore should you witness phenomenal events transpire while a party is apparently securely strapped in a chair, etc., and at the finish is still in that condition, do not put too much credence into any statement made setting forth his inability to have taken part in such happenings. The hands only need be released, which is done in a space of short duration, they are again reinserted into the loops or folds, drawn tight, and it appears to the neophyte that the individual has been helplessly bound throughout.

### **BLINDFOLDS:**

To the average person a blindfold on an individual renders the wearer incapable of visualizing events that may transpire, but such is far from being the case. Again deception enters.

A folded handkerchief placed over the eyes renders sight straight ahead an impossibility, but it does not prevent looking down the nose and viewing actions that take place within this range of vision. Thus a reader so treated, while sitting at a table, has complete knowledge of writing on cards, etc., placed at or near its edge. Occasionally a kid glove will first be laid over the optics, this in turn being held in place by a handkerchief or cloth—the result is not altered, however; in fact, it is simplified, the glove, being stiff, holds cloth further away from the eyes. Should it be a little low, a wrinkling of nose and forehead will raise sufficiently to not inconvenience the wearer.

At times it is necessary that sight straight ahead be secured, thus an ordinary blind would not suffice, but the obstacle is easily and simply overcome through the use of a trick bandage. To ordinary appearances it is a folded cloth of

several thicknesses, but what the observer cannot discern is the square, fitting over one eye, where the folds have been cut away, leaving only two thin layers of cloth, the vision of one eye thereby not being affected.

Numerous devices are employed: These few remarks are merely to inform the uninitiated that a blindfold is not always what it appears.

### SEALED ENVELOPE READING:

The backbone of spiritism, fortune telling, crystal gazing and various incidental psychic effects is the transmitting to the asker of information in regard to a query written by himself and sealed in a container. In some cases the question is folded and securely tucked away about one's person.

Unless the performer be endowed with clairvoyant or supernatural powers it would, of course, be impossible for him to become aware of the contents of envelopes or what is contained on the paper slips in another's possession. Such being not the case, it is necessary that this data be secured in a manner which will arouse no suspicion or thought of trickery; on the contrary, leading to the belief that he must be endowed with powers beyond those of ordinary mortals.

When a question is written by the average person and concealed by himself while performer is not possibly within reading distance, very little misleading talk is indulged in, for on the face of this operation the writer is satisfied that he alone knows what has been asked. When written, sealed in an envelope and then collected by performer or his assistant, some suspicion might be attached to this action, which is overcome by the logical arguments advanced. A basic or commonly used excuse is that performer collects the messages to protect himself in case of denial, it being then only necessary to open

envelope and verify the correctness of what is contained therein.

One of average intelligence would reason that if the gazer, clairvoyant, or medium is capable of conveying information sealed away in envelopes, why can he not transmit the thought concentrated upon without such a procedure; consequently the opening talk of a crystal gazer, or other, is something along the lines of that quoted below:

“ . . . . I desire you to write your questions upon the slips of paper handed out for your convenience, or, stationery of your own is entirely satisfactory; in any event, kindly sign your name in full, seal in the envelope also passed out—in your own container if desired, and hand to my assistant who will pass amongst the audience. These envelopes will be brought upon the platform, remaining in full view throughout my experiments.

“The only reason I desire to have each one write out his question is this: By so doing you unconsciously concentrate upon it, storing this message away in the subconscious mind where it is later more easily recalled and transmitted to myself. Some times persons have denied writing a question that I have answered, but knowing what was concentrated upon—that I was right, it was necessary to open the envelope and convince my audience of the truth of these statements; that is the reason they are brought upon the stage, though neither myself nor my assistant approach near them. Further, I desire to impress upon you that I am not a mind reader—this is merely thought transmittance and should your name be called out, kindly concentrate strongly upon the question you have written; I in turn will endeavor to transmit the various visions as appear to me, etc.”

Following is a description of the most effective and also the

modern routines employed in securing information contained on question blanks:

**Alcohol Method:**

This is one of the oldest methods known to the faker and used extensively for many years throughout the country in various forms of presentation.

Small cards were passed out to audience with a request that the message be briefly written and the name affixed thereto. Performer himself distributed cards, at the same time handing out a soft lead pencil; he then returned to platform, taking up a stack of envelopes of sufficient size to accommodate the cards and again went amongst the audience, asking that parties hold cards with writing side down, precluding a possibility of his glimpsing the message; performer handed the envelope to writer, face down, requesting that he insert his card, it being face down the written side was brought against the face of envelope. As soon as card was partly inserted it was given into the keeping of the writer who was told to seal and hold until collected: Should he investigate it would be apparent that the writing was not discernible through the envelope. All the messages having been sealed they were collected by performer and deposited on his table. Picking up one, placing to his forehead and apparently deeply concentrating, a name would be called out; having received acknowledgment of this person's presence a fairly intelligent reply to the actual question would be transmitted and immediately thereafter envelope was again given into his keeping, perfectly intact.

What actually transpired after the return to stage was this: In his pocket performer had a small salve can, with a clip on the bottom, enabling it to be grasped between his fingers; this outfit was painted "flesh color." Inside the can

was a soft or silk sponge saturated with cologne spirits. As an envelope was taken from table, the hand containing this "fake" was passed over its face, rendering the paper transparent—and enclosed message was read while being placed to the forehead. The spirits evaporated rapidly, enabling a return of envelope at conclusion of answer none the worse for wear and to all appearances just as when picked up by performer.

In lieu of cologne spirits, alcohol may be used, when to this is added a couple of drops of oil of cassia and incense burned on platform, absolutely no trace of the alcohol will be apparent by the sense of smell, a faint "punky" odor alone being noticeable; thus the excuse for burning incense.

Cards are used so they cannot be easily folded—a message so treated is unanswerable, however, the performer will collect and ignore same when it is reached.

The above method is still in vogue but has several drawbacks, principally slowness of procedure and the small amount of information containable on cards.

A more modern and suitable routine, using the alcohol base, is to have a square of one-quarter-inch felt fastened to a piece of tin the size of envelopes to be used; after saturation it is placed in an envelope with face thereof removed and inserted between two ordinary envelopes, the whole placed at bottom of ordinary stack and taken into audience, in which event performer makes sure that he has several more containers than cards; the envelopes are collected and laid face down on top of those remaining in hand, then after drawing out the ordinary empty container on top of fake the face of first collected message lies against the felt; it is necessary to draw the envelopes from bottom of pile, a slight pressure moistening the face and rendering message visible.



**Wax Pads:**

Generally referred to as the Anna Eva Fay Method. After proper introduction a dozen or so tablets were passed amongst the audience, the paper of each sheet being perforated to allow of a message being written within a certain space, this portion removed, paper folded and placed out of sight. The pad was then passed along to another seeker of information.

After completion of message writing an assistant collected the tablets and disappeared at back of theater.

Instructions as to your concentration were given by the medium's manager, also a narrative of her powers, etc. She then made an appearance, was seated in a chair free from any outside connection or trickery; next a sheet was introduced and used to envelope the entire body. Almost immediately a name was called out, the person identified by manager as being in audience, whereupon an answer was given which the writer acknowledged as fitting his question. Balance of messages were similarly treated.

The pads passed out are known among the magic fraternity as "wax pads"—every second sheet has been treated to a parafine wax process—the parafine rubbed over sheet and then smoothed off with a knife blade. This sheet will appear ordinary, but when the one above is written on an impression or tracing of this chirography is left in the wax. Just as soon as assistant has them in his possession they are quickly taken to back of stage, or dressing room, a black powder poured over the sheets and carefully shook off which develops impression in the wax and this in turn is copied onto small cards, brought in concealed about the medium's person. When enveloped with sheet the cards are removed and through a thin part of this covering sufficient light enters to enable the messages on cards to be deciphered. Later a rubber tube attached to back

of chair was used as a speaking tube, being superseded in turn by the telephone.

How the answer really fits into the question is a matter of hit and miss. Being aware of what you want to know the performer can be rather vague and lead up in a general way to the point, doing quite a bit of talking and yet conveying no definite information; a little pumping can be indulged in and it is quite necessary to take a chance and guess; perhaps the correct point is covered, or if not "the impression is not quite clear." The fact that your name was called out and a fairly good answer given to what you actually desired to learn convinces an average individual of the superhuman power possessed by medium, and when relating the experience will state, as a rule, that she was told just what she wanted to know. Human nature is such that it passes over the errors, recollecting the truths; thus when a crystal gazer, for instance, hits the nail on the head and conveys certain actual facts, his wonderful attainments are praised to all the friends and neighbors: The public itself is the best advertisement for an act of this nature.

More generally the performer works in conjunction with an assistant, securing part of his information before the demonstration or while answering one batch of questions, thus avoiding the old-time system of stalling along with a lengthy introduction while the messages were being prepared, also making recourse to the telephone book and city directory possible in search of clues. Following are the methods employed by the present day workers:

#### **BACK OF HOUSE STEAL:**

In the case of crystal gazers, especially, at entrance to theater is a box acting as a depository for messages. The billing states that you may write your messages at home on

your own stationery, sealing or fastening up as desired. Along side of this box is placed a table containing writing material, cards and envelopes, which is the means of a fair percentage of persons depositing their queries sometime before actual appearance of gazer.

An assistant from time to time removes unobserved from this box a supply of envelopes, carrying same around to the dressing room where they are opened and the information transferred onto cards, paper rolls, etc., depending upon the apparatus to be used, a description of which is given in following pages.

An ordinary envelope can be opened by simply rolling a pencil or orange stick under the flap; if this does not work an application of steam renders the operation easy of accomplishment. Where sealing wax is used, it can be carefully broken, the contents obtained and through the use of a little additional wax (a supply of all colors are kept on hand), the tampering with envelope is not visible. Generally these can be passed up entirely; a large proportion will be written on your own stationery and sealed in envelopes provided, which only necessitates opening of the stolen one and resealing in a duplicate.

As the assistant or assistants finish with one batch of envelopes they are returned to the box at entrance so that when it is eventually brought upon the stage and contents placed in a glass bowl, or other container, the absence of any conspicuous envelope or container cannot be commented upon. At conclusion of performance the envelopes may be left at back of house and the curious will find them untampered (?).

#### **SWITCHING IN AUDIENCE:**

Using a system whereby the performer has messages written and collected after his appearance it is necessary to switch

the actual collected ones for dummies, these latter being brought upon the stage, the original taken to the dressing room or into the wings.

In this case the queries are written entirely on your own paper and the assistant has a batch of "dummies" in his coat pocket; starting at the front of theater and working back, while going from one aisle to another, he nonchalantly tucks the collected messages into his coat pocket, extracting a set of dummies. As a rule two assistants are used, one on each side of the house, and after having received and substituted messages taken up in the center aisle, they start again on the side aisle at front, repeating the operation of substitution, bringing up these dummy containers and deliberately dropping into a glass bowl or a suitable receiver, where they remain in full view of audience throughout the act.

In the larger theaters a third assistant stands at back of house, outside entrance doors, and as the collector goes out the door of one aisle to enter another, he is handed original messages and in return gives the collector a batch of dummies.

Where but a few messages are taken up, the coat sleeve is used to effect a substitution, taking place right in the aisle, amongst audience.

As a matter of fact the exchange of envelopes may be affected in the very center of an audience; the more deliberate the moves, the less attention attracted. That an exchange of messages is to take place does not occur to the audience. The eye is easily deceived, or the picture transmitted through it to the brain is one of every day occurrence; it is known that messages have been written; a collection of same takes place and a batch of envelopes are brought onto platform and deposited in plain view. This is what the operator stated would be done; apparently such is the case—no thought of

exchange enters the picture and deception is consequently very easily obscured therefrom.

### CHANGING BAG:

An article bearing this professional name is used at seances and amongst small gatherings.

In appearance it is an ordinary plush bag, 4 to 5 inches in diameter and 8 to 9 inches in length, mounted on a small handle. Into this are dropped sealed envelopes by members of the audience as assistant passes amongst them. Without leaving the room, at all times being in plain view, assistant goes up to platform and dumps collected envelopes from this bag into a basket or glass bowl; without any person approaching the questions, medium proceeds to call out names and convey impressions to the writers.

As an actual fact, the bag is double, consisting of two inner bags, or lining, along side of each other, both mouths ending with a wire frame from which projects an arm running down the handle and securely fastened to the end portion, which revolves in either direction, thereby bringing mouth of either bag into opening frame; when brought into audience the handle is in such position that an empty bag is in view, the second bag containing duplicate or dummy messages being invisible. When final message is deposited, assistant returns to platform and enroute gives a half turn to the handle, which action brings into place the dummy messages, concealing those just deposited; it is these dummies that are placed in the bowl. As the collection bag apparently has performed its function little thought is now given it, but had attention been paid to the events occurring it would have been seen that the bag was carelessly laid on a side table and a few moments later both table and bag carried off platform, there the container was reversed, emptied of original messages, the contents being

secured and transmitted to performer in one of the many methods explained herein.

### **CHANGING BASKET:**

To accomplish practically the same substitution a basket is sometimes used in lieu of a bag. In appearance it is of reed construction, lined with silk or satin into which the billets are placed and immediately dumped into a container on medium's table.

This piece of apparatus is specially prepared, being a double-bottomed affair, the first bottom is in two portions, hinged to side of basket about one inch above the lower bottom and parting at its center; the under and top sides are finished the same as interior and actual bottom, so that when open and against side of basket, held in place by a trigger arrangement, its presence is not apparent: Tucked between the fake and sides of basket are dummy envelopes. Passing around, assistant collects the originals, at completion of which trigger is released, allowing the false bottom to fall in place, bringing to view duplicate or dummy messages concealing originals, and it is these latter that are deposited on the platform.

Like the bag, this basket is also unceremoniously carried off stage, and in a few moments information contained in envelopes is in readiness to be imparted to performer.

### **MIRROR BOWL:**

Probably the most effective and convincing method for gaining possession of original messages, where presenting a stage performance, is by the use of above named piece of apparatus, whereby the assistants collect messages, never leaving sight of audience, and the original ones are plainly seen to be deposited therein.

The bowl, while made of glass, is specially prepared: The half facing audience is unprepared, but across the middle of bowl, from one side to the other, and from top to bottom is inserted a mirror, it appearing by this insertion as a whole vessel; the half back of mirror partition has its bottom removed and a chute running from this bottom off stage. It is necessary in this method to have the bowl back on stage near wings so that the chute will be invisible.

After original messages have been collected and assistants approach platform, from the folds of the uniform or clothes is removed a bunch of "dummy" envelopes, being held in the same hand as the collected missives, but separated by the fingers; when dumping these envelopes into the bowl it is screened by assistant's body and under this cover the blanks are dropped into front half of bowl, actual messages going into rear portion and thence down through chute to an awaiting attendant in the side wings.

### **BOWL AND STAND:**

In connection with this piece of apparatus suspicion is easily averted. Envelopes are collected, actually brought upon platform and plainly seen to drop into a brass bowl resting upon a table. The seer pours alcohol into container and sets fire to messages, thereby destroying same; several of the billets are taken out and seen to be burning; nevertheless no difficulty is experienced in securing necessary data as contained in the originals.

The bowl, of circular form, like a Lota, is double, tapering from the bottom up to neck; in partition formed by the two walls is inserted waste and blank messages, these being the ones burned. The bowl is bottomless, resting upon an ornamental stand, which has a corresponding aperture, thereby

permitting the collected missives to go through bowl into stand.

After messages are destroyed assistant carries entire paraphernalia off stage, or, while the cremation is in process, bowl is carefully placed upon another stand, the former, with base, carried away and original envelopes opened.

The bowl may also be rested upon a stand or small table, with a square center leg, similar to those in use by lodges. The leg portion is hollow throughout and permits of the messages, through a hole in stage floor, to drop into a container placed there; in the latter effect it is necessary that bowl should remain in position until curtain is lowered. Due to the fact that most modern theater owners object to cutting holes in stage floor it cannot always be put into practice.

### **BOWL AND TONGS:**

Where but few questions are to be answered, or for demonstration purposes, the following is quite convincing.

To a casual observer the moves appear as follows: Performer has several questions written and sealed in envelopes, the same being kept in possession of writers until collected by him. Advancing to each one individually, an envelope is grasped by means of a pair of tongs and, without any false or suspicious moves, this identical billet is dipped into a vase in which a fire burns. By means of the tongs envelope is brought out of vase, seen to be in flames and dropped again into the bowl of fire. The balance of messages are so treated, the idea being to convince beyond any lingering doubt that contents of envelopes are not accessible, or have been at any time throughout the routine. Envelopes are collected by means of tongs to preclude the possibility of substitution, likewise exhibited in flames to prove destruction. Despite all these



apparently fair and above board moves the contents are conveyed to performer by an assistant, according to method chosen.

What performer desires to impress upon the mind as having taken place, actually is not consummated. The messages are collected fair enough and no substitution takes place, but inside the vase are two compartments, one containing alcohol, which accounts for flames issuing from bowl, and another smaller one, which is detachable, and may be slid out or removed from the bowl at will.

Apparent burning of the envelope is nothing more or less than the alcohol burning; itself is at the most only slightly scorched, for after being exhibited ablaze for a few seconds it is inserted into the small container, which action extinguishes the blaze.

The performer having disposed of those messages to be answered enters a discourse or explanation of what has just been done, during which an assistant either carries off the vase in its entirety or steals out the little container with unburned envelopes therein; they are opened and, of course, he is at once aware of the various queries, these facts coming into performer's possession by any of the methods explained under the chapter, "Transmitting Contents of Messages."

In parlor or office demonstrations the medium or clairvoyant cannot always rely upon assistance from a confederate, making it necessary that he himself secure immediate possession of contents of messages, yet allowing questions to be retained by the writers; at least, if this is not the procedure, to substitute, or in an unsuspecting manner glean the desired information.

Where but a single caller is having an audience artifices too numerous to mention may be indulged in, such as exchang-

ing the message by sleight of hand for a duplicate, left in plain sight throughout, while original is opened on medium's knee and there read, wax pads may be used or several now little employed ruses, as mechanical means lessen the possibility of detection.

### **CARBON TABLE TOP:**

By no means new, this above named article was formerly the most deceptive manner known for securing possession of written questions, eliminating entirely any idea of fraud: Even today it is put into practice by some.

Coming into outer office of the clairvoyant a couple of chairs and a small round topped table alone were visible; upon ringing a bell the seer, who generally worked alone, made his appearance, stating he was at present busy but to write out whatever questions you desired answered and to sign your name thereto, this paper to be secured about your person. A piece of paper and a pencil were laid on the table top and he disappeared into the other room. A few minutes later, being summoned into this second office, the fortune teller seated you opposite himself at a small table, requesting that he be allowed to hold a handkerchief, glove or other article used personally. After a minute or so of deep concentration he would state: "Now, Miss ——— (calling you by name), please think intently of your troubles, etc.," whereupon he would proceed to give advice or answers to the query or queries written by yourself in outer office, after which you were dismissed through a private exit.

By means of the table a duplicate of your message was secured. The center leg was hollow and a small hole bored in center of table top; in floor was a similar hole, under base of table, which allowed communication with a room underneath. Over the top of table had been placed a piece of fine white

silk, the center tucked into hole in tabletop, and by means of a cord affixed thereto the silk could be drawn down through this leg into room below. When in readiness, the silk was spread out smoothly on table, over which was placed an oil cloth covering, its underside having been covered with a good quality of light impression, or carbon paper, and held in place by thumb tacks along its edges.

There was no other place to write, naturally your query was composed on table where the blank piece of paper had carelessly been laid, making an imprint on the silk. In all probabilities no one was present in the second office, but it was necessary for faker to go downstairs from this office and after a duration of time sufficient to enable your completion of message, draw down silk and become aware of your name and the contents of message.

Why you were led out a private exit should be apparent; he was busy when you entered and no one left through the outer office.

While very convincing this procedure had its drawbacks—that of using several tables and the work of preparing in readiness for each caller.

### **THE INK BOTTLE:**

In this method, upon being ushered into the presence of medium or clairvoyant, you were seated at a desk containing ink bottles, writing material, etc. A piece of paper was handed you with a request that thereon be placed what was troubling you or information desired, your name signed thereto, folded over and rolled into a compact parcel to prevent any prying eyes discovering the contents. Medium advanced to another part of the room, turning his back so as to relieve any thought that your writing would be visible to him: On completion of

instructions received he returned to table, taking a position opposite you at the table, removing cork from a small ink bottle, asking that you insert message therein; the cork was replaced; a request was made that you concentrate upon the information desired, during which time medium carelessly fumbled with ink bottle and in a few seconds called you by name and divulged the information requested, or at least gave some kind of an answer to the questions actually asked.

The message itself came into performer's possession by means of this innocent looking ink bottle, which, however, was not just what it appeared on the surface.

These trick bottles are made of wood, painted black and ornated with a genuine label, passing inspection before the eyes of the most critical. A hole, the diameter of neck, is bored through bottle and therein is inserted a piece of brass tubing, painted black both inside and out. The action of removing cork does not alter the appearance of commonness and the message, apparently placed in an ordinary empty bottle, really goes into this brass tubing. While toying with bottle it is drawn close to edge of table, allowing of this tubing being dropped into palm of hand, or into lap; While the moving about is continued with one hand, the other opens your message on knee and contents are read while apparently concentrating, the eyes being lowered; in some cases protected by the hand which acts as a shield, covering the direction of vision.

To heighten this deception most operators, after reading slip, refolded, worked into tube and thence into bottle, so at conclusion of reading the cork could once again be removed and your original message handed back.

### **THE CLIP BOARD:**

The article described herewith is the most ingenious for

obtaining copies of messages yet to be devised. What is passed out to the reader or to members of audience appears to be an ordinary clip file board, procurable at any stationery store and in general use in most offices, as it not only holds a quantity of miscellaneous bills, receipts, etc., but permits writing with its aid to be readily accomplished.

The genuine article is constructed of a quarter-inch board about 9x13 inches in size; at the top is screwed a large clip by which papers are held in place: The one used by mediums and others, while resembling in appearance, varies greatly in construction.

Procure a clip as is used on these boards, also a quantity of wall paper representing grained oak, which has the actual appearance of wood, especially if after completing apparatus a thin coat of shellac is applied over all. Make a half-inch wooden frame approximately 9x13 inches, leaving, however, a margin of 1 inch at the bottom and 2 inches at top, where clip is fastened; a panel is next cut, which fits snugly into the frame, being held in place by invisible hinges and secured by a screw eye, ostensibly placed for hanging up the board.

The top side of board is covered with a piece of tightly drawn oak-grained paper, likewise the back side, but a label is used to cover hinged portion of panel. With a few daubs of paste a piece of carbon paper is fastened to front of oak-grained paper, on the inside, and on panel is secured a piece of plain white paper. Fastening clip in place completes the board.

It can readily be seen that if anything is written on face of board, a copy thereof will be transferred to the sheet on inside of hinged panel.

Professionally used in a theater, several clip boards with perforated sheets are passed out, similar to the method em-

ployed with "wax pads;" as one person fills up a slip, it is torn off and kept by them, the board being passed on to the next. At conclusion, boards are collected by an attendant and the messages either removed at back of theater, or a substitution affected, duplicate boards being carried upon stage, remaining throughout performance and fake boards taken to dressing room where the messages are secured.

In the case of a medium, where a single sitter is answered at a time, he or she is handed a slip of paper and requested to write a message; to facilitate this action the board is handed out, which may have a few receipted bills under clip to further banish suspicion. While the caller is engaged in filling out his slip medium walks to another part of the room, paying no attention to his visitor until message has been finished and concealed; the board is taken and laid to one side on a small table back of the seeker for information.

A copy of message is inside the board and it becomes necessary for medium to gain possession without attracting attention: To accomplish a routine similar to that described below is followed:

Picking up a crystal performer walks around room, concentrating therein; advancing to sitter he stands behind his chair, within reach of the clip board; handing crystal to visitor a request is made that he concentrate upon his question while gazing into the sphere. The worker keeps one hand on the back or head of sitter, the other reaching over, securing pad, opening flange and reading carbon copy now exposed to his view. The information can then be transmitted to sitter, either by performer taking back crystal, or by both gazing into its depths.

#### **TRANSMITTING CONTENTS OF MESSAGES:**

A major portion of the methods explained are in vogue, or

have at some time been used by crystal gazers; many of these systems were put to use by mediums or fortune tellers, however, this chapter dwells principally with the professional gazer, who in reality creates more mystery than a medium as he works on a lighted stage, surrounded by hundreds of people, walks around unrestrained, in full view of all, and even comes down amongst his audience. The answers may or may not fit the exact question asked; the same procedure as explained under "Wax Pads" holds good in all these methods; further, it should be borne in mind that only the asker actually knows the contents of this individual message; the balance of several hundred hear a lot of information imparted, which may not directly fit into the question, or be somewhat evasive, and take it for granted that he is indeed a reader of minds and a prophet, especially in view of the fact that seldom, even when imparted information is not correct, will a denial be forthcoming from a writer.

#### **DIRECT CONNECTION TELEPHONE:**

The telephone system has been used more than any of the various methods; it is the simplest in operation and dispenses with a least amount of delay. Its principle is that of an ordinary telephone in daily use.

Up in the wings, organ loft, a booth, or in some spot where operator thereof can keep performer in view, and still be inaudible, is located a set of three dry batteries and a sending instrument. On the stage is placed a rug, which is interwoven with fine wire, two different series being used in order to form a positive and negative pole, the wire from one pole leads off stage, or down under stage to one part of the sending instrument or mouthpiece, from the opposite side, or positive pole another wire connects with the batteries and thence to mouthpiece.

Receiving instruments are fastened in turban used by performer, being in such a position that they will fit over the ears, though generally but one ear-piece is utilized, the wires from ear-pieces come together inside turban and hang slightly below it, ending with a plug arrangement, which is concealed by a broad ribbon at back of turban; The performer's shoes have a brass plate on the sole, to which is attached from inside a small copper wire; this covered wire leads up each leg, joining on the back and coming out at neck, where receiving part of the plug is loaded. When head-piece is in place, plug connected at back of neck and performer stands on rug with one foot on a positive pole and the other on a negative, he is making a direct connection, thereby enabling him to hear anything spoken into transmitter or mouthpiece. He may walk about on the carpet and as long as his shoes make connection through two separate poles, is in direct touch with the sender. One object of this plug at back of neck is to enable performer to remove head-piece when switching to another method, thus averting any suspicion on the part of those who might be somewhat familiar with this telephone method.

Some performers run rugs up to edge of steps leading into audience and even down the aisles, enabling them to move about with perfect freedom.

### **INDUCTION SYSTEM:**

Practically identical with the above explained version, but more limited to use as performer has to keep within a certain radius of the coils laid under rugs or about stage. A great deal of wire is necessary to manufacture these induction coils and the only gain is through performer dispensing with copper plated shoes and body wires, all necessary apparatus being concealed in turban or upon the operator's back.

Experience has shown that wireless or induction method



is not as reliable as direct connection, the professional adhering to the former.

At this time experiments are being conducted with a phase of wireless, dispensing, however, with induction coils, which when perfected will permit performer, carrying a small amount of apparatus concealed about his person, to cover the entire area of a hall or theater and still be within hearing distance of his sending operator.

It is advisable that the sender be located in such a position that performer is at all times within his range of vision, whereby a prearranged signal or certain ordinary move or gesture denotes that another message should be transmitted, a practiced performer being able to talk and receive at the same time, thereby dispensing with any delay between the finish of one answer and the start of another.

### **THE BLACKBOARD METHOD:**

In presenting the blackboard system the only requirement necessary for accomplishment was that stage or platform be supplied with wings (entrances off stage), whereby a person standing therein would be invisible to audience, yet within range of vision of the gazer.

When first appearing it was the most puzzling of any methods heretofore known, the crystal gazer not being restricted as to wearing apparel, had nothing concealed about his body, used an ordinary crystal and walked unhampered about stage.

In actual operation it was extremely simple, but like all things in magic, the simpler the method of operation the more puzzling the result. In front wings an assistant with messages in his possession wrote same out on a large blackboard, performer walking about stage and apparently gazing into his

crystal, in reality reading from blackboard; when the contents of one message was conveyed to performer and while quoting his answer, assistant erased former message, writing in another. By memorizing two or three, operator would walk into audience, convincing even the most doubting of his ability to gaze into the past, present and future. If desired two assistants could handle the messages, one being on right hand of side of stage and the other on left. At this time, or during any part of his performance, regardless of methods used, to overcome delays, possible short-circuits, etc., questions were faked; that is an imaginary name was called out; apparently some party in back of house held up hand or acknowledged their presence and an answer as seen fit transmitted to this imaginary person; with a little nerve several questions can be so handled. I know of gazers having their apparatus fail and resort to faking the entire set of answers, but this is a risky procedure.

In order to make a lasting impression upon those present it is customary to employ "plants"—certain persons hired by the performer who will endeavor to trip him up without avail, or to whom some startling information will be imparted; again the exact location of some lost article may be stated; they are used in various ways, generally for publicity tests. Not all crystal gazers stoop to this practice, nor is it necessary in the case of a good showman.

### **CUSHION AND CRYSTAL:**

For the amateur gazer, or one caring to expend only a small sum of money, a very creditable showing can be accomplished by means of the cushion and crystal arrangement.

Performer's assistant carries in a crystal of any nature, or a small inverted bowl will answer the purpose, which reposes on a cushion, preferrably of a plaid or mixed cloth variety of

cover; in right hand is concealed a stack of small cards containing copied information from original queries; the cushion and crystal are placed on a small table or tabouret, and while straightening into position cards are left on cushion out of sight behind crystal or gazing ball. Performer seats himself behind table and after reading top card, in act of wiping ball with velvet or piece of silk, turns over this card, exposing another message.

The pillow and crystal may rest near edge of table, to which is attached a drawer-like arrangement, or shelf below top of table, professionally termed "a servante," into which the cards are dropped.

A small pocket arrangement can also be made in covering of pillow into which the finished cards are inserted.

### READER STAND:

A progressive entertainer switches his methods throughout, going from one routine to another, thereby keeping his audience continually deceived as to a possible mode of operation; many who know some of the older methods are also thrown off the track.

While performer is demonstrating his ability, using a certain piece of apparatus or system, an attendant brings in a stand, upon which the crystal is later rested, and questions answered while it remains in this position.

These stands are about 5½ feet over all, so that when crystal is in place it is about on a level with one's eyes. The base or pedestal is similar to a piano or floor lamp stick, surmounted by an ornamented triangular rest for gazing ball. This stand itself appears to audience as triangular, but the rear portion is flat, with a holder, containing a card filled out with names and messages by an assistant, these being easily read while apparently gazing into the crystal.

### FARO BOX HAND READER:

A very useful piece of apparatus, one or two being concealed about the person at start of performance; again, they can be brought in by an assistant under cover of a handkerchief, or any small object.

These readers are constructed of 18-gauge brass, being slightly over two inches in length, one inch wide and about the same in height; sides and ends are made of one piece, soldered together; the bottom piece protruding about a quarter-inch on each side is then fastened in place. The projecting edges are notched or milled to permit of a firmer grasp being obtained on the reader; one inch from end of box is inserted a partition or dividing wall, making a box with two equal compartments, a piece of brass one inch square is next cut and affixed to a wire spring, this piece moving freely up and down inside the end partition like an elevator; over this end and extending a slight distance beyond is soldered a  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch brass strip, it being bent over the sides to accomplish securing in place; the spring is now soldered to bottom of end partition, the brass piece pushed into place beneath the  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch projections, which keep it from flying out of the box; cards inserted in this end, over the spring part, will depress same and fifty or more may be accommodated with ease.

Light cards 1-inch square can be cut up by any printer and a large supply of these are kept on hand. Contents of stolen messages are copied briefly in a small fine hand onto cards, either before entrance on stage or while performance is in progress.

When adopting this device at start of performance the routine is along following lines: Crystal ball is passed for examination, the gazer himself going into audience to accomplish; in right hand trousers' pocket, or in pocket of uniform worn

is secreted a loaded hand reader; after examination and return of crystal, and while enroute to platform, the reader is taken from trousers' pocket, held in right hand until platform is reached, when it is placed in palm of left hand, being effectually hidden by the crystal.

To release cards the thumb or finger is lightly drawn across their top, this causing one card to slide off into the empty partition, balance of cards coming up flush with top, due to the spring action; these movements are accomplished while answering the previous question, during which time attention is distracted somewhat from performer's movements.

When empty, reader is carried away under a handkerchief or palmed out of hand and a switch made to a distinctly different routine; later this same process can be resorted to, especially in a long program, or where performer has but a few different means of working at his command.

### **CONCEALED READER:**

At times a gazer will walk down the aisles of the hall, with or without his turban, creating a doubt in the minds of skeptics as to existence of fraud, should they be in possession of deceptive methods employed from time to time. The use of direct connection telephone has been exposed by public performers, especially throughout the southern part of the United States. This led to the adoption of mechanical devices, or an intermingling of the telephone with methods to offset. For instance, we will say that performance opened by the telephone method, the user walked down aisles into audience; those witnessing an expose will immediately be positive that the telephone is used; even at times voicing their sentiments as to what is transpiring. After several questions have been treated in this manner the gazer returns to stage, handing turban to an assistant (assistant incidentally tucks wire out

of sight at back of neck, and again walks into the midst of audience, calling out names and transmitting information in answer to queries, being enabled to do so by working with a concealed reader.

This is a small box about the size of the faro box reader, generally less in height, but broader; in each end of this box are two reels and, traveling from one to another is a roll of paper, containing copied in messages. One end of the box is secured to velvet used in conjunction therewith, the other end open, enabling messages to be read as the paper unwinds from one reel and is taken up on the other, this winding process being accomplished by a milled gear on outside of box which the performer turns with his thumb underneath velvet, this latter having a slit cut therein so that messages can be glimpsed as they roll up on reel; some use a trap—that is hinged, stiffened velvet acting as a miniature door, being swung back so messages can be read, or swung into place, thereby enabling ball and velvet to be held within a foot of one's head without anything suspicious being observed. In actual operation, velvet is first placed across hand, with reader resting in palm and crystal rested on tips of fingers.

### READER BALLS:

In order to dispense with the velvet or silk always associated with a crystal, methods were devised whereby the ball could be held at finger tips, and both hands shown unmistakably empty.

Probably the simplest constructed and least expensive is the Reader Ball, an article first explained and manufactured by myself, reducing greatly the price as compared to an expenditure necessary to procure a "mechanical ball."

In spinning metal circular objects, such as gazing balls, they are made in two parts; thus a 5-inch ball consists of two

shells or half balls 5 inches in diameter at their center; inside one shell is soldered a thin strip of  $\frac{1}{4}$ -in brass; second shell is then fitted into place, a slight mark being made on rims to insure the best location as to junction; shell is removed, soldered applied to  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch strip, shell again put in place where marked and sweated to the strip; after polishing down a coat of nickelplate is applied—it is now a gazing ball.

Reader balls are constructed by taking one shell, cutting therein near its wider part a slot  $2\frac{1}{8} \times 1\frac{1}{8}$  inches, inside this shell is soldered a light strip of brass in the form of a square, minus one side, making a bracket inside about 1 inch below its surface, so that an object inserted through projection will not drop into ball.

A specially constructed faro box reader, having no bottom on the well portion, or side into which cards drop when pulled off their container, is carefully fitted into this slot so that it will remain in place at any angle, but can be removed with the fingers for loading. Top of fargo box is nicked, the two halves of ball sweated together, and given a coat of nickelplate, which completes the labor on this article.

In practical application it is necessary, if used at beginning of performance, that messages are obtained in sufficient time to permit of their contents being copied into the small cards and placed in the reader; otherwise an assistant can fill in the information and bring in reader ball later at conclusion of different routine.

When cards have been inserted and reader pushed into ball it is ready for immediate action: This apparatus is held at finger tips, with very slightly protruding reader towards yourself so as not to be visible to those in balcony or boxes. The cards are pulled down as with faro-box reader behind ball, but in this case they drop into the ball itself, eliminating danger

of expose by cards possibly falling out of reader onto floor, which would otherwise be the case, due to angle at which held.

### MECHANICAL BALLS:

The latest addition to the programs of modern crystal gazers and by far the most easily worked and useful piece of apparatus in the whole category is the one under this caption.

It consists of a 5-inch metal ball; inside of it, by means of gears, is rotated a wheel containing messages, which flash by a small window or slit cut in ball. There is nothing whatever concealed in the hands, the rotating operation is caused by a very slight movement of thumb on projecting gear wheel and performer's movements are unlimited; by turning ball over so window rests in palm of hand he may freely hold same within a few inches of a spectator's eyes without disclosing that it is anything but an ordinary metal ball.

Due to the wonderful results obtainable by means of this mechanical device, detailed directions for constructing are given, but it should not be attempted by a person unless possessed of considerable mechanical ability.

First secure the two half shells (5-inch ball)—the collar or band to be used in fastening these halves together is next soldered in one portion; 1/16-inch brass braces for the axle to rotate in are fastened in ball two inches apart, so that axle will rest at exact center of ball. The rotating wheel should be 4½-inches in diameter by 1½-inches wide, and for this purpose an aluminum wheel can be cast from a castiron pulley of this size: A pulley or iron company will make one for two or three dollars. On one side of axle, outside of brace, is fastened a 1-inch, 32-tooth standard gear wheel of 1/8-inch thickness, fitting into another of the same dimensions, set in place on axle-brace as shown in illustration; the latter wheel is ope-



rated by a 1½-inch gear-wheel, being in such position on axle-brace that it protrudes very slightly through a slot cut in half shell containing axle-braces and collar. Slots are next cut in the braces as a rest for axle, which is held in place by a clip-like device, allowing of the rotating wheel being lifted out of shell, yet when locked preventing wheel from falling out of brace, should the entire ball be turned upside down.

After pulley wheel has been affixed to axle, gears in place, and slot for permitting 1½-inch gear wheel to slightly extend outside is cut, the upper shell is fixed on collar and turned until the best fit is obtained, mark both halves of the ball with a lead pencil at corresponding places so that bayonet catches may be placed in lower shell and a "teet" or projection soldered in upper half, thereby securely holding the two halves together; on completion of this mark off your window in correct position opposite rotating wheel and about ½-inch above center of upper half, taking shells apart and cutting the window slot.

To operate: Messages are written on a slip of paper, same width as wheel, being condensed as much as possible; this strip is pasted to the rotating wheel, fastened back inside ball, shells put together, when a very slight movement of thumb will cause these messages to rotate past the little window, where they are easily read by operator.

### READING FROM FACE OF WATCH:

The ingenuous and versatile performer is constantly seeking new means and apparatus to throw skeptics or those possessing knowledge of common-place methods off the trail.

By writing in the names and questions in brief on a small piece of paper and lightly pasting this to the crystal of his watch, or with a hunting case, using crystal, upper case, and

even the back one, at conclusion of performance the gazer still had several messages easily accessible.

Performer would state that he had exceeded the time allotted to his act, but would answer three or four more questions without the use of apparatus, limiting each answer to a space of one minute, removing watch and apparently timing himself, but in reality reading a message; after answering, or while conversing, as if to verify his limit, he would again glance at watch, securing another message. If executed as would be natural when timing one's self there is absolutely nothing to arouse the least suspicion and this watch method has been the means of fooling even magicians versed in the more widely employed routines.

#### **READING OFF CUFF:**

Working in evening dress the white cuff of shirt has been sometimes used as a container of messages. They are written quite small on side of cuff nearest body when arm is hanging at the side in a natural position.

In concentrating the hand was naturally raised to forehead, which action draws back coat sleeve and leaves the message in plain view a couple of inches below level of eyes.

#### **USING EDGE OF ENVELOPE:**

At times, to vary the mode of procedure, performer should dispense entirely with apparatus, stating that an endeavor would be made to concentrate upon the envelopes themselves. This and the following explained methods are the most deceptive in existence and can be added to the repertoire of a professional without hesitation.

Several envelopes are picked up from basket, either by the gazer or his assistant, one is placed to his forehead, a name called out, advice communicated to writer and, if as to verify

the correctness of his answer, he tears off edge of envelope, reads message aloud and either returns it to writer or hands to members seated near front of hall, conclusively proving that he divined the thoughts of the individual seeking information. The balance are treated similarly.

The procedure is simplicity itself. Several messages contained in performer's own envelopes were opened; contents in brief written with a hard lead pencil along the edge of a duplicate container, into which is placed the message itself and these prepared envelopes fastened with a small clip and deposited unnoticed by assistant in container within easy reach of performer. In act of placing to forehead the message is read; after answering, tearing off edge with writing to extract contents destroys the evidence, allowing of both message and envelope being returned, if so desired.

This is far superior to reading one message ahead, a system familiar to even the most untutored neophyte.

### MARKING ON ONE ENVELOPE:

For a real brain teaser to even those initiated, the answering of questions in audience or on steps leading to platform, immediately handing back unopened envelope to writer, is without a peer. A well known crystal gazer caused much comment by working along these lines.

Performer states he will dispense with the aid of a crystal, endeavoring to concentrate upon individual envelopes, several of which he picks up apparently haphazard from bowl or other container; standing on steps or at bottom of same, one of the envelopes was placed to his forehead for a second, a name called out, envelope immediately being brought back by an assistant to this party upon acknowledgment of his presence, and an answer given to his query. If receiver of envelope opened it, inside would be found his original slip.

Either the assistant or performer himself prepares for this very effective test by opening up several envelopes as provided by himself, removing the questions, selecting therefrom a half dozen especially suitable ones; contents of these messages are written in brief on the face of a corresponding envelope, after which they are resealed in duplicates and kept in the same order as those on blank envelope, which is placed at bottom of this stack and a rubber band placed around, or a clip used, keeping all together.

This prepared stack is conspicuously placed in container, and while performer moves his hand among envelopes, apparently picking same up at random, he secures this prepared lot and a few extras, allowing those undesired ones to drop back into bowl, together with clip or rubber band. Slightly fanning envelopes he reads first message on bottom one, which corresponds to first or one on top of heap; as soon as the name is called out his attendant takes and returns envelopes. This party is requested to verify the fact that envelope contains the question actually propounded by him, which he proceeds to answer, and while so doing, catches a glimpse of next message.

In this method it would be impossible to use up the entire number of envelopes held in hand for the reason that last one acts merely as a conveyor of information, therefore, it is well to leave one or two unanswered, tossing the few envelopes remaining back into bowl.

Where more than five or six questions are to be so treated, several envelopes can be used as note containers, being arranged in two or three series. When all envelopes above the "dummy" are exhausted, this written on one is merely slipped to bottom of pile in the act of fanning.

### HANDING BACK ORIGINAL QUERIES:

Practically the only apparatus for which this test is suited is the mechanical ball, whereby no possible opportunity for errors can occur, the messages being at all times under your direct command, as the ball can be rotated forward or backward.

To spectators the effect appears thusly: Performer having stated it would be impossible for him to answer all questions received, to avoid any thought of favoritism, or that he answered only certain persons, picks up seven, eight or more envelopes, mostly being ones brought from home, or otherwise provided; this batch is given to an assistant, who remains amongst audience. A name is called out while gazing into crystal and to this party assistant immediately brings the envelope, asking if it is his, and to open so as to verify contents; in the meantime the desired information in reply to this writer is being furnished by performer.

From a stolen batch of envelopes several written on stationery other than your own are opened, contents copied onto strip for use with mechanical ball, the envelopes carefully resealed and kept in proper order. A red line or some distinguishing mark is placed on the slip, enabling performer to know when he comes to this arranged set (also when he completes the run). These envelopes having been kept in proper order with the strip, are clipped together or laid in a corner of the basket, bowl or other make of container. Now when performer comes to this mark on strip he picks up, apparently at random, this prearranged batch, handing to assistant, who is careful not to lose the order thereof. When he picks up an envelope, performer calls out name written on slip, assistant takes to him, and as convincing an answer as possible, suiting the question, is transmitted.

This is the strongest test in existence for the unbeliever; apparently performer has an ordinary ball—his ears are not covered (precluding the telephone theory)—he does not touch envelopes but for a few seconds; they are far beyond his range of vision; the identical message is handed back and an intelligent answer, or answer pertaining to the query is transmitted to each individual.

### **TRUMPET SEANCE:**

Several of these preceding methods can be utilized by the medium in seance work, but as many of the phenomenal effects take part in the dark, it has been necessary to devise a means whereby answers can be given to written questions under this existing condition.

Using the trumpet here described, medium has questions written on small cards, which are placed upside down in a stack upon an ordinary table; resting thereon is also a metal trumpet, about 12 inches in height, which may be freely examined, as there is absolutely nothing mechanical or fraudulent about it. Medium is securely strapped to chair, near table—again all may be seated in a circle around performer, and the lights extinguished, leaving the room in total darkness; suddenly a whispering voice is heard calling out the name of the sitters to whom is imparted information pertinent to his question; sometimes as from the departed spirit in regard to whom they are inquiring; at times it may be medium's control who conveys the facts.

As stated in the first part of this book, ties are of little value so far as preventing freedom of action on medium's part.

The trumpet itself is ordinary, except that the smaller end is made so as to fit tightly against operator's eye, resembling the outer edge of an eyeglass in shape. About medium's per-

son is concealed a block of wood, slightly larger in circumference than the outer end of trumpet (usually 5 to 6 inches) about 1 inch thick with a groove into which this end may be inserted, the bottom of said groove being padded to prevent any noise whatever. The block is bored out and inside is inserted a small flash-light battery, connecting with the tiny electric light globe near edge on inside of block; this has a shade above it, causing the light to be thrown downward and is connected with push button on back of block; below the electric light globe are numerous tacks arranged to hold the cards in place.

When the room has been darkened, medium takes out this block, picks one of the cards off pile on table, lays on the block between rows of tacks, inserting trumpet into grove and placing tightly against his eye; by pressing button on bottom of block it illuminates the card, enabling same to be easily read. It is necessary that this block be tightly in place and that small end of trumpet be pressed firmly against eye, otherwise a ray of light would be visible when the globe is illuminated. The cards as read are placed together in a stack on table, so that at conclusion of seance, when lights are turned on, medium is in same position as at the start, cards and trumpet appear untouched and the block has been safely hidden away.

Not all mediums go to the trouble of having questions written: After several tests, lights are extinguished and thru the trumpet come whispering voices, emanating from a spirit control, so you are informed. This is what is called "fishing for information"—the medium pointing the trumpet at various individuals and softly calling out portions of names, such as Ja—Joh—May—Jo—Jha, etc., which to an excited mind will perhaps resemble James, John, May, Mary, Joseph, George—a name from whom you might expect to receive a

message. Should you say "John"—the medium in a far-off voice, through trumpet will say, "Yes, John is here and wants to speak to you." The conversation is carried on by yourself, answers being imparted by medium.

In the vernacular this work might be termed "raw," nevertheless it is in vogue with present day spiritualists who manage thereby to dupe their sitters.

### READING UNDER SHEET:

Before introduction of the trumpet explained above a routine was employed in answering written questions which proved very satisfactory and is still made use of today.

The initial proceedings were similar to those in the trumpet seance—cards having been filled out and left on table, performer secured to chair and lights extinguished, names were called out and to these parties advice or communications from departed friends was furnished.

About performer's person was secreted a black rubber sheet, sufficiently large to cover upper portion of the body, likewise a small pocket flash-light.

Releasing himself from the tapes or restraints, the sheet and flash-light were removed, cards secured from the table and placed on lap, or held in one hand: When covered with this black rubber sheet the light could be flashed with impunity; thus by holding a card close to his eyes and turning rays of flash-light thereon the contents was readily in his possession, and a suitable answer formulated. At conclusion, light and rubber sheet were stowed away, cards placed on table, hands reinserted in tape, lights turned up;—everything appearing as at start of experiment.



## PSYCHIC TESTS

Under this title will be explained tests used by mediums, clairvoyants and professional performers to demonstrate the existence of thought transmission, spiritualistic aid in causing objects to move or obey commands, invisible message writing in plain view of spectators, etc. The majority are later day inventions, being so extremely clever and convincing it is small wonder an uninformed person attributes the different actions to other than human aid.

### THOUGHT TRANSMISSION TEST:

Used as an introductory effect to demonstrate the existence of thought transmission. It can be variously employed and depends upon existing circumstances to determine the exact effect to be conveyed to spectators.

As an opener for a crystal gazing act the user states, in order to absolutely demonstrate the existence of thought transmission, a simple test will be enacted with ordinary articles.

Several small envelopes are picked up from table, likewise a blank card, an envelope and card passed for examination and found to be very ordinary; with a red pencil performer writes something on the card, unseen by anyone, plainly placing this card in envelope, which is immediately handed to one of audience to hold during the test.

To preclude the possibility of fraud or existence of assistants amongst audience, two or three persons are picked out by the members themselves to act as volunteers.

For brevity's sake we will assume that performer is using two people, and has secured a man and woman to assist. To this first party the statement is made that written on card in envelope, now held by a certain member, is written a month of the year (day of the week color, etc.). He is asked to concentrate his mind and when "Ready" is called out to speak aloud the first month that enters his mind. Supposing "January" to be the response elicited; he is informed by performer that January is the month written on card—it was the month that he was concentrating upon and therefore it was natural that same be spoken.

Similarly is the routine employed with lady assistant using, for instance, a number, and that 16 was the numeral she called out.

The envelope is now taken from party holding, performer calling attention to the fairness of the test involved, opens same up, extracting contents and verifies the month and number as given by members after proper concentration, immediately handing out slip to those seated in his immediate vicinity as proof of the correctness of his announcements.

In securing this result, which is not dependent so much on skill as nerve and a boldness of presentation, performer resorts to substitution of envelopes while right in the midst of his audience:

The proper size of envelope to use is what is termed a No. 2 drug envelope; one is prepared by securing to the inside face of it a piece of red carbon paper, its impression closely resembling a red crayon or drawing pencil and will not smut as easily as black paper, which, moreover, does not match up with the ordinary lead pencil in common use. This carbon paper is pasted lightly at the corners, impression side down, whereby writing on outside face of envelope will be trans-

mitted to a card therein; it should also not extend to ends of envelope so as to be exposed when the message is removed. Another envelope of corresponding make and size contains a piece of heavy cardboard, acting as a writing base; at start of experiment they are in the following order: At bottom of stack the one with cardboard; on top of this the faked envelope, containing a duplicate card of the one to be exhibited, which has also been sealed; on top of these two is a plain ordinary envelope and a blank card, and it is these the seer passes out for inspection; taking back, after examination, the envelope is laid on top of those in hand, then the card, making a natural writing base; with his red pencil in hand performer merely goes through the actions of writing upon card, actually sealing up a blank one and handing out to a person seated nearby, as all this can be accomplished while standing at bottom of steps leading to platform. The faked envelope is now uppermost in hand and writing on it will appear in red carbon on blank card therein.

On performer's right thumb is small flesh-colored band, the underside having a slight piece of round-pointed steel soldered thereto. After his instructions have been carried out as to concentration; a certain month given by selected assistant, and while talking to second party, the thumb traces over envelope this month, or whatever subject is used. When the second person calls out a number, as shown, while reviewing the proceedings just transpired, performer traces in this numeral, proceeding to get rid of fake, or it may be allowed to remain on thumb for the time being.

As the matter now stands performer holds in his left hand two envelopes, one containing a card with an impression of the month and number called out, and which he was supposed to have written before starting actual test, also one containing heavy cardboard, while a spectator holds envelope containing

a blank card: It is necessary that this latter be exchanged for the one which is held in left hand and this is accomplished by what magicians term "the top and bottom change"—that is exchanging envelope taken from spectator and leaving on bottom of those in hand, and removing the top one; it is a sleight that requires some practice, but once learned can be done as a continuous movement in the midst of a gathering. Reach for envelope in audience with right hand, facing towards holder, at same time left thumb slightly pushes over top envelope; when the one is secured from holder bring right hand towards body at the same time turning body away from sitter and as turn is being made both hands come together for a fraction of a second whereupon fingers of left hand grasp envelope in right, drawing it in under the other, while thumb and first two fingers of right hand grasp the extended or fake envelope, moving away until same is held some distance from body and slightly in the air.

All that remains to do is to tear off end of envelope, extract cards, verify the fact that those in audience called out the identical information as originally written by yourself. This card can then be left with audience to pass along as confirmation. Envelope should be dropped into coat pocket.

The reader probably cannot appreciate this effect until it is given a trial or has been witnessed in use, but if performed deliberately and with plenty of confidence, makes the strongest psychic test of its character, suitable under all conditions.

### STYLUS METHOD:

A stylus is a glass or agate pen, commonly used in former years by railroads when compiling way-bills, through its use being enabled to write the original in ink and at the same time prepare a carbon copy. For this test only the stub is neces-

sary in order to be easily manipulated inside trousers' pocket, or the pocket of whatever costume is worn.

An exactly similar routine is employed as in preceding method, except that writing on faked envelope is accomplished while same is slightly clipped to a pad in pocket. At conclusion of test it is extracted from pocket, concealed in palm of hand and placed on top of the few envelopes visible, and top and bottom change effected, or it is deliberately switched for the one held by spectator while enroute to bottom steps leading to platform.

Of these two methods the former is recommended, it requiring only a fairly impressive misdirecting talk to entirely divert attention from the hands; in any event movement of thumb is covered from view by the bottom envelope, if held at an angle of about forty-five degrees.

By adopting this thumb clip stylus, where only one subject is to be covered, an exhibited blank card is placed in fake envelope and same held by yourself in plain view, with thumb out of sight back of envelope. The subject is written while so held, card removed and handed to audience for verification. I do not recommend this method of presentation.

### **PARLOR THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE:**

For the beginner, who desires to entertain his guests, a practical version of the foregoing can be accomplished without substituting envelopes, or by the stealthy writing of subjects made known by your selected spectators. However, as in all magical or psychic tricks, it requires a convincing manner of presentation. This applies to every effect; if you are not convincing in your talk, you cannot impress the thoughts in the light you desire. Convince yourself that what you say will take place, actually does, allowing the unknown moves to be

made in a subconscious manner, thereby lessening the attention otherwise paid to some, and also avoiding as much as possible any chances of being detected.

In this version performer holds a few envelopes in his hand, the top one being faked as in previous tests; a blank card is exhibited, on which is supposedly written with a red pencil two, three or four subjects; it is then sealed in envelope and placed on top of balance of those in hand. Performer states that he has written several objects, such as the name of a President, letter of the alphabet, a color, etc., and by concentration will endeavor to have those present call out the objects as he himself desires; as a matter of verification a piece of writing paper (size of envelopes) is taken, also a black lead pencil (about a No. 3 being best to obtain satisfactory results), upon which will be written the names called out. Enough people are chosen to cover the number of objects written beforehand, or presumed to have been. To the first one is communicated information that the name of a certain President was written on card; to concentrate when told to do so, and when "ready" is called out by performer he or she is to give you the name of the first President that is thought of. No matter what name is given, performer states: "That is correct, and to verify my assertion I am going to make a note thereof," which he does with black lead pencil on slip of paper, at the same time transferring this name to blank card in envelope by means of red carbon paper.

When the final object is treated, this verification slip is handed to one member of audience, card extracted from faked envelope and handed to another seated a little distance away, so that handwriting cannot be compared, at least during the concluding part of experiment. By asking what President's name was given, performer again verifies through party holding slip, requesting person with card to see that this was

identically the same as written at beginning of test. Each subject is accordingly compared and if performed properly throughout will cause your audience to believe that you actually incited those participating to think of exactly the same thing as you yourself was concentrating upon.

### THE WANT AD TEST:

To convince his auditors of the existence of thought transmission, existing clairvoyant powers or mind reading, performer has assistant or medium on platform concentrate upon chosen ads, quoting same word for word.

The apparent moves or actions of performer are as outlined below:

A complete local newspaper is introduced, handed to a nearby spectator with a request that one of the want ad pages be selected, suggesting, however, to avoid confusion, that a page with ads upon but one side be chosen. After selection this page is taken and with a pair of scissors fifty to sixty ads are cut out and laid on a tray carried by assistant, he or she handing them to various members present, asking that they fold the ad over once and seal in envelope provided; upon completion of this work, after collecting, the entire packet is given to any person present with a request that thirteen envelopes be chosen at random for use in this test. This chosen heap performer takes and a lady or gentleman selects one, holding in view of all; instantly medium on stage slowly quotes an ad; upon opening container this quoted ad is found to be identical with the one selected; a similar routine is employed with two additional members, the contents being correctly called out in all cases.

Apparently this test is of the fairest, but it is not devoid of trickery as herewith explained. The paper itself is ordinary,

likewise is a free selection allowed and the actual fifty or sixty ads cut from paper go into plain No. 2 drug envelopes, but in right hand trousers' pocket are secreted three envelopes, each containing a want ad placed there before performance, these specific ads having been memorized in a given order by the medium or assistant. If your helper is not possessed of a retentive memory, he or she may be blindfolded, as explained at the start of this volume, the ads copied off onto a card and left within range of vision on table, near which assistant is seated.

While thirteen ads are being chosen from the entire bunch clipped from page of paper, performer stands near selecting party with right hand in trouser's pocket, palming the three envelopes contained therein; as he reaches with left hand for packed of thirteen, the three in pocket are taken out palmed (concealed in palm of hand) and in transferring to right hand, these three palmed ones are placed on top the roof. Envelopes may be false-shuffled, care being used to not disturb the three top ones, and the pack then held towards some lady with a request that she choose one, slightly shoving over top envelope, which is quite naturally taken, as it will be found most people act along the lines of least resistance, and when envelope is partly shoved into their hand it is unconsciously and as a matter of course selected as the easiest accessible.

Performer now requests medium to concentrate and endeavor to convey the exact contents of this freely selected envelope, which is done in a slow deliberate manner, as if the task were a difficult one.

The stack of envelopes are fanned and some party chooses one at random; as soon as removed, close up fan, take envelope away from selecting party with right hand, executing the top and bottom change, previously mentioned, which leaves this



last chosen one on bottom of stack, while performer grasps the second of memorized envelopes, which is at once given to another to hold. As in the first instance, contents are read off by medium, envelope opened and a verification received. For third choice performer may use this same procedure or just carelessly hold entire pack towards a person, trusting that the top one will be removed, it being the third of already known ones. Should it not be selected, it is handed, apparently, to another party, actually, however, being substituted for desired ad by means of the formerly employed top and bottom change.

Performer at this time states his assistant could keep on quoting the ads, but while so doing is under a great mental strain, but believes that his assertions have already been proved. While making this brief speech three envelopes are palmed off the pack and dropped in coat or trousers' pocket, thereby enabling performer to leave a packet of ten envelopes in midst of audience, and in case a curious or suspicious person opens them up, contents will all be found different.

A former method required the use of thirteen newspapers; thirteen copies of one ad, twelve of another and eleven of the third being sealed in envelopes. These various packets were concealed about performer's person, in upper and lower vest pockets and substituted for selected thirteen, thereby allowing free choice given; however, each time the hat came back to performer another exchange was necessitated. At conclusion the package of duplicates being switched for ten of the **original** thirteen, and these were left in audience. With this latter routine practically the same effect was produced, but for the beginner, lacking abundance of nerve, too many substitutions were necessary, leaving an opening for a false move or a bungling of the trick.

### FLAP SLATES:

Slates have always occupied a position of prominence in the repertoire of mediums, clairvoyant workers, magicians and crystal gazers, being used either for the asker to write his query upon, or as a means of communicating information from supposedly departed spirits.

The oldest and probably most used version was that whereby an ordinary school slate was fitted with a silica flap, matching the slate. Writing placed on slate beforehand and covered with this flap was invisible to audience, though both sides were unmistakably shown; in some instances being wiped with a damp cloth or sponge.

After exhibition, the faked slate was set down for a moment on a table fitted with a dark drape or cover, allowing flap to drop thereon where it was invisible a few feet distant; a second slate proven devoid of writing was placed under the first one, it being necessary for medium to avoid exposing under side of slate when picking up from table. The two now being together, with writing inside, were wrapped with a piece of cord, a stout rubber band or enclosed in newspaper and given to one of audience to hold; concentrating strongly upon the thought at hand for a minute or more, medium requested that slates be separated, exposing to view a message addressed to the writer, or one of general information.

### MEDIUM'S SLATE MYSTERY:

For individual use, where medium came into possession of a sitter's information before he was ushered into his private reading room, the following was applied with telling effect: The chamber in which presented was never brilliantly lighted and aromatic incense burned in a vessel or miniature idol to disguise the odor of alcohol.

A thin solution of ordinary library paste was used to cover one side of slate and while still wet the message written thereon with an ordinary slate pencil and allowed to dry. When ready for demonstration slate was washed with a sponge dipped in alcohol, darkening writing so as to be invisible in the dimly lighted room; lightly wiped with a towel it could be laid, writing side down, on table, or placed with another slate and given to sitter to hold between his hands; when dry the message was plainly visible.

The use of water in lieu of alcohol would obliterate this message.

#### THE BOLTED SLATES:

Among more recent pieces of apparatus are the slates which may be passed for examination; a question is written on a slip of paper, placed between them and they are then bolted at the four corners, wax being used if desired to demonstrated that they have been unmolested. The slates may also be bound with twine and knots sealed.

When properly secured slates are placed in a cabinet and on completing whatever tests are to be utilized, they are once again passed for examination and everything found intact; the audience are allowed to separate and discover the slip of paper still in place, but one of these slates bears a message addressed to writer, giving a fairly intelligent answer to his or her query. The possibility of human aid in producing this message seems extremely remote and has convinced more than on edoubting person that the writing is actually performed by an unseen spirit. For cabinet tests this piece of apparatus has no equal.

The slates resemble the ordinary school brand, with holes in each corner for insertion of bolts; one is entirely unprepared

but the second has at one end a bracket or hinged portion of braid, held in place by a small brad; upon removal of this brad, braid portion can be lifted up, thereby permitting of the slate itself to be extracted through this end; after reading slip with message inserted between slates an answer is written on the unprepared one, sliding section reinserted and brad pushed or driven into place, all this being accomplished without interference by the bolting and wrapping of slates, provided they have not been bound around their smaller ends.

The spectators take slates apart, and no matter how carefully examined evidence of trickery cannot be discovered about the one bearing a message, for it is, pure and simple, an article of ordinary design.

#### MECHANICAL SLATES:

Nothing ever produced for slate writing has equalled this truly wonderful piece of apparatus, which can be worked while surrounded on all sides, if occasion requires, but it is best to have your audience seated in front of you. It is further necessary that the information come into your possession beforehand, through any of the various explained modes of procedure.

The user introduces two ordinary looking slates, washing on all four sides and passing out for examination; collecting them from examiner's attention is called to the fact that slates never leaves spectator's view for one instant, precluding any possibility of substitution, and they are accordingly held above his head until desired position facing spectators is reached. Again, unmistakably showing all four sides of slates, they are placed together, a piece of slate pencil inserted between and several people allowed to hold, depending upon individual taste. After proper concentration, the separation is done by members of audience, who find a message on both slates;

closest scrutiny fails to bring to light evidence of trickery or preparation, so far as the slates themselves are concerned.

Utmost care is necessary in the construction of this piece of apparatus, which is really a version of the old flap slate, but in this instance apparatus is practically "fool proof" and will stand scrutiny of the most observing skeptic; even if told the secret it would require some time to actually operate.

The wooden edges of slate, around which the brade is fastened, are wider than in an ordinary school slate, giving the appearance of a more expensive article; these four edges are about 1-inch wide and one end of each slate can be pulled back a fraction of an inch into border portion, but a strong spring makes this action difficult unless it is properly grasped; as soon as released the spring carries edge portion back into place.

A flap made of the same grade material as used in the two slates is provided, being of the identical width and slightly longer, so as to fit in place underneath movable sides; it is made an exact fit and minute inspection will fail to disclose its presence. When the two are placed together this flap is on uppermost slate, facing the second one; a strong pull on edge of upper slate causes it to drop onto lower and in moving from one side to the other a grasp is obtained on lower slate, end pulled back and released, fastening the flap in place. Performer takes slates slightly apart to insert stub of pencil, at the same time making sure that this flap is in correct position.

By writing a message on the one covered with flap and on the inner side of this same flap, when lowered on to bottom slate it exposes a message written on both.

This article can be used in conjunction with various tests and defies detection.

### HINGED FLAP SLATE:

In order to dispense with writing on pads, etc., in this version a slate is used, which remains in possession of the sitter throughout, and will puzzle even the intelligent as to how the information came into medium's possession. It is not suitable for stage use but a valuable asset in private readings, where but one person is present at a time.

Entering medium's office there will be noticed on his table several ordinary articles, including three slates. You will be requested to write your name, the name of some departed friend or relative and what is uppermost in your mind at the time being, during which medium will repair to another part of the room, out of range, precluding any theory to the effect that he could possibly know what was being written on slate.

Upon completion of your inquiries it was requested that you place this written on slate face down upon the one lying beside you; the medium took his place opposite, placing the third one on top of the others and asking that you write thereon the initials of this departed friend.

At conclusion of these various proceedings medium lifted all three slates to an angle of about 45 degrees, requesting that you gaze upon the initials just written, also concentrate strongly upon the advice sought; after a minute or two had elapsed slates were laid to one side and information imparted that conditions were now suitable; the presence of a spirit from the other world being felt.

You were informed that a certain party (the name of the deceased friend written on slate) desired to speak to you through intercession of medium; your correct name was given, and after holding your hand or hands for two or three minutes, an answer and some advice was forthcoming to fit that previously written on the slate.

It is small wonder that many persons have been made the dupes of fraudulent clairvoyants and others; these transactions and results produced seem beyond the power of mortal man, and that spiritual intercession was invoke would be a natural conclusion; everything transpired in your immediate vicinity, precluding the possibility of trickery, substitution of slates, etc.

The slate given you for writing upon was very ordinary, so was the third slate, carelessly placed a trifle beyond your reach, but the second one, upon which you deposited that bearing a message, contains a solution of this mystery, for far from being supernatural it was a clever piece of apparatus, enabling medium to obtain possession of what had been written.

This mechanical slate was in reality a hinged one, the hinges being concealed in lower frame; pulling up on the opposite edge released entire slate portion, permitting it to fall against table and leaving a clear view of writing on second slate.

In operation, after you had deposited message bearing slate face down upon mechanical one, medium placed the third ordinary article on top of all, and on this was written the initials. Holding slates at an angle for your intent gaze was merely a ruse, enabling medium to release slate portion of bottom one, being concealed behind the others and not visible to you; while concentrating he in turn was memorizing names and questions written, and the finish hardly needs an explanation—just close flap by allowing slates to rest flat on table, discard to one side, and answer according to how the party “sized up.”

#### **WEDGE AND STEEL HOOK:**

Before introduction of the mechanical bolted slates, two

ordinary articles were used (your own if furnished), tightly bound together and knots sealed, nevertheless a brief message was found after exit from cabinet.

To secure writing upon slates medium took a small hardwood wedge, forcing them slightly apart despite bindings; a thin steel rod with a minute piece of slate pencil secured to its end was inserted between slates and the writing accomplished in this manner—a crude comparison to the modern devices used for such demonstrations.

### SLATE SWITCHES:

In clairvoyance and medium readings prepared articles are not always employed, but slates switched for duplicates through many ruses, such as using a holder on bottom of table, a shelf under seat of chair, switched through curtains while held overhead—an assistant back of a curtain placing down a duplicate set and bringing away the desired ones; this being above the sitter's range of vision; panels in wall have been used and artifices too numerous to mention, in these modern days having been supplanted almost entirely by mechanical means.

One still in vogue and often employed by the faker was to have seven or eight slates piled upon his table with a slightly larger one nearby; these were all washed and examined and in the event of placing your message on a slate, which was laid on top of pile, face down, medium covered with larger one and later carried it away with your message-bearing one concealed underneath. After obtaining desired information it was in the same manner replaced.

In having a previous knowledge of your query, this same system was used to introduce a written on slate concealed at the start underneath the larger.



All these exchanges, switches, etc., depended to a great extent upon the systems known to each faker, and the degree of dexterity possessed.

### RAPPING HANDS:

**Thread Method:** Probably the most common and often adopted means of communication with supposed spirits was through the rapping on tables, boards, etc., developing later to rapping hands, talking skulls, and the like.

The rapping of hands as explained under this method is suitable only for stage use or, at least, where performer is some distance removed from spectators.

A wax or wooden hand, presumably that of some ancient mummy, according to the version of performer, is passed for inspection, and it is really free from trickery.

On platform are seen two ordinary folding style of chairs, also a piece of plate glass about three feet in length and a foot wide, which is taken to footlights and displayed; nothing would prevent its being passed to audience for, like the hand, it is devoid of preparation, used to demonstrate that electricity cannot be a controlling factor, glass being a non-conductor; while so exhibiting an assistant places the chairs close together, back to back, on which is laid the plate glass and hand deposited thereon; performer walks completely around chairs, takes his wand and passes all around, over and below, to show the absence of threads, wires or kindred means for moving the hand; once more hand is shown free of any detachments, laid again on the glass by performer who walks to edge of stage, but upon his command it begins to tap upon the glass in an uncanny fashion, answering questions through application of the spiritualistic code, which is: one rap for "yes," two raps for "no" and three for "I do not know—doubtful, or question

is not clear." Hand can at any time be lifted from the glass, but on being replaced immediately resumes its rapping, and at conclusion of exhibition slides off glass into waiting hand of performer.

A thread is stretched completely across stage, each end being held by an assistant out of sight in wings on either side; this thread lays on the floor, enabling performer to walk about chairs and to conclusively prove the absence of any connection above or below glass; as he puts hand back a second time assistants raise thread so that it lies across the glass and the wrist is placed on top of this thread, which on being pulled up by assistants working in unison causes hand to tip forward and tap audibly upon the plate glass; needless to say it can be lifted at any time and replaced in proper position; also it can be shown that no connection exists either above or below same while in the act of tapping.

The sliding into performer's hand is accomplished by both assistants pulling forward on thread quickly, causing hand to glide off glass. Thread is than reeled in by one confederate, leaving stage clear for whatever demonstration is to follow.

#### **ELECTRIC MAGNET:**

Similar results are accomplished with this article, but it is not as simple in operation as the one previously explained.

The hand is a wax one, resting with fingers down on glass. In wrist is concealed a quantity of iron filings, the tampering therewith being obscured by a fancy cuff adorning hand; it is passed for examination, likewise the board upon which it rests, this latter having an electro magnet concealed in a gouged out space, though after plugging and finishing no evidence of preparedness is visible.

through the body of chairs down under stage run two fine

wires connected with storage batteries. By the aid of a switch electric current is turned on or shut off at will. These may be located in the wings, if desired; any place not in view of audience.

A connection is established by a spot on the board where it comes in contact with chair, thus by turning on current wrist is drawn down, raising fingers of hand, and when shut off it drops into natural position, causing thereby a tap upon the glass.

A conversation is carried on identical in all respects as when the thread method is resorted to.

#### NEEDLE POINT METHOD:

Among the latter day inventions for stage seance presentation is a hand, resting upon a small board, both being passed for examination, yet when the hand is set upon this board, while exhibitor is in midst of his audience, it raps out answers and conveys information at will. It is even possible for a disinterested person to hold one edge of the board; hand nevertheless continues to rap and may be picked up by a spectator while so doing.

A wooden hand is employed in this baffling version; it can be freely passed for examination as there is nothing to discover. Like in the magnet version, a rap is accomplished by fingers of hand tipping down, the weight of wrist bringing it back into normal position. The board is the agency responsible for this seemingly impossible action; in reality it is two pieces of wood, accurately fitted after insertion of mechanism, finely grained and polished, thereby showing no junction.

Inside the board is a lever arrangement, at one end, near center being a small metal point, like a needle, with a weighted bottom, resting on a felt pad, opposite end is connected with a

screw in a small cleat across bottom of this board, and by the action of operator's finger pushing against this screw needle point is projected fully a half-inch beyond surface of board. In setting down hand the wrist is over this minute hole; needle point raises wrist, the fingers striking board and on release of finger pressure, immediately returns to its natural position. Operation is accomplished while board is held in performer's hands.

This small hole in the board is further disguised by a dozen or more perforations of similar nature over its face.

### **WEIGHTED HAND:**

In presenting, performer walked amongst audience with examined hand on a plate of glass or piece of wood and while in their midst caused the hand to rap out answers.

The base used for receiving raps is free from trickery, the action being caused by hand itself, which is worked on a balance idea: The fingers are almost straight up in the air and it tips several inches before making a tap. The hand itself is so finely balanced that a very slight variation of board throws a concealed weight inside, causing it to tip over and strike board, a reverse movement brings it again into place.

Should an idea develop that tipping causes the hand to obey its owner's commands, performer can pass to any individual, who, slanting board as much as desired, fails to upset the gravity thereof, due to the fact that a locking device is concealed in wrist, a slight pressure rendering hand unworkable, and instead of tipping, it will slide completely off board.

### **BIBLE TEST:**

As the Good Book seems to lessen any thought of trickery, its use was a great favorite with mediums in former years.

By its aid thought transmission was demonstrated, or a message from an apparently fairly chosen page was reproduced on examined slates.

In the original method I will explain how it was adopted to cause thought transmission, or the obeying of medium's will in certain selections.

Performer first wrote out an unseen verse, or a paragraph from any certain page in the Bible, allowing no one to view his choice, but immediately sealing in an envelope and entrusting to the care of one seated nearby.

The bible having been introduced, a selected individual was given a small card or indicator and requested to insert it at some freely chosen part, and with this card extending it was placed to one side.

A cloth bag containing various numbered counters was exhibited and any person requested to insert his hand and remove one, keeping same in their possession.

Next some individual was asked to choose one side of the bible, right or left.

Upon opening book where card was inserted and counting down the number of lines, on right or left side, denoted by chosen counter, this verse or paragraph was read and found to agree with what had been written at start of test.

A certain page had been picked out before hand as the one to be used by medium, counting down, we will say, twelve lines and memorizing the verse at this location. By bending back the book several times it would readily open at desired page, but to simplify matters an indicator card was stuck in at this point, not being visible when in audience as it was held towards body. When card was inserted by spectator, on return to platform, performer merely pushed it out of sight, turning the book so his own card was exposed to view.

Bag containing counters was a double one—various numbers being in one partition, in the other all were No. 12—exhibited counters were removed from the assorted lot, but this portion was then held closed by performer when selection was allowed, making it impossible to pick out any but the desired number.

Using the left or right side was merely a little dodge to make test seemingly more complicated. If you said left side, and that was the one performer wanted, it would be left hand page from his position! if he desired the opposite, well and good, it was the left side from your position, the right from his own. Opening book where card was seen protruding, counting down twelve lines on left hand side, this verse was read aloud by medium, or one of those present, and upon comparison with sealed container's contents found to agree, for the faker knew beforehand just what verse would be chosen.

A more later version, especially suitable in conjunction with the mechanical slates is accomplished by using a bible, left hand page throughout being exactly the same, thus no matter where book is opened performer is aware of the contents; right hand pages are different and consecutively numbered, avoiding suspicion by the leaf not corresponding with the number of pages showing.

### TALKING SKULL:

The operation and use to which applied is very similar to that of rapping hands.

A paper-mache skull resting upon a plate glass by opening and closing its mouth the proper number of times carried on a conversation in the spiritualist's code.

The same principle is involved, that of a stretched thread engaging in a protruding rear portion of jaw, a pulling thereon causing the hinged jaw to lower, a slackening of thread

brought it back to normal with a snap, due to a spring concealed inside.

### **SPIRIT CLOCK:**

There is passed for examination a glass dial, about 15 inches in diameter, having numerals corresponding to an ordinary clock; close examination will show that there is nothing complicated or fraudulent, for it is but plain plate glass, with a handle at the upper edge to facilitate holding same; a pointed or indicator on a spindle fits into an opening in center of dial, permitting of its being revolved by the operator or one of audience. The spindle being put in place, after revolving, will stop at any desired number, reveal the universal value of spots on a chosen playing card, etc. It may be used in midst of audience, held by the operator or anyone else, or suspended from an ornamental stand, the result always being identical.

The action of stopping at a desired number is caused by the revolving spindle itself which is finely balanced at its center; this center portion of indicator contains a concealed ball weight that may be revolved by moving the back of case, which is ratcheted into twelve positions, corresponding to numerals on dial and in moving this weight by the aid of thumb while exhibiting spindle, it will cause handle to stop at desired number. The weight is rotated in a direction opposite to the order of numerals on clock dial; thus if desired to stop at "3," the weight would be moved into a position corresponding with "9" on an ordinary dial—just opposite to usual arrangement in numbering the face of a clock.

### **SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY:**

#### **Double Envelope Method:**

The results obtainable by this so-called photography are applicable in various ways, either to cause the likeness of a

chosen card to appear on a blank piece of paper, a reproduction of a certain president, author, etc., or a quotation from some chosen verse in connection with the bible trick, depending upon ingenuity possessed by each individual user. The same diversities apply in following explained methods.

For instance, a card was chosen from the pack and held by selector; an envelope is shown perfectly empty, into which is placed a plain blank card, freely examined; envelope is sealed, the chosen one placed thereon and held for an instant by a spectator; upon opening envelope a photographic likeness of this particular playing card appears on the previously inserted blank.

To cause this effect the card is forced, either through sleight of hand or making use of what is termed a "forcing pack," all the cards, except a few bottom ones, being the same. The user has a supply of photographs of this card to be forced, also blank cards of the same dimensions and quality as is used for producing the playing variety; two ordinary envelopes are necessary, the face with flap part carefully cut out of one; photographic card placed inside untampered envelope; face portion placed over this and the two flaps squared up and stuck together, thereby enabling envelope to be held open by fingers without disclosing presence of card between the two front parts; after insertion of blank card the flap is sealed in place; later an edge is cut from envelope, fingers holding bottom portion to keep blank card from sliding out, and the one with picture thereon slid out of front portion, the envelope itself being destroyed or placed out of reach, so as not to expose routine necessary to cause this apparent phenomena.

### **THE SAND FRAME:**

In this version an ordinary looking frame is shown from both sides and seen to be apparently free from trickery. Mem-



bers of audience are requested to write the names of well known persons on slips of paper provided for this purpose. The slips are collected and from these one is chosen by a spectator; again showing frame perfectly empty, it is covered for a few moments with a large handkerchief which, upon being removed, discloses a picture of the personage whose name is written on chosen slip, later being removed from frame and passed for examination.

It is necessary to force the name as desired and this can be accomplished by performer having secreted in palm of hand a name corresponding to picture to be produced. After all the slips are collected some party not participating in the writing is given a choice, performer's own paper being forced; in lieu of a force accomplished through sleight of hand, a changing bag or basket may be utilized. It should be borne in mind that the different writers and members of audience are unaware of various names written outside each individual in his own selection.

The frame appears ordinary, however, therein lies the whole secret; The edges are about 1-inch wide and into these are securely fastened two panes of glass a fraction of an inch apart, appearing as a single pane: Top portion of frame is hollow and before insertion of the glass is filled with sufficient fine black sand to completely fill up this space between the two glasses. The back is composed of a removable wooden frame, held in place by two clips, similar to those on a plate holder used in photographic work, its inner side being painted black to correspond with the sand.

At start of trick performer takes off back posting, inserting picture to be used, replaces same and turns frame upside down, causing sand to occupy space between glass and completely hiding picture from view, the impression being that back of frame is visible.

After forcing name of the person whose portrait is concealed, performer takes frame, laying thereover a large handkerchief, but in so doing, under cover of handkerchief, frame is reversed, whereby sand enters hollow portion and leaves the picture exposed to view. The back portion of frame can now be removed and picture handed out for inspection.

### **The Buckley Method:**

The below described impressive version was introduced into this country by Mr. Arthur Buckley of Australia.

A large frame about 9x12 inches is shown empty by taking apart, there being only the outer frame proper, a sheet of glass and a backboard, held in place by two clips.

Next is introduced several sheets of white paper the size of frame, being shown from both sides, proving absence of preparation; one of these sheets is placed in frame and marked by a member of audience as a means of identification and to avoid substitution on part of operator.

Upon a card being selected from pack it is held up in plain view; the frame handed to a member of audience, who places one hand on either side. Taking a piece of flash paper, performer states that he will cause a photograph to be projected, by this flash, of the selected card, its likeness appearing in frame held by a party some distance away.

Paper is ignited and disappears in a sheet of flame; performer then takes frame, removes back, shows identifying mark still on paper, but on opposite side is a large photographic likeness of the card just selected.

Besides the parts of this frame described above, there is also a "fake," consisting of a stiff white board to just fit over inside face of frame.

The frame is lying on table, together with a half dozen or more blank sheets and one, about the third down, containing an enlarged photograph of a playing card, which is to be later forced upon a member of the audience. The "fake" is also reposing upon table, on a piece of newspaper, the back of this fake being covered with newspaper so that its presence is invisible to spectators.

Performer first forces card to be used, either by sleight of hand, or by means of a "forcing pack," and this is held by individual selecting throughout balance of experiment: The regular frame is now picked up, taken apart and shown to the complete satisfaction of all to be without preparation; in replacing on table, after exhibition, it is layed directly over fake: Picking up blank sheets, performer moves them from hand to hand, but in so doing keeps the photographic one behind a blank, holding the two sheets as one; they are reversed and freely shown on opposite side; apparently picking one at random, performer removes photographic sheet, face down, holding so audience cannot see the front part thereof, and this supposedly blank sheet is laid on glass portion of frame; back part is now put in place and the frame, together with white fake picked up: Front of frame shows a white card, apparently the one just laid down, but really the fake, covering photographic card. Half of back portion can be opened by having it hinged; this is done, allowing plain side of picture sheet to be initialed. Performer once again shows back and front of frame and on reaching table, as the flash-paper is picked up, fake is allowed to drop off face of frame onto newspaper thereon. The frame is taken into audience, being careful to hold so that face part is not exposed, and given to a lady near front of audience to hold, one hand underneath and one above frame, thus preventing her or any other person from seeing the now visible photograph. As soon as flash-paper is

ignited, frame is taken from volunteer helper, lifted up and the likeness appearing on paper therein compared with selected card and found to be identical. Opening frame, performer shows it again as ordinary and verifies initials written by a member at start of test.

This frame can be made up by a person familiar with tools and will provide the owner with a wonderful parlor or stage trick, out of the ordinary routine where playing cards are introduced.

Photographs of Presidents or famous men may be used, or any routine as exacted by different individuals.

#### TABLE LIFTING: (Old Method)

A form of trickery resorted to by mediums to prove assistance from unseen spirits in causing a light table to rise in the air, float about above the head on one hand—to all appearances defying the laws of gravity.

As formerly used table had a small, large-headed nail or tack driven into it near one end about its center: An operator's third finger of right hand was worn a band ring with a notch cut therein of sufficient size to fit into nail, under its head. When right hand was placed on table it became engaged in the nail; left hand being placed in a corresponding position was used in steadying table when raised; after being in a position over his head, decreasing the weight sustained and permitting of an easy balance, left hand was taken away. By proper balance the table could be moved around in various directions and even taken into audience.

The drawback to this system is the fact that hands, or at least right hand must remain perfectly flat on table at all times during test; further, table could not be closely examined.

Human assistance was often suspected, so as to divert any

doubting mind into another channel of thought, the table was provided with an additional tack at its exact center. After manifestations through the aid of a notched ring, operator would allow table to rest on floor and around this center tack, while invoking the spirits, would wind a stout thread, held in the hands of two assistants out of sight in wings, or behind screens.

Table was now caused to float several feet in the air while operator's hands were some distance therefrom.

#### **New Method:**

To overcome the impossibility of inspection some shrewd mind devised a mechanically operated table that would bear the closest scrutiny, and when employed performer or medium could disclose the tack method, requesting that a close examination be given to prove the absence of such an article.

This particular table was caused to float above performer's head, similar to that shown in former method; it could be taken into the midst of those present and some party allowed to place their hand on one end, performer placing his on the opposite end, but still it rose in the air. To further preclude the possibility of a tack taking part in this manifestation, only the tips of fingers and thumb rested against table top.

This seemingly impossible effect was accomplished on the same principle as in the "tack" method. Sunk into table top was a steel needle rod with a ball-point head; when in a natural position this rod was invisible and the small hole in table top was obscured by using a checked design covering or a striped piece of felt. To cause needle point to rise above table top it became necessary to press down on a trap portion near opposite end, this trap slightly depressing and working a lever connected with needle point, thereby throwing it about a half

inch above level of outer top. A notched ring was worn, as shown in previous method, but as this needle point could be pulled out over an inch it allowed of the fingers being raised so that palm of hand did not touch; due also to the fineness of this protruding point and the screen offered by one's fingers, it could be taken into audience with impunity, especially as all suspicion relative to "tacks" had been removed.

After carrying table into audience, medium requested that the hand be rubbed over its top to show the absence of any "tacks" or similar articles; then depressing table trap as right hand went into place he engaged his ring into needle point, requesting a lady or gentleman to lay their hands in a similar position on opposite end; then raising hand up until only tips of same rested on table, it was lifted by the operator, his volunteer assistant merely aiding in maintaining a balance.

A cloth could be placed over entire table top, but due to the protruding point, sufficient room was available for insertion of notched ring engaging rod and cloth, thus further bewildering audience.

### **FLOATING BALL:**

While caused by seemingly supernatural means, this trick is more adaptable in the program of a magician, and can only be satisfactorily presented on a stage or platform some little distance from audience. A double parlor is suitable, but there should be a drape of some dark color back of operator to blend with thread used.

This is the way the effect presents itself to spectators:

Performer's assistant brings in a 5 or 6-inch gold ball, apparently solid, and an ordinary hoop about 3 feet in diame-

ter. Performer throws hoop over his head, allowing it to rest on his neck, tosses ball into air and shows it absolutely free from connections. Taking a position near center of platform, he balances the ball on his hand for a few moments, then slowly withdrawing, the sphere remains stationary, held by an unseen force. His hands are passed below and above and the hoop completely passed over ball, which actions prove beyond a doubt that nothing can be connected with it. The ball is now caused to move forward and backward, rise in the air, lower itself, following apparently the motions indicated by performer's hands. At conclusion it is tossed to an assistant or caused to lower itself into a small box on stage.

The ball is made of paper, a globe of the world heavily painted with bronze being commonly used; into wooden point at one axis is forced a thin piece of wire, the protruding portion being bent over so as to form a small hook.

When assistant comes onto stage he or she carries the ball, hoop, and an ear-piece, like the curved portion of an eye-glass temple, to which is attached a length of black silk thread, the opposite end held by an assistant in wings; performer first takes hoop, placing same around his neck, then secures ball and ear-piece, placing this hook over left ear (if right side is towards audience) while apparently brushing back his hair; the globe is freely shown and when balancing on hand the small wire hook is inserted over thread, which in meantime has been drawn taut by assistant; through this assistant lowering or raising his end of thread the ball is accordingly raised or lowered; following out performer's motional commands it is caused to perform various antics.

As there is no connection above or below, the hands can be

passed over and below, and as supporting thread is within radius of hoop, it can be passed back and forth in the same direction as ball and thread, thereby making a most mystifying effect.



## CLAIRVOYANCE OR SECOND SIGHT

**C**LAIRVOYANCE, second sight, mind reading and thought projection, whether exhibited on the entertainment platform or in the privacy of a medium's parlor, is pure and unadulterated bunk. Scientists and others have investigated the supposed supernatural powers possessed by various persons from time to time, disclosing that most of these sensational feats were merely "press agent" reports.

While some persons performed seemingly supernatural feats and conveyed information that did not seem possible by an ordinary mortal, a thorough investigation would reveal trickery or pre-obtained knowledge as the basis.

The following described routines are those used by public performers as a means of entertainment, though in some cases they are not too particular in allowing reports to be circulated, via the press, as to their supernatural powers of divination.

### **SUGGESTED FEATS IN AUDIENCE:**

In the following version, performer enters with his assistant (generally a lady), stating he will place her in a state of hypnosis, then passing amongst audience will have them submit various tests for the lady to execute. She is apparently hypnotized, performer passes down the aisles and into his ear is whispered tests to be undertaken, such as removing a handkerchief from one man and giving it to another, tying a certain number of knots in same; removing a cigarette from a package, placing in owner's mouth and lighting; opening a box

of candy and taking out a certain number of pieces and giving to another; mussing a person's hair; taking their hat and placing upon the head; taking off coat and turning inside out, and several others.

The lady is now caused, through performer's control over her mind to enter audience, and while he is ten or more feet distant at all times she executes various tests laid out beforehand, presumably through aid of performer conveying this information by mental telepathy.

The lady is not in a state of hypnosis and though a bandage is placed over her eyes, she can, nevertheless, see various motions made by performer.

The tests themselves are not of your own making, as you probably think, but a certain prearranged system, each designated by a certain signal, and are actually forced upon audience. Performer bends down to a spectator and asks in a low tone of voice what shall be done, suggesting three or four of these tests in his routine, and again, following a line of least resistance, you gladly grasp one of the ideas conveyed; this is continued throughout audience, it being necessary for performer to remember each test as slotted to certain individuals. The assistant on platform being able to see through blindfold, has a fairly accurate knowledge of the position of those persons participating, but coming into audience, when opposite correct row, performer "sniffles" slightly, as if possessed of a cold, so that his assistant knows absolutely the correct row and can go past same; then after apparent violent concentration by performer, goes back to correct one.

While in audience, performer is constantly moving the hands in front of his eyes, as if they were an antenna along which he was projecting mental instructions regarding the actions to be carried out. In reality he is signaling with the

fingers numbers which correspond to test to be undertaken, position of party in a certain row, the number of articles to be removed or knots tied, etc.

When presented by a good showman the above act, requiring only a fairly retentive memory, is one of the most deceptive in existence and will puzzle an enlightened mind, or one having a mediocre insight into ordinary magical routines.

### PLAYING SELECTED PIECES ON PIANO:

There are two methods for presenting an act of this character, namely; by silent and spoken code.

In the former, assistant is seated at piano on stage; operator goes through audience requesting the names of popular pieces of music, operas, old fashioned melodies, etc., which are whispered into his ear and without a word being spoken by him assistant immediately plays the chorus or enough of each piece to prove its identity. This same procedure is enacted throughout the duration of entire act.

In the second version, person seated at piano is blindfolded and operator amongst audience requests her to play the lady's or gentleman's selection, or allows you to request that it be played.

In both of these systems it is necessary that the pianist be talented and able to play a large assortment of songs, ballads, operas, etc., a hundred or more being listed, given a numerical value and memorized by both pianist and operator, therefore upon a certain number being communicated to assistant she readily translates it into the desired selection.

In the silent code these numbers are transmitted by slight and almost imperceptible gestures on part of performer, whose body is divided into a chart, the forehead, ears, sides of face, chin, shoulders, elbows, and hips representing a certain spec-

ified number, 1 to 10 inclusive, thus with a slight brushing motion by the left ear, one hand on hip, hand on chin, as if in thought, or a motion of one hand toward opposite elbow, communicates to observing assistant the numeral corresponding to selection just given operator. It is necessary that these motions be made in a natural and matter-of-fact manner, otherwise it would be apparent to a close observer that a signal system was involved.

The spoken code is applied along lines similar to those of the "object code," explained in following pages. A prearranged series of selections are given a numerical value, and through direct query or while talking to audience, assistant is made aware of the piece to be played upon piano. If allowed to yourself request that selection be played, the necessary cue is given in addressing you direct, or in requesting assistant to comply with your wishes.

#### **"OBJECT" CODE:**

An object code is a spoken one in which performer blindfolds medium on stage and enters audience; Upon being handed various articles they are correctly described by medium.

The examples cited herewith are for objects alone, but such a code is plastic and may be applied to names as well: A performer specializing in this branch adjusts his code to represent sounds as in shorthand, later filling in the vowel if necessary. A certain set contains phonetic sounds beginning with A—such as "Ad"—"Ab"—"Ac," etc., on down through alphabet and John Thompson might be transmitted as "Jn"—"Mp"—"Sn." These are merely basic examples, as any system may be devised to suit individual tastes, numerals in all cases, however, being the foundation upon which built.

Again it may be used as a branch of clairvoyant work,

operator in audience asking what information you desire to ask of medium, and, for instance, a question regarding some proposed journey was propounded, operator would signal "journey," and perhaps the name of town, if communicated by you: The medium necessarily must be a good talker and leads up in an indirect manner to the point, similarly to methods adopted by a crystal gazer. The "coding" can be disguised by apparently talking to an individual person; the manner in which the request for a query is placed, etc., all this conversation being carefully followed by medium on stage, even though she may herself be talking.

It requires years of study and practice to perfect a code act so that it is smooth running, whereby no halts are necessary on the part of operator or medium, enabling operator the instant he sees an object to unhesitatingly transmit its correct set and numerical value in this specific set, and medium to as quickly deduce from these numerals the object itself.

The object code explained herein is made possible through the courtesy of Mr. Arthur Buckley, who with his wife are known as "The Australian Buckleys." During a period of ten years this talented couple have been performing their code act and in that time covered practically the entire globe. For the past two years they have resided in Chicago where their services are in constant demand at better class conventions, banquets, entertainments and social gatherings.

The information necessary to embody in an act of this kind is—figures, dates, amounts, countries, shapes, designs, emblems, colors, materials, precious stones, metals, animals, birds, insects, articles and names.

The figures 0 to 21 call for first attention as they form a basis for the whole system. Each of these numbers are rep-

resented by a word or words, as set out in the following table:

1. Describe.	11. Can or Can't.
2. Try.	12. See.
3. Answer.	13. Do or Don't.
4. Have.	14. Go on.
5. Name.	15. Will or Well.
6. Next.	16. Then.
7. Right.	17. Here or Give.
8. Say or Speak.	18. What
9. Be Quick, look or let.	19. Now.
10. Call.	20. Tell.

0 and 10. Quick or Quickly.

“See” only retains its value when commencing a sentence. The word “quick,” when preceded by “be quick,” loses its numerical value 0 or 10 and becomes 9.

NOTE: These are the exact words as used by Mr. Buckley in the formulation of his code. However, I have changed their numerical value, as it would be unfair to take advantage of his efforts, the intent being to dispense with the theory entertained by some that this class of work was due to mind reading, rather than a lesson in this branch of entertaining. Using above words as a basis, either in the order shown, or changed to suit the individual, a private code may be developed, its limitations depending upon the amount of articles the performer desires to include.

The first thing to learn is the equivalent value of above words, enabling them to be transmitted and deduced without an instant's delay; then a series of numbers are dealt with, endeavoring to make an as intelligent a question as possible

with these code words that necessarily have to be inserted in order to transmit desired information.

After the numbers have been thoroughly learned, various sets of objects are assembled, for instance: Money, countries, etc., as shown in a preceding paragraph. Each one of these sets is given a numerical value: "one" (as an illustration) designating countries; "two," money, continuing throughout each set. Now to intelligently convey further information it becomes necessary to list under each set the various objects pertaining thereto, and these are likewise given a numerical value: Under countries would be included those most likely to be mentioned; under metals,—gold, silver, brass, copper, tin, bronze, etc., etc.

Upon completion you would have a list covering practically every article liable to be handed you in a gathering of any nature.

Each set and the article therein must be memorized by both sender and receiver, so that the instant party in audience is given an object, without hesitation he can form an intelligent or ordinary question, conveying to his assistant the set number and position this particular articles occupies in said set: As an example: a gold watch, Waltham make. A sentence is formed using code word to designate "jewelry," this being the "set," and always the first to be transmitted; it would also be necessary to include in your question sufficient code words to transmit "watch" and "gold" in its position in the metal set; medium knows it is a watch and therefore the "metal set" itself need not be projected; likewise number of Waltham occupied in jewelry set, or under the classification listed. As it is apparent from the question itself what controlling set is necessary in order that questions asked of assistant may not be jerky and hesitating, also that they form

an ordinary question. As a literal example we will say that when performer was handed a gold watch he instantly said: "Can you see this? What is it?"—denoting a gold watch, and while being answered learned the make of watch, and on completion of medium's answer, such as "Yes, I can see that, it is a watch—a gold watch," he said, "Now, the make," meaning Waltham.

Selecting a few of Mr. Buckley's questions and answers, in his routine they appear as follows, demonstrating that continued practice will make the hardest task appear very easy of accomplishment:

Q.—Look—say this.

Ans.—That is a razor.

Q.—Now, the kind?

Ans.—A safety razor.

Q.—Now, this.

Ans.—That is a comb.

Q.—Let me know the color.

Ans.—It is a black comb.

Q.—Can you see the length?

Ans.—About three inches.

Q.—Here, look at this.

Ans.—That is a pencil.

Q.—Look at this—speak up—think—look.

Ans.—That is a safety razor blade.

Q.—Here, the make?

Ans.—Gillette.

Q.—Here, do you know this?

Ans.—Yes, it is a letter.

Q.—And this?

Ans.—It's a stamp.



Q.—Of what country?

Ans.—France.

### **Second Sight by Telephone:**

In order to present a second-sight, clairvoyance or mind reading act, as they are generally termed, it is not necessary to always resort to a code. Where performances are given in a theater, the telephone may again be introduced.

In this routine it is necessary that theater aisles be wired, using a carpet with dummy tacks, connected to wires concealed between the cloth portion; these wires lead off under stage to a plug, which connects with one leg of the chair in which medium is seated; from this plug they run up inside chair to the back and terminate at a sensitive watch case receiver, concealed in the folds of a handkerchief-blind lying across back of chair. Medium makes her entrance, is seated, and in securing blind in place the small receiver is tied against her ear; party passing along aisles asking questions of persons seated in audience has concealed beneath his shirt bosom a large sensitive receiving apparatus, connected with wires running down trousers' legs to copper plates on soles of shoe, and in making a positive and negative connection on dummy tacks, by the aid of batteries under stage, anything spoken or whispered to performer, within a short distance of himself, will be heard by medium on stage, who proceeds to quote an answer to each individual, much in the same style as adopted by crystal gazers.

### **SILENT THOUGHT TRANSMISSION TEST:**

Performer enters with assistant or medium, who is taken in charge by a committee and led from the room or hall. During his absence several cards are chosen, a certain number selected to be written on an ordinary slate with a certain color

from amongst several assorted crayons; a box of matches is counted and placed on table, a run-down watch is next taken and set at a specified time and also laid face down thereon; two dice are thrown and covered with a cup. The test may be elaborated upon to suit performer's capabilities and whims.

Upon completion of these different selections, assistant is led into hall and upon platform, taking his place at a large blackboard near table upon which articles are lying (sometimes a blindfold is employed) and while performer is in audience, or some distance away, without a word being spoken, he proceeds to write the names of chosen cards; takes up correct colored crayon and writes in the number suggested beforehand; correctly marks down number of matches in the box, the time at which watch is set and the sum of dice hidden under cup.

The secret depends upon a division of the table into imaginary squares and the position in which various articles are placed on these squares; for example, we will take an oblong table, representing numerals from 1 to 32; also designating the name of a certain letter in the alphabet—that is "1" can represent "A," "2," "B," and so forth; top row also represents various colors as to be used for the crayons or otherwise. The slate has a small known mark as a starting point, from which it is divided into ten imaginary squares; thus by using position of table in connection with the placing of slate three numerals are communicated; should more than three be necessary, crayon is used for the last one or two digits. In denoting value and suit of cards first four squares designate suit or angle of card illustrates one of four suits, and the corresponding imaginary square shows correct number of spots; the dice being covered it is necessary that their value or a total of the spots be conveyed by the cover or cup, which has a small nick therein and is worked on a clock-dial basis—that

is, if the nick was pointing straight up in line with table it would designate largest number possible to throw, namely, twelve; if total was three, this nick would be placed in the same position as that numeral occupies on a clock dial; in telling the time of watch, square on table designates minutes, turning down the bow on stem designates under thirty minutes, or actual numerical position shown by table; over thirty minutes by turning bow up and placing on number that added to 30 will transmit the correct amount; position of hour hand is transmitted by the clock dial principle, watch stem acting as an indicator. Should any article be in the position of next one, it is merely placed on top thereof. Therefore start with slate and large objects first.

It is first necessary to practice with a table marked off with chalk, you placing the article and assistant calling off numerals; after an article can be set down without hesitation in a desired position, the lines are erased and practice continued with plain topped table. It is also very essential that the correct position of an article be figured out before being laid on the table, so that this can be accomplished without any show of study, otherwise suspicion would be instantly aroused by your actions.

In writing on blackboard, if blindfolded, assistant should be in such a position that he can see the table below his blind and by figuring out various positions occupied by articles is enabled to immediately write down the value of cards, time shown by watch, and continue thusly with each article.

Proper practice by two persons will enable them to present a very interesting experiment at social gatherings, though a similar procedure to that explained has been employed professionally.

## SPIRITUALISTIC EFFECTS

### Floating Light:

USING this trickery in conjunction with other psychic effects or as a single item of mystification the result is uncanny. Operator can be thoroughly searched, yet when lights in room are turned out a small light is seen floating around, despite the fact that operator may be securely tied to a chair.

This is accomplished by having a piece of heavy isinglass about  $14\frac{1}{4}$  inches wide by 2 inches coming to a sharp point at one end; it contains a heavy coat of luminous paint, exposed for some time to a strong light; this article is shoved into heel of shoe and rests against instep, preventing its being walked on. When lights are extinguished operator merely raises his leg and moves it about, such action being facilitated if seated in a chair with arms tied. If feet are bound it is necessary to extricate himself before the phenomena can take place.

### Materialization:

There are two forms of materialization, cabinet and body production.

Very few mediums have the space, money or inclination to resort to a pretentious cabinet, capable of the most mystifying materializations. A cabinet as used by stage workers can be utilized without extinguishing the lights, however, only those in front of same remain illuminated which, instead of betraying the interior, act as a shield, partly blinding and obstructing the view of actual occurrences. Interior of this materialization cabinet is black, consequently articles painted white

will be visible, even though a foot or more inside. Across its back, a couple of feet from rear wall, is stretched a black slit curtain, behind which assistant is concealed, he or she being dressed entirely in black, with gloves of this color and a light dark gauze covering head and preventing this party's eye-balls betraying their presence inside.

Tamborines, bells, etc., are played, assistant merely reaching out and grasping same unseen by spectators. Where chairs or tables are made to rise, it is accomplished through the aid of a stick painted black. Lights are caused to flash about cabinet, these being nothing more than pieces of cardboard daubed with luminous paint; a hand is seen floating around and finally a ghostly form rises from the floor and moves about; then faces make their appearance, and fade slowly from vision. The form seen to rise from cabinet floor is a piece of gauze, treated with luminous paint; it is introduced into the interior of cabinet by assistant, under cover of a black cloth, and gradually raised upwards. In disappearing, this luminous gauze is allowed to sink to floor, covered with black cloth and removed through slit; the hand is a wax one, painted like the form and is moved around by assistant; the faces seen are merely those cut from magazine covers, or otherwise provided being, like previously mentioned articles, coated with a thin solution of luminous paint.

The most pretentious materialization ever accomplished is in the performance offered by Howard Thurston, a well known magician. It will repay any person doubting the authenticity of these assertions to visit one of Mr. Thurston's interesting offerings. I am not boosting for the ticket office, but after witnessing various crude materializations effected by mediums, you will see a far superior one, and no spirits from the world beyond participated therein.

The common form of materialization adopted by mediums

takes place in a darkened seance room. After various tests and only upon favored occasions will it be undertaken (presumably when the financial reward is sufficient or only the deeply engrossed disciples are present). Perhaps medium is secured to a chair, but as explained, this offers no hindrance to free movement. Suddenly a voice of one deceased starts talking to the person interested and then a faint glow is seen, a form emerges with a faint outline of a woman's face; it whispers words of cheer, floating away from medium towards sitters; then gradually recedes, disappearing entirely from view. The person being communicated with will generally affirm that it was an exact image of a departed daughter, we will say in this case, but had the lights been suddenly turned on it would have revealed the medium removing from the folds of her skirt a length of gauze, surmounted by a woman's head, coated as shown in the previous article, the floating being accomplished through the aid of a telescopic rod.

#### A TYPICAL SEANCE:

In describing this seance, no particular meeting is in mind; it refers to generalities, for very few mediums would endeavor to accomplish so many effects at one time.

Entering the room, after making a donation at outer door, which you are informed is \$1.00 (no war tax is paid on donations), you take a seat in the circle, medium and assistants giving you the once over, if I may use such an expression, endeavoring to determine, if a stranger, whether or not your actions are suspicious, also making note of anything that may be used to value later on; if a regular attendant, a mental memorandum is made so that you may be sure of having a message communicated from a loving daughter, for the more frequent you hear from her the oftener you will attend, and incidentally, the more you will contribute.

The meeting is started off by all present singing hymns, followed by speeches from members (those on the inside), who in excited tones tell of visits paid and messages communicated to them, perhaps extolling the wonderful results obtained through medium in question. Occasionally a poor dupe, his mind saturated with fear and superstition, will describe a vision, occurring only through pure imagination. Great interest and intense concentration is thus worked up, like children listening to ghost stories at bed-time; all this with a purpose in view; that of placing the mind in a receptive mood in order to be easily impressed by events to soon take place.

Possibly medium makes a vivid talk, informing her auditors that by great concentration she expects a visit from some well known spiritualists, now deceased. A circle is formed, all holding hands, with medium at outer edge, the dupes furthest away, the co-workers nearest medium. Holding hands prevents a break in the ranks, preventing intrusion of one at a critical moment, or the use of hands to play a flashlight upon the spiritual worker.

If questions were written beforehand, medium is securely bound to a chair, the messages and a trumpet placed on table, together with a slate, a bell, or any such articles; the lights are lowered by an assistant and medium goes through the sickening process of **entering into a trance**. Lights are then entirely extinguished and the voice of medium's "control" is heard. She then informs them that "Grace" is here and wants to talk to Mrs. ————. This woman excitedly announces her presence, whereupon Grace proceeds to give her valuable advice (?) in response to a question previously written on a card. In between arrival of spirits the control brings words of good cheer, the bell rings and the tambourine plays. Perhaps one or two present are favored with a view

of their departed relatives; in other words, they are materialized and communicate with the loved ones present. Finally medium's control states that she must be going back to her spirit world and the bell is heard to ring, finally landing with a loud noise upon the floor, which is a signal for lights to be turned on, and there, there lies the poor medium in a dead trance, unaware of what has taken place and so weak that the meeting has to be dismissed without further adieu.

And yet they fall for it—perhaps the average mind does not dream of trickery, or look for same, so my advice is to provide yourself with a good strong pocket lamp and when a materialization or other phenomena is taking place, flash same upon medium, which will discover her “control,” but don't be alone or you may need the services of an ambulance.

A reader should have no trouble in following routine employed in order to cause above manifestations.

The medium was tied to chair—one of the folding type variety—her wrists being fastened together at sides of same, the rope going underneath seat, whereby it does not seem possible they could be released from this position: However, medium sits well back in chair while being tied, and no matter how many knots are placed on the first wrist, in tying second one only the end of rope is usable, so instead of tying knots you are making “hitches” or a slip-knot. To get hands close enough together in order to obtain slack on this last wrist, medium moves up so as to be on extreme edge of chair, from which position the hands can be brought together under seat of chair and by pulling on rope around wrist it is instantly released; the bell can be rung, a message written on slate, etc. The trumpet used is one with a block fitting over its end; materialized forms are pieces of cheap gauze. At conclusion, while medium is re-inserting hands and making cord fast, the bell is held between her teeth and the instant it falls onto



floor, being given a toss so that it will not be in close proximity, lights are turned on.

There is also a reason for this hurried exit. You might want to ask embarrassing questions, and knowing what has transpired, if given an opportunity, something out of the ordinary might be noticed.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**U**NDER "Miscellaneous" will be found effects that can properly be termed "Magic Tricks" yet related in a way to psychic experiments; they are all deceptive and the most interesting of many which could possibly be embraced under this classification.

### THE LIVING AND THE DEAD:

A parlor experiment of considerable interest. Taking a sheet of note paper, the one presenting requests a party to tear into strips, illustrating his words by tearing off one of the desired size. It is requested that on first three, or four, names of living friends be written, while on last slip that of a departed friend, at conclusion all of them to be folded several times.

During the time required for filling in slips of paper, operator walks to another part of the room, and at conclusion of his instructions advances to table, and immediately picks up pellet bearing the name of a deceased person.

An ordinary piece of note paper can be torn into five or six strips; performer tears off one of the desired size from top of paper and measures off distance for remaining slips, not having them severed until all names have been written. This cutting up into strips is done by the aid of a ruler. The slip torn off by demonstrator is used to show how the others are to be folded and thus disposed of. It will be observed that all slips torn off from now on will have two rough edges, except bottom portion, containing name of dead person, and all the

skill required is to spot folded up pellet with one smooth edge.

### **The Haunted Handkerchief:**

Suitable for stage or double-parlor presentation.

Performer borrows a handkerchief, tying a knot in one corner, then apparently mesmerizing same it remains suspended in air without visible support; it is then raised or lowered, performer walking all around same. After various antics have been displayed, handkerchief is handed back to owner with knot still remaining, however, leaving no clue as to the origin of these spooky actions.

Across stage or room, with ends running into wings or out of sight in room, is a thread lying on the floor; performer borrows handkerchief and walks over and passes thread, which is immediately raised by unseen assistants to a level with his hands, and when placing the knot he actually ties it around the thread; assistants, following motions of performer, cause it to cut capers around the stage, going up and down, side ways or forwards and backwards or dancing around; when lowered to floor performer may walk all about it, or when up several feet, by one assistant, who is on a ladder, raising his thread high in the air, he is enabled to walk under it, to one side only.

At conclusion handkerchief is held by performer for a few seconds, allowing time for one assistant to pull thread through knot before being returned to owner.

While very simple of operation, a great deal of laughter can be created by the adoption of this handkerchief trick.

### **SECOND SIGHT WITH CLOCK:**

Handing an ordinary alarm clock, which has been allowed to run down, to anyone present, request that they set the min-

ute hand at any hour, laying it face down on table. It may be covered with a cloth, if this procedure is desired to be followed. In any event you correctly state the hour to which this hand points, and may repeat the process as often as you wish.

The secret is extremely simple. Set minute hand so as to point to twelve then make a vertical scratch across the button at back of clock, but see to it that this scratch is slightly wider at the top. When button is moved, the scratch will indicate position of the minute hand, by considering it as a miniature dial, except that the mark will move in an opposite direction to an actual dial; thus if set at four o'clock your indicator would be at eight on regular dial; just count off in the opposite direction, that is, to left, and you will arrive at "four" on reversed dial.

If cloth is used, just have one large enough to cover face and part of side, where it is held by a rubber band, leaving back exposed to view.

A stock article is manufactured by magical dealers for this purpose, being a mahogany case containing a clock dial with one hand, a sliding panel enables same to be shut off from view. Operator can tell at what hour set by a screw in back of this wooden frame, which revolves with the hand, it having a small scratch to designate proper position. It is necessary to read as on a reverse dial, the same as explained above.

### **PENETRATING GLASS OF WATER:**

A center base table, with a circular glass top rests upon platform, also a glass partly filled with water. Performer borrows a derby hat from a member present, places a handkerchief over glass of water and thereon rests the derby; on command the hat is seen to gradually sink down, the glass

apparently penetrating its crown, and when flat on table it is unmistakably removed from the inside.

The hat is an ordinary article and may belong to one of audience, likewise is glass partly filled with water, but the table is not as innocent as appears from a casual glance.

In center of glass top is a piece of nickel-plated metal, the same circumstance as an ordinary drinking glass, which can be raised four inches above table top by performer stepping on a trigger located in base of table; this metal extension is connected with a plunger running down through rod supporting top into a compartment filled with water, which offers enough resistance to sustain in elevated condition the weight of metal disc and hat with partly filled glass of water inside. Below this compartment with water is another, and if a string leading off stage is pulled a minute opening is made in upper compartment, allowing water to slowly penetrate lower one, and as the water recedes in upper compartment the plunger also lowers until metal base is flat upon table top.

In working, performer places glass of water in center of table, but under cover of handkerchief pulls it back several inches, at same time raising the rod with metal plate and it is over this handkerchief rests, resembling a covered glass; it is smoothed at back so as not to cover actual glass, which, however, is hid by its folds. Placing hat on top of metal fake (presumably the glass) he asks if it shall go through the crown, or through the side, at same time turning hat over on side, clipping top of glass of water between his fingers and swinging into inside of hat as it is placed up right again. When assistant pulls cord, hat and glass slowly sink to table level, the glass is actually removed from inside the derby and handkerchief taken away, leaving no visible signs as to how penetration was accomplished.

### **HINDOO LOTA:**

This is a bowl about five inches high and six inches in diameter, nicked on outside and painted black on inside. After proving empty by holding upside down, it is placed on table or other receptacle, after which a quantity of water is poured therefrom until again empty; the same operation is repeated four or five times.

The open neck of this lota is about three inches in diameter and a partition goes straight down from this neck to bottom of lota, having a small opening at bottom; this partition creates a large compartment around the sides. To fill this compartment lota is submerged in water until filled and a small piece of wax placed over the air hole in top, and after getting rid of water now in partition no more will run into it until air is allowed to penetrate the filled chambers.

As the inside is painted black partition is invisible a few feet distant, so performer may hold towards audience and invert, but in placing down the wax is removed by thumb nail which allows water to enter center compartment to its own level in the sides; placing thumb over air hole this water is dumped out, and no more will leave side chambers until thumb is removed from air hole; each time water will reach its own level and stop flowing into center compartment, until entire supply has been exhausted.

### **THE BEWITCHED UMBRELLA:**

A borrowed umbrella is taken in left hand, the ferrule laid across open palm of right hand; a volunteer assistant grasping the handle is unable to lift it from your hand until so willed.

Make a loop of strong black thread of sufficient length so that when one end is secured to suspended button on left side and the other end is carried up across back and down right

sleeve, looped over little finger of right hand, your right arm is allowed plenty of freedom; yet when loop is released and right arm extended, it will vanish up your sleeve.

Facing your audience, assistant is placed on the left; grasp umbrella in left hand, holding same about the middle, ferrule to your right. Right hand grasps ferrule, allowing it to slip into the loop snug against cloth of umbrella. Spectator takes hold of handle, at same time your left hand slides along umbrella up against right hand. Remove the right one, showing empty by displaying both sides, the thread being hid by left hand and right wrist. Place right hand, palm up, under ferrule, allowing loop to come between first and second fingers and extend slightly in order to tauten thread. Left hand moves above umbrella as if magnetising. Now have assistant grasp with both hands, near handle, and endeavor to remove from your palm. It will be impossible for him to do so, if thread is taut, as the stick itself will break before the thread.

At conclusion, slide loop off ferrule, pulling up sleeve and of course the rain stick may now be lifted with ease.

### **FINDING HIDDEN ARTICLES WHILE BLINDFOLDED:**

Crystal gazers, clairvoyants and similar entertainers when arriving at a town in which their engagement was to take place, in order to create publicity, performed various tests before their stage appearance.

One of the widely discussed feats was that of locating some hidden object while blindfolded and accompanied by a committee of public citizens. The group would start out from a newspaper office, or some prominent spot in the down-town district, either afoot, or by automobile, performer giving them directions, such as start to the east; after a certain distance was traversed he would again give his orders, gradually arriv-

ing at the immediate vicinity of hidden article, when he would take one of those participating in actual concealment, holding him by the arm, slowly locate exact spot, and recover the article in question.

As a general rule this test was conducted through connivance with one member of the committee, he being reached beforehand, through lodge affiliation, the payment of money, etc., and who probably suggested this test (at the instigation of performer).

Being on the committee that hid the object he was aware of its location, yet could not communicate this fact openly to performer, but following prearranged instructions he managed to obtain a seat alongside performer, holding onto his arm or leg and communicating necessary directions to be followed by a pressure upon the arm, such as one for turn to right, two for left and when approaching object, three pressures was a signal to dismount. Knowing that hidden object was in the immediate vicinity, performer could continue his former antics or, in lieu, take his confederate's arm, who by a very slight contraction of arm muscles continued to flash instruction signals until hidden article was retrieved.

Not every individual resorted to this form of trickery. A few were so far advanced in muscle reading, as it was termed, that they could tell from the relaxations and expansions of nerves and muscles whether or not the right directions were being followed. For instance, if a turn was made to the right, and this was correct, the nerves would remain passive, but if performer had made a mistake an involuntary start on assistant's part was made known to performer, who changed his instructions. This was a slow procedure and not always sure-fire, while the former could be relied upon, and unless satisfactorily consummated, detracted from, rather than enhanced the test as a drawing card for the actual performance



### THE SPIRIT ANSWER:

To members of audience is passed a dozen or so plain envelopes, pieces of blank paper and pencils, with a request that they write upon this paper, or paper in their possession, any question desired answered, sealing up in envelop and to be sure and place no identification marks on outside of container, for a very important reason that will later be explained.

These sealed envelopes are collected by an assistant, being brought upon the platform and deposited in a glass bowl resting on performer's table. Performer delivers a discourse upon the peculiar workings of unseen spirits, calling attention further to what has just taken place, that envelopes are in plain view and lack of identification marks precludes the theory that an assistant or confederate enters into the execution of this effect: To make it still fairer a boy or girl is requested to pick out any one of the envelopes, which is held by performer in plain view and then placed in center of a white handkerchief, whose four corners are tied together, a moment later being deposited in a small glass bowl brought in by assistant during the trick. Without any false moves or substitution this bowl is passed to some well known person with a request that envelopes be removed from handkerchief, opened and enclosed message read. On being done it is found that on this same sheet is written a fairly intelligent answer to the query.

Method of working: All the articles used are ordinary, but when envelopes are collected by assistant, on return to stage, he palms one, or keeps concealed in band of hat, dumping remainder into the bowl. Assistant retires to wings, opens envelope, reading message, writing as intelligent an answer as possible thereto, and reseals same in a duplicate container, which is placed and tied in a handkerchief similar to one performer is to use. In bringing in small glass bowl he has this

handkerchief concealed behind it, and in setting bowl down on table drops the duplicate handkerchief onto a servante (a small invisible shelf attached to performer's table several inches below its top). The choice of envelope from large bowl is absolutely unrestricted; this selection is fairly placed in handkerchief and tied; it is then held in performer's right hand and as he turns to the left to pick up small bowl with left hand, the right for a fraction of a second goes below table, dropping the original and picking up the duplicate, which is deposited in the small bowl. This is a natural movement, but should be studied in order to execute in a matter of fact manner, never, of course, allowing your eyes to follow the movements of this hand, but to concentrate upon your left as it picks up the bowl.

It naturally follows that upon opening of message, an answer thereto is found written in a heavy hand, so as to be plainly visible.

The move above described will be found invaluable in various magic tricks and psychic effects.

### **THE GHOST'S MESSAGE:**

A beautiful psychic experiment for parlor entertainment consists of the following:

From his pocket the entertainer takes out a package of cigarette papers, allowing some individual to remove one of the tissues; while this is transpiring he lays upon the table three pieces of paper, about two inches square, colored red, blue and green, one of which is selected by a disinterested party. The cigarette paper is now handed to some lady with a request that she roll into a ball, at the same time another person is asked to give you a number between 1 and 100. When the paper has been rolled into a compact ball by assisting lady she is asked to place it upon the chosen color, whereupon

performer chants some mysterious words and has her again take paper and unroll. When straightened out written upon in the color named is found the chosen number.

In right hand trousers' pocket operator has a duplicate package of cigarette papers, glued to a piece of stiff cardboard, facilitating the writing thereon; also three stubs of pencils to correspond with colored papers used, being distinguished by notching the ends.

After laying colored papers on table and one is chosen, he locates this corresponding colored stub in pocket, and when number is given proceeds to write it upon the top cigarette paper, tearing same off and rolling up in pocket as near as possible resemble the job done by lady, bringing out of pocket concealed between second and third fingers at their base.

In telling lady to set paper down, you do not specify "on the chosen color," and when it is placed on table, state: "It must be placed on the chosen color," proceeding yourself to pick up her pellet with first two fingers and thumb, and when over chosen color, your concealed paper is dropped and her's carried away.

In presenting this experiment you should keep right hand in pocket throughout, conveying the impression that it was a habit, otherwise undesired attention would be directed to your movements at the critical moment.

### **SACK ESCAPES:**

This properly belongs entirely to the realm of magic, and several methods are explained in books on rope and handcuff releases, however, as it is employed occasionally by mediums to demonstrate the impossibility of interference on their part during a certain test, and as a matter of general information,

will explain a few methods, enabling one to instantly extricate himself from the folds of a sack or bag.

### **The Bottomless Sack:**

Where an instant escape is necessary and close examination will not be given the articles employed, a large sack, at least three feet longer than person to occupy, has its entire bottom removed. The sack is lying in position for assistant or medium to step into, and when inside, the feet are placed on the bottom folds; balance of sack is taken up over head and secured, waxed, labeled and otherwise treated, but when lights are out or curtain drawn, party inside merely pulls bag over the head and after completing his mission enters sack, steps once again on the folds and attending committee will find all seals, etc., absolutely intact.

### **Double Sack:**

At times a person is fastened in one sack, which is placed inside a larger, and the mouth of this latter one securely tied and sealed.

In this method the inner sack has a split therein, making escape possible, while the larger is of the bottomless variety above described.

### **Stealing Slack:**

When an ordinary sack is used, performer or medium conceals about their person a small circular pillow of straw and after bag is drawn above head and neck is being put in place for tying, the little sack, or pillow, is inserted into upper folds, so that the cord is tied around it. When placed into cabinet, or out of view, the person inside bag pulls down this small sack, leaving sufficient room to insert hand and pull off bindings or to work them off through imprisoning sack. Upon

entering, if this is undertaken, the small parcel is pushed into place, taking up the slack on neck, after, of course, working the rope or tape into position.

This method is seldom used except for escapes, as too much time is consumed in fixing cord back into place.

### **Mail Sack Escape:**

Undoubtedly the idea of employing a mail sack was to lessen any thought of trickery, and the bag itself is not tricked, being just as it appears, a heavy, leather-enforced, canvas bag with brass bound eyelets at the top for insertion of a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch steel bar, which is locked in place after slack has been taken in.

The secret of this escape lies in the bar itself, one end having a large eye-bolt, which cannot pass through eyelets, the other end being secured with a padlock, furnished by spectators if so desired.

The eye-bolt end will unscrew, but removable bar is so finely fitted as to be invisible under ordinary scrutiny. To release himself, the person inside grasps padlocked end with one hand, through the sack, securing a hold on eye-bolt with opposite hand and proceeds to unscrew same, which will enable the bar to pass through eye-lets. If desired to be found still locked in sack, the bar is put in place and bolt screwed on from inside.

The secret of this Mail Sack Escape is probably the hardest to detect of any, and on its face will be less liable to arouse suspicion as to tampering. Allow a thorough inspection of the bag and only a casual one of the bar, which apparently is but a minor factor of the apparatus.

### **BLACK ART:**

This is essentially a stage production but in the wierd

effects introduced certainly smacks of other than human aid.

On a stage entirely devoid of light performer suddenly appears in its center; next a wand is seen to materialize and gently floats into his outstretched hand; walking to one side of stage and making several passes with wand a table springs into view; another is materialized out of thin air and caused to float to opposite side; reaching into the air, performer picks out a large vase, which before the eyes multiplies to two. Objects placed in vase on one side of stage mysteriously disappear and are found on opposite side; many other events transpire, such as the materialization of an assistant who is decapitated and his body apparently completely dismembered; these pieces then being thrown towards back of stage and the body completely reassembled. At conclusion the various objects used are dematerialized, or caused to vanish from sight, performer himself walking off stage or instantly vanishing while thereon.

The principle embodied is similar to the one explained under the caption, "Materialization Cabinets." The back drop of stage is black, and sides and top are enclosed with similar colored velvet or heavy cloth, so that no ray of light penetrates upon the stage; along the proscenium arch and sides of stage are rows of bright lights that partly delude audience into believing the stage is lit, but as a matter of fact so blind a person's eyes that actions thereon are invisible.

Performer himself is dressed in white, and all the objects used are of this color, being therefore visible on the darkened stage, if not set too far back. Near rear of stage is an additional strip of black velvet, about four or five feet high and running partly across stage, behind which the objects to be used are concealed; also where assistants remain; these assistants wear soft felt shoes, are completely dressed in black, with

similarly colored gloves and black netting over head to obliterate the glow of their eyeballs.

The Performer's remarkable entry is made in this manner: He is concealed back of strip running across stage; an assistant throws a large piece of black velvet in front of him and keeps pace with him until desired spot is reached, then suddenly whisking velvet away performer is in view. Tables, chairs, etc., are introduced in the same manner; if a gradual materialization takes place, it is effected by slowly drawing away the covering. An article placed in one vase is immediately picked up by an assistant, who unseen, carries it across stage and deposits in the other vase. The butchery of assistant is carried off by the live person stepping behind a velvet shield and a dummy substituted, and when these dummy legs are thrown, an unseen assistant catches and assembles, substitution for actual assistant again taking place.

These acts seem to be in disfavor in the United States and have not appeared on the boards for several years.

### THE FORTUNE TELLING BALL:

A  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch nickel rod, three feet high, with a five-inch weighted base to keep same in upright position, is exhibited by performer, who also passes out for inspection a light wooden ball five inches in diameter with a hole through its center to permit it being placed on the nicked rod: When this has been done performer causes ball to run up and down, or to answer questions by the spiritualistic code, one rise for Yes, etc. At conclusion ball floats off the rod into performer's hands.

At base of rod is fastened by the aid of a very small eyelet a length of strong silk thread, running up the side of rod, through an eyelet hole and thence off stage to a confederate.

Performer may take stand to footlights and exhibit without disclosing presence of thread, but the ball itself can be passed into audience: When returned it is slid over rod, which causes it in this downward flight to carry along the thread, and confederate should feed out this slack. If thread is pulled it will cause ball to rise the desired distance, and on releasing, ball will fall to bottom of rod, slowly or rapidly at will of confederate. In this manner questions are answered by causing the ball to bob up a few inches and then settle into place.

At conclusion a sharp pull on thread causes ball to rise beyond the point of rod and fall into performer's waiting hands, incidentally breaking thread, so that all may be shown once more, if thought advisable.

### **THE CUT AND RESTORED TURBAN:**

A folded piece of white cloth several feet in length is exhibited, a volunteer assistant each holding one end; the person performing takes hold of this cloth or turban at its center, gathering up between his hand and completely severs, exposing two separate and distinct portions, while two ends are still held by volunteers: Tying a knot with these two ends in his hand, they are ignited and burned; when knot has been completely consumed, the center portion is dropped and cloth found to be completely restored.

Several artifices are employed in the presentation of this effect, all with a similar end in view, but the one explained herewith is the most convincing and simple of operation.

To the center of your folded cloth is lightly stitched another folded portion about nine inches long; being of the same material and color it is invisible even at a short distance; when two ends are grasped by assistants, performer takes



hold of center portion, containing fake, grasping turban part proper tightly in lower portion of fist and pulling up the sewed on section, and it is this extra strip of cloth that is severed; in tying knot, or in having own assistant perform this operation, the fake is entirely removed from main turban, but still held by fist; the burning is done merely as a blind to destroy extra cloth; if it is not all burned, remaining portions are carried away concealed by the opened fan. Releasing his hold on turban proper it appears just as at start of experiment.

### CATCHING LIVE PIGEONS OUT OF THE AIR:

Correctly speaking this belongs more to the realm of magic, being a trick or illusion, but is so impossible of solution by the ordinary observer that an explanation is given herewith.

In presenting, performer exhibits a net about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet in diameter, secured to the end of a five foot pole, no thicker than a broomstick. Waving net slowly over heads of audience he suddenly makes a quick lunge, picking a pigeon out of the air, it being deposited in a basket held by an assistant.

That a solution of this puzzling trick lies in the handle of net would appear beyond belief, but nevertheless it is one of the main assets, the other principal item being the basket into which performer tosses pigeon after landing in his net.

The handle consists of a piece of tubing about  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch in diameter by five feet in length generally made up to resemble bamboo. At lower end of tubing is a slot cut for a distance of about 7 inches; inside of tube is a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch rod having on one end a fake made out of feathers to resemble the wings of a pigeon, it being attached to a spring arrangements so that

when free from the confines of tubing it will spread out, and at a glance resembles a live pigeon. This rod which works fake is fastened to a sliding piece of tubing just fitting over the handle, so as to work up and down on tube; at bottom of sliding tubing is soldered a projection or "teet" connecting to rod with fake. After rod and fake are in place and secured to sliding portion, a projecting rim is soldered at end of handle to prevent the sliding piece coming off pole proper.

The baskets are mechanical and sometimes provided with lids, others devoid thereof. Bottom of basket is painted black and across the corner, same width as basket, is a metal flap, attached to its bottom by a spring, so that it will naturally fly to this position and remain flat. The flange may, however, be pulled up so that it covers one end of basket, being held in this position by a catch, attached to a trigger arrangement on outside end of basket, a pressure on said trigger releasing flap and causing it to quickly take it's natural position in basket. When ready to operate in connection with this trick, a pigeon is concealed under the flap and assistant holds same with hand on trigger ready to release at the proper moment.

Performer waves net around heads of audience and with a sudden sweeping motion in the general direction of basket held by assistant slides the collar operating fake, causing these feathers, which are of the same color as pigeon in basket, to project out into net, and as only a fleeting glimpse is obtainable, spectators conclude it is the live pigeon seen an instant later. Carrying net quickly towards basket, it is met by assistant in an upward movement, the instant net strikes basket, performer pulling in fake and assistant releasing live pigeon, which due to this upward movement is projected into the middle of basket, or even into net itself.

It is necessary that both assistant and performer carry

out their part of the trick in harmony, otherwise two pigeons would be visible, or fake would disappear before live one was released from its trap.

### THE OBEDIENT BALL:

There is introduced a five-inch wooden ball with a length of cord running through a hole in its center. Operator places one end of cord under his foot, holding opposite and with one hand and by lifting up and dropping ball illustrates that it is very ordinary, but, on raising the ball to top of string and commanding same to drop slowly, it obeys, or may be stopped at will on its downward journey.

The hole running through this ball is not cut straight, but at a slight angle from both sides, therefore, if plenty of slack is allowed ball will drop quickly, the same as if hole were bored straight through; when desired to slacken speed or cause ball to entirely stop its flight it is only necessary to hold cord taut.

A block of wood may be bored in this manner and accomplish similar results.

**In conclusion:** While my attitude towards spiritism may seem sarcastic, I have nothing personal against the believers in this religion (as it is now termed). If persons can convince themselves that he or she is talking or listening to a departed friend, well and good. I maintain that a ventriloquist medium is doing the talking; also that these same dear friends in ghostly robes are nothing more or less than quantities of muslin or gauze. Neither is there any envy or hard feeling against the worker who merely extracts a nominal fee for witnessing a seance; I have been guilty of executing similar frauds when performing a crystal gazing act, which was essentially an amusement proposition, but seriously taken by some.

There will be suckers now and in years to come, for truly was Barnum right. Perhaps the mediums figure that they might as well have this easy money as someone else, and sometimes do put forth a creditable show, giving the donator a good amusement return for his investment.

The person I do denounce and whom I have endeavored to expose is the unscrupulous faker who strips the deluded widow, or whoever the individual may be, of their entire savings by causing investments in bogus stock, or any other venture. They have no vestige of conscience, and like the vulture, prey upon the unfortunate, regardless of results or hardships endured after stripping these victims who fall into their eager clutches.

It probably would be impossible to convince an ardent follower of seances that trickery was the basis upon which phenomenal tests were built; that this also plays an important part in all the transactions, but, as a final word, the late Harry Kellar, a staunch fighter against the doctrine of spiritism and the greatest magician the world has ever known, for many years had a standing offer of \$15,000.00 that he would, within forty-eight hours, produce by natural means any test or phenomena, or duplicate any feat performed by a medium; otherwise this sum would be forfeited to the medium. While widely advertised this offer was never taken advantage of.













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