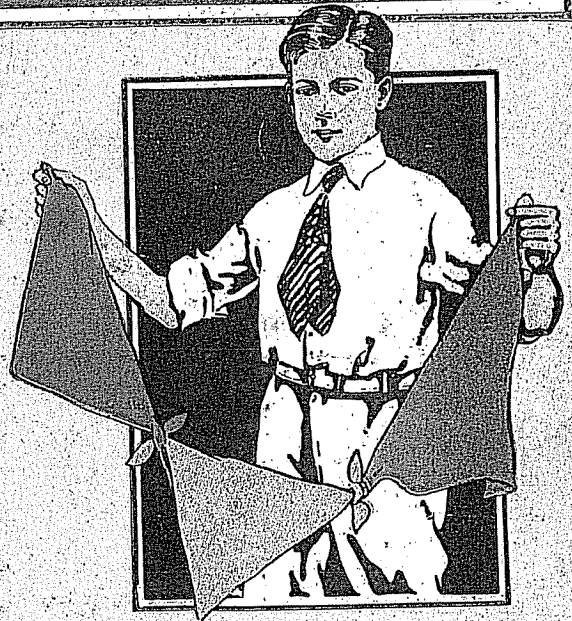


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HANDKERCHIEF TRICKS

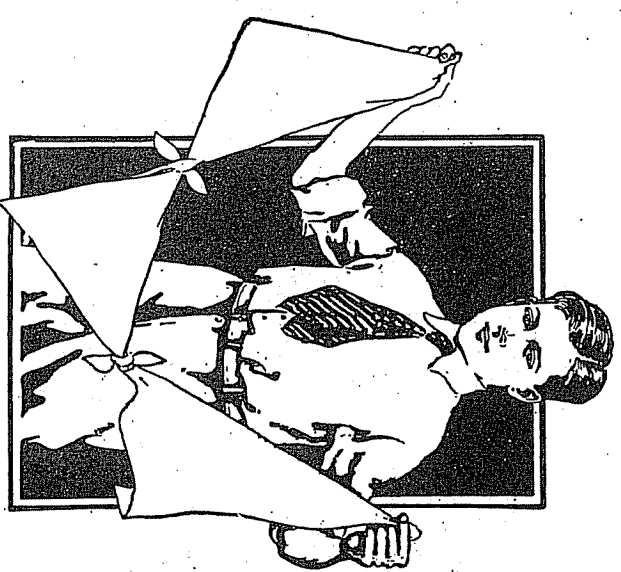


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HANDKERCHIEF
TRICKS



GILBERT HANDKERCHIEF TRICKS FOR BOYS.

PROVIDES INSTRUCTION IN TRICKS MADE FAMOUS
BY WELL-KNOWN ARTISTS AND FURNISHES
A NOVEL ENTERTAINMENT FOR
ANY PROGRAM

BY

ALFRED C. GILBERT

Yale University, 1909

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FOREWORD

How often have you admired the magician who was able to produce some very startling and wonderful effects with handkerchiefs? Haven't you heard people remark, "It can't be done," yet right before your eyes you saw a white handkerchief changed to a red one, with lightning rapidity. You saw three handkerchiefs appear where only one was shown previously. There is no denying that magicians are clever people. With very few movements of the hands they accomplish some mighty puzzling results.

Now wouldn't you like to possess the same ability the great artists have to entertain and mystify your friends? You can, with a very little practice. This book gives you a thorough explanation of famous handkerchief tricks. It exposes many of the secrets the professional sleight of hand man knows in a way that makes it easy for you to give some intensely interesting and fascinating performances.

Doing these tricks will provide you with a new kind of fun. You will be able to entertain your friends at home as you have never been able to do before. And what a crackerjack way to spend an evening—with a whole lot of pleasure to yourself and those you are with. It won't be a dull evening, you can be sure of that. Not only that, but you should soon be able to give entertainments for lodges, churches and clubs where you can earn considerable spending money.

Read this book carefully and then try the easiest ones first. Don't try to do all of them at once and I'm sure you'll find these Handkerchief Tricks the kind of fun you want—real fun for a real boy.

Sincerely yours,



MANUAL OF HANDKERCHIEF TRICKS

To really be a leader in any profession nowadays requires specialization, and the magician of today is not far behind the professional man. In olden days a conjurer or magician generally gave a performance consisting of sleight of hand, miscellaneous tricks and illusions, but today our great sleight of hand performers are specialists in some particular sort of magic.

First, there was Nelson T. Downs, the King of Coins, whose entire evening's entertainment consisted of tricks with coins. He spent the largest part of his life in doing sleight of hand, devoting his entire attention to tricks with coins. Then came Howard Thurston, the King of Cards, who gave an entire evening's entertainment with cards, holding audiences spellbound by his mystifying tricks with an ordinary deck of cards. And last, we had the famous Stillwell, who had, probably, the most beautiful specialty act of its kind, purely with Handkerchief Tricks.

It might be a matter of interest to my readers to know that magic was a hobby with me from the time I was a boy. I made it a hobby the same as some boys make collecting stamps a hobby. I became acquainted with professional magicians and conjurers and once had the opportunity of assisting Herman the Great in doing some tricks in a theatre in Salem, Oregon. He afterward showed me simple tricks and started me on the way to learn the secrets of the world's greatest magicians. In later years, I established a business and supplied the leading conjurers with the secrets and apparatus for doing all the best tricks. I

had a store in New York, one in Philadelphia, and another in Chicago. I catered to the leading amateurs and professionals, and was in this way brought in contact with the best known professionals, supplying them with new things, as well as building tricks from their ideas. I thereby gained a reputation for knowing quite accurately how every trick was done. My knowledge of and experience in magic permits me to write this book devoted to the very best Handkerchief Tricks that have ever been performed. If any boy will have patience enough to practice them faithfully by himself in front of a mirror, until he becomes thoroughly familiar with them, he will never regret the time spent. It will be a great source of satisfaction and fun to be able to duplicate the tricks of the greatest magicians in your entertainments at home or in giving shows to earn money. It is not intended, in writing this book about Handkerchief Tricks, to assume that it is absolutely necessary to give a whole evening's entertainment on Handkerchief Tricks, nor is it intended that you should do every one of them. These tricks can be used in conjunction with the other magic tricks to make a fine evening's entertainment. For those who would like to give one evening to Handkerchief Tricks, they will find a large assortment of very clever and fine tricks described suitable for his need.

PRACTICE

If you try to do a trick before an audience without first knowing it thoroughly, you will lose the whole effect of the trick, and it is liable to be spoiled. Practice, practice, practice—patience, patience, patience; this much is demanded of you before you can ever become a successful magic entertainer. It is really hard work to be able to familiarize yourself so well that you can do tricks as if by second nature; to achieve that point of self-confidence which is the foundation of good sleight of hand

performances do not forget that half the fun is in practicing the tricks. You have all heard the saying, "The quickness of the hand deceives the eye." Nothing could be further from the truth, because you should not move your hand so rapidly that the eye cannot follow it. In fact, you should never make any quick motion, because it will always arouse suspicion. The thing to remember is to be absolutely calm and deliberate.

MISDIRECTION

Misdirection is the foundation of real sleight of hand performing. It is misdirection and not the quickness of the hand that deceives the eye. The thing to acquire is the habit of looking in the direction you want the audience to look. That is, if you give the audience the idea that you are placing something in your left hand, look at the left hand all the time and follow your left hand. Of course the object is really in your right hand as you have palmed it off, but you have misdirected attention by looking at your left. You will find that when you have acquired this habit the audience will look where you look. Patience and self-confidence are required to attain this degree of cleverness which is absolutely essential in successful conjuring.

IMPORTANT WARNING

Never tell your audience what you intend to do before you do it; because, if they know what is coming, most of the effect is lost and they will find out more quickly how the trick was done.

IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG

You should learn the tricks so well that nothing will go wrong, though accidents will happen even with the best of professionals. The thing to do is to turn it into a joke; do not become confused. For instance, if you drop a coin in doing

a coin trick, simply remark that you dropped it to prove that it was real.

ESSENTIAL APPARATUS FOR AN EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT WITH HANDKERCHIEF TRICKS

A Handkerchief Stand (see Figure 1). Take an ordinary musician's stand; take off the top and have a rod attached across it with a little servante (pocket), which holds the fake. Place the handkerchiefs as illustrated. (See Figure 2.)

If you really wish to make a sort of stage setting, as Stillwell did, you should have two of these stands, one on each side of the stage with a table in the center. The servante should be concealed behind a few handkerchiefs that are thrown carelessly over the cross-piece of the stand. A good assortment of fine Japanese silk handkerchiefs in various colors, about 12 by 12 inches, is necessary.

Before the performance starts, it is necessary to prepare certain fakes (a fake

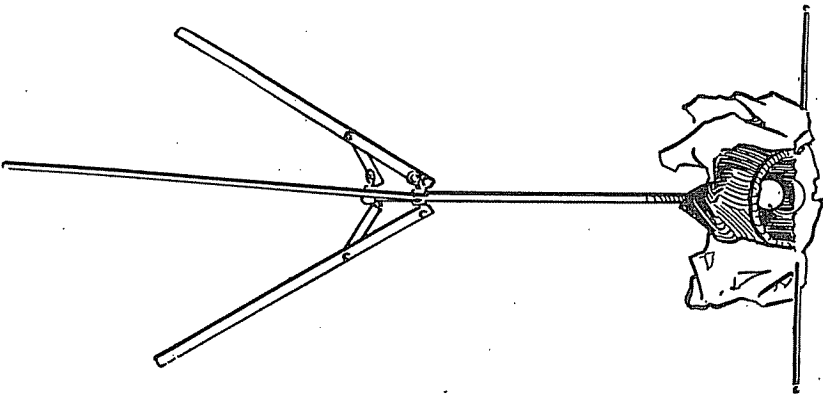


FIG. 1

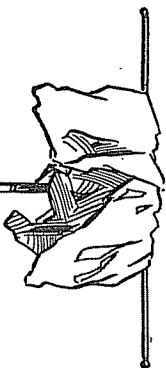


FIG. 2

a round metal ball, flesh color, with a large hole in one side. In doing this trick a blue handkerchief is tucked into the ball, leaving the corner protruding; then twist (do not knot) the corner of a white handkerchief around the corner of the blue and tuck it into the

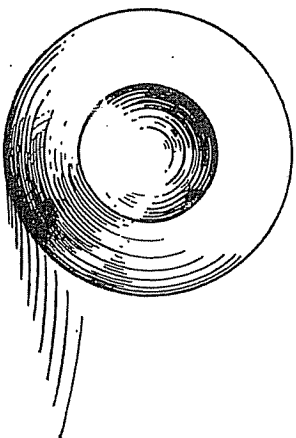


FIG. 3

is a hollow ball for holding the handkerchiefs) and have them all ready for your use. Have them placed on the table or in the servante on the handkerchief stand before the show begins. In describing the Handkerchief Tricks, we tell you how each trick is performed, and you will understand that they are all prepared and in their right place ready for the entertainment before it begins.

THE OPENING TRICK

Effect. Producing three handkerchiefs, a red, a white and a blue, from hands that have been shown apparently empty. Take a handkerchief fake (see Figure 3) which is

fake; then taking the red handkerchief twist a corner around the white corner which protrudes and tuck it in until you leave just a slight point of the red handkerchief protruding. The object in curling the tips of the handkerchiefs around one another is to remove one handkerchief quickly, so that it will pull the next one out where it is ready to grasp. After you do this a few times, you will find out how simple it is. When you come on the stage, you conceal this fake in the palm of the right hand. (Note palming. See Figure 4.) A little practice will enable you to

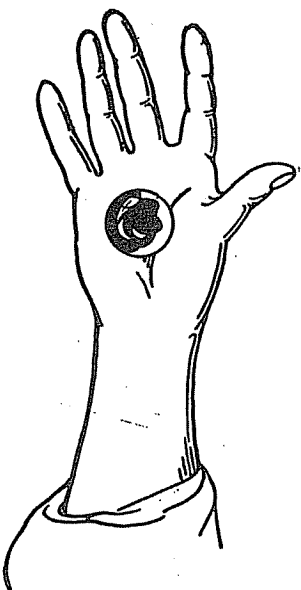


FIG. 4

hold the hand perfectly natural, so that no one will imagine you are holding anything in your hand. You approach from the right hand side of the stage. I recommend that you hold your hands down by your sides in a perfectly natural manner with the palms turned in, and the fingers slightly closed. (See Figure 5.) You now appear before the audience keeping the right side of the body toward the people. You show your left hand, palm open, facing the audience. Take the thumb and first finger of your right hand and pull the sleeve of your left hand up to show the back and front of the left hand to be empty. (See Figure 6.) Now you do the "change over," that is you slowly change the left side of your body to the audience, placing the palms of your

hands one against the other as in clapping them, and roll the fake from the palm of the right hand into the palm of the left.

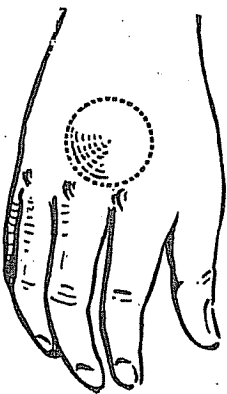
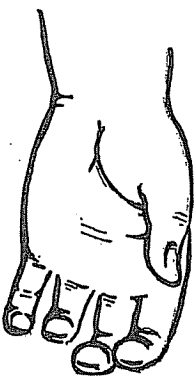


FIG. 5

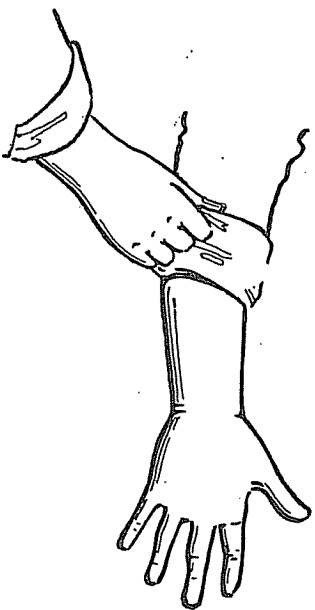


FIG. 6

(See Figure 7.) Then with the thumb and finger of the left hand you pull the sleeve of the right arm back, and show the right

hand front and back to be empty. (See Figure 8.) This act of changing back and forth, known as the "change over," is very simple after you try it a number of times; because the fake can

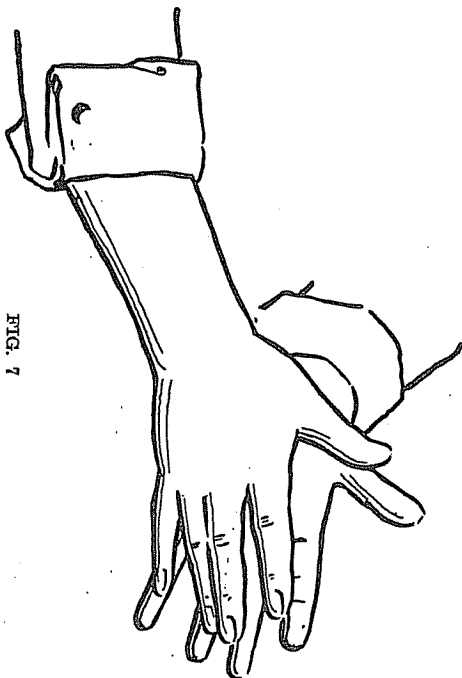


FIG. 7

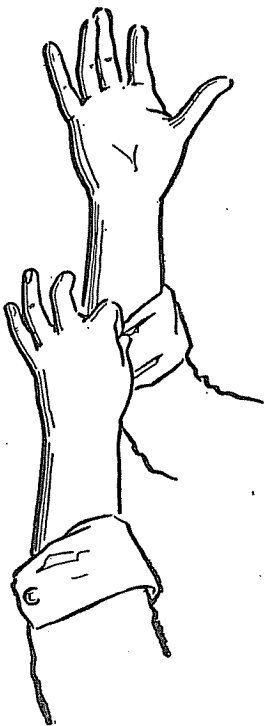


FIG. 8

be changed from one hand to the other, in a slow rolling movement, in a perfectly natural manner, changing the position of the body slowly and naturally. It is impossible to see the fake, as it

has a flesh color tint over it; and even though you stand very close to people they are not apt to discover it, if you practice the trick carefully.

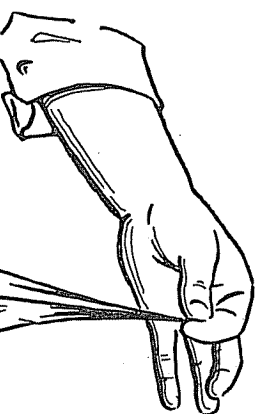


FIG. 9

kerchief slightly protruding in your right palm.

The next move is to take the thumb and the first finger of the left hand, reach down into the palm of the right, take the corner of the handkerchief protruding from the right hand which holds the fake and pull it downward, which releases the handkerchief in full view. (See Figure 9.) Next, with the right hand still

the trick carefully.

Now, after palming the fake in your left hand, you turn and show your right hand; then palm it in your right and show your left once again.

Now this should leave the fake with the opening and the tip of the blue hand-

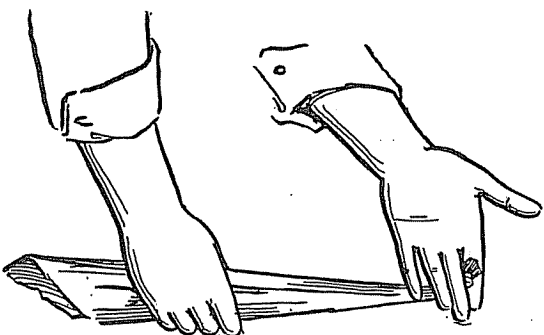


FIG. 10