

The performer, securely tied in this way, is placed into a cabinet and in a very few seconds all kinds of manifestations are heard—bells ringing, horns blowing, tambourines and other musical instruments. The committee then brings the performer out and he is found to be still tied.

METHOD OF RELEASE. The knees are brought together and with the thumb of the right hand shoved under the loop in the left wrist; the tape is pushed down to a point just above the knee, which enlarges the loop around the wrist and enables the performer to release the hand. The same thing can be done to release the left hand, if it is deemed necessary, although all the manifestations can be accomplished with the release of the right hand, if the instruments are placed in a handy place. In this way you will be able to put your hand back and draw the legs under the chair, expanding the muscles about the thigh and drawing the tape back higher up on the thigh, when you will look as though you were securely tied. In this tie, the cords can actually be sealed. At the conclusion of the trick the performer can be cut loose from his bondage.

NOTE. The knots above the wrists and those about the neck and ankles may be sealed with sealing wax to convince the committee that the knots are not untied and there is no chance for the performer to get loose from his bondage.

TWENTIETH - CENTURY ROPE - TYING TRICK. This trick is frequently sold by concerns dealing in magical apparatus. Nevertheless, you need have little fear of finding many people who know about the trick, as it is quite unknown.

EFFECT OF THE TRICK. The performer has his two wrists securely tied with a silver sash cord. Six or more knots should be tied between the wrists, to permit wrists to pass buttocks. The necessity of the silver sash cord is that it is difficult to tie a tight knot and also makes it easy to untie the knot. The wrists are tied behind the performer's back and it is important that they be secured as close to the hands as possible. The importance of this will be apparent as we go on with the description.

THE RELEASE. The hands are brought down as in Fig. 79. This is more or less of a scientific feat and requires pulling the wrists as far apart as possible. Shrugging the shoulders downward in order to make the loop formed by the arms as large as possible, permit the hands to pass by the hips. In going through this movement, it is necessary to

lean forward. You will also find that the feat of passing the hips will be accomplished better by slightly bending to one side, thus enabling one arm to pass first and then the other.

At first you will think this trick almost impossible to accomplish, but with patience and practice you will soon see that it can easily be done, if you possess any agility at all. You will also find that the rope will give a little bit and more slack is gained, if it is always worked downward.

When the arms have been worked by the hips, you sit down on the floor and draw one foot through the loops of the arms and then the other foot. The arms are now easily brought up to the mouth, where the knots can be untied with the teeth, just as easily as they could be with the fingers. With a little practice you will be able to do this trick with a great deal of satisfaction to yourself and your audience and it will be found that the most skeptical committee will be fooled.

If any one in your audience thinks he is able to escape from such a tie, all that is necessary is to allow himself to be tied, and to the uninitiated it will be impossible to become free; first on account of the lack of practice and, second, because, as a rope-tying expert, you know how to firmly tie the knots and you will not be as lenient as the committee when drawing the knots tightly about the wrists.

THE TEN ICHI THUMB TIE. This is one of the most popular tricks on the stage. It was first performed by a Japanese troupe,

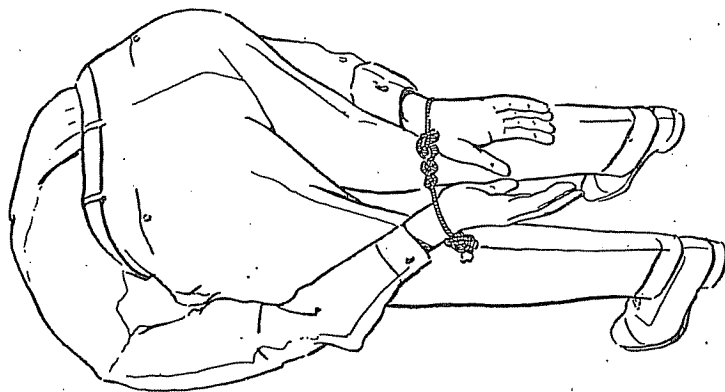


Fig. 77

who created quite a sensation throughout America and Europe. They had many more tricks, but the Ten Ichi Thumb Tie was the most startling.

THE TRICK. The two thumbs of the performer are crossed and, in this position, tied together with cords by a committee, one member usually being an assistant or confederate, as he is termed in the art of magic. The two sides of the cord are then brought together by another cord, which crosses at right angles to the first, and this cord is also tied. The ends of the cords are then tied together—an end of one to an end of the other. A cane is held perpendicularly, one hand at each end, by one of the committee. The tied hands of the performer are thrust at the cane, which passes between them, and the hands are shown at the other side of the cane, still tied. The same effect is produced with a bicycle rim, when thrown through the air and caught on the performer's arms or on the arm of one of the committee, who, interlocking his fingers, makes a ring of his arms. Two members of the committee, each with interlocked fingers, stand side by side. The performer first thrusts his hands around the arm of one man; then withdraws them and immediately repeats the effect with the other man and finally withdraws his hands. Before and after each move the thumbs are submitted for examination and found to be securely tied. At the finish the assistant unties the cords.

THE CORDS. Two are used. The first should be about seven-teen inches long and a quarter of an inch in diameter at its center, tapering to points at both ends. The second about thirteen inches long, an eighth of an inch in diameter at its center, also tapering. To make them, cut any strong, coarse tissue paper, better Japanese rice tissue paper, the long way, into strips an inch in width. Beginning at one end, twist the paper at an angle (as in making an old-fashioned lamplighter). Each turn should lap over the former, half its width. When within three inches of the end of the first strip, take a fresh strip, moisten its end, lay it under the end of the former and continue twisting. When the cords are the lengths given above, break off the strip of paper, take a fresh strip and recommence twisting, but in the other direction, beginning at the end just finished and finishing at the other. Use enough layers to secure the lengths and diameters as given above. When finished, the cords should be stiff and so strong that a strong man could not break them between his hands.

THE TIE. With all fingers pressed together, spread both thumbs away from the hands until they form the letter L with the line of the forefinger. Lay the right thumb across the left and at right angles to it. (Fig. 80, 1 and 2.) The thumbs cross at their base—the large knuckle-bone of one lying directly over that of the other. The larger cord is laid, at its middle, directly over the point of juncture; both ends brought down, crossed under the thumbs, brought up again and tied in two knots on top of the right thumb. (See Fig. 81.)

Right here is where all the trick lies.

Just as the tie is being made, pull the left thumb until its smallest diameter (midway between the points) reaches the cord, and pull down with the left hand. Push the right thumb so that its fleshy part goes as far into the cords as possible. Insist upon the tie being tightly made.

THE SECOND AND SMALLER CORD. The second and smaller cord is laid at its middle, below the right and on top of the left thumb and against the first cord. Both ends are carried around the first cord, crossed, brought back and tied twice. When this is being done,

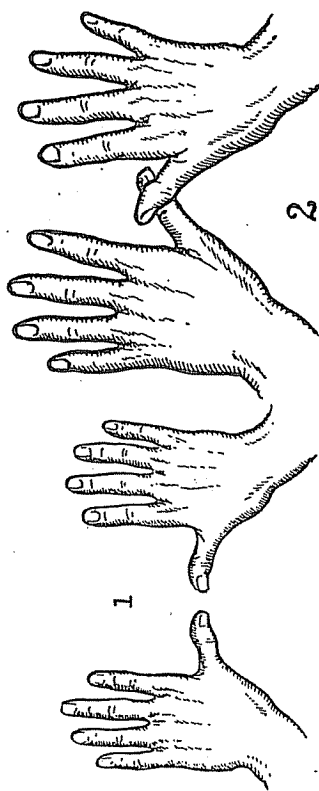


Fig. 80

reverse the pushing and pulling as above explained, pushing in the left and pulling out the right. Get all the slack on the left thumb—the right being pushed into the cords at its smallest diameter; the second cord being tied high up, as near the right thumb as possible and very tightly drawn.

Remember, if this second knot is not tight it will give trouble later.

THE RELEASE. Bring the tips of all fingers together. Carry the thumbs down into the palms. If the ties, as just described, have been correctly made, using the finger-tips as a hinge to mask the movement, there will be no difficulty in withdrawing the left thumb. The peculiar nature of the cord causes the loop from which the thumb has just been withdrawn to remain open and rigid, like wire, and if the last tie was tightly made, the second cord will not slip down to close the loop.

In approaching the cane, or the arms of the committee with the joined hands, touch the article to be passed with the finger-tips and withdraw them, leaning backward three or four times. As you draw back the last time before passing it, withdraw the left thumb from its loop, make a lunge forward and upward, open the finger-tips, pass the object, close the finger-tips, open the palms, push left thumb back in the

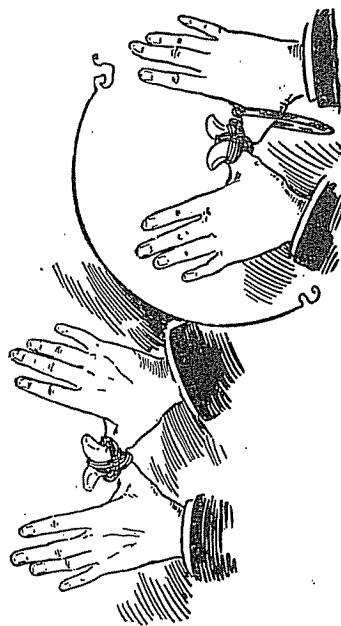


Fig. 81

loop, close the palms, strain on both thumbs and show the tie. In passing the cane, hoop or arm, press both thumbs well into the palms so that the tips will not strike in passing, bringing them up again in exhibiting their tied condition.

Always exhibit the tie from the back of the hands and with the palms outspread before and after passing any object.

If there is any difficulty in drawing out or in replacing the left thumb in its loop, it is because the ties and positions have not been

made in careful conformance with the above descriptions. Practice until the proper method is obtained will prove that the foregoing is a very easy as well as a very strong and effective trick.

THE PHANTOM ROPE ESCAPE. This trick was originated and performed by Chevalier, a noted conjurer.

THE EFFECT. The performer steps to the front of the stage and asks for the assistance of some gentleman from the audience. A gentleman then steps upon the stage, whereupon the performer introduces a long piece of rope, one end of which is given to the gentleman and the other being retained by the performer. The rope is stretched out between them to convince the audience that there is no preparation about it.

The wrists of the performer are then tied together with a handkerchief. The rope is passed between the wrists, but held in place by the handkerchief. The two ends are held by the gentleman. He is requested to pull quickly, when the rope comes free from the hands of the performer, but his wrists are still tied tightly with the handkerchief.

The performer then shows a short piece of rope, in fact two pieces of equal length. He pulls upon them and otherwise convinces the audience that they are without preparation. This double rope is then passed around the body at the waist and tied tightly at the back. A second rope is likewise passed around the neck and tied at the back.

Two shorter ropes are then tied tightly around each wrist, after which the performer brings forward a chair and places it sidewise to the audience. He then seats himself and asks the gentleman to tie the rope at his waist to the back of the chair. Likewise the ropes at his neck and wrists are firmly tied to the chair.

The gentleman then retires, with the thanks of the performer, to the audience. The performer's assistant then steps forward with a pistol. The performer then calls attention to many so-called rope tests offered by many mediums, in which they find it necessary to work under cover of a cabinet, while he would show them how he escapes in plain view of the spectators.

Then he counts "one—two—three," and hardly has he said "three" when the assistant fires, and the performer immediately stands up, the ropes being tied firmly to the chair.

The applause which follows this demonstration is terrific.

THE REQUIREMENTS. Procure a coil of soft cotton rope about one-half an inch in diameter. From this cut a piece about ten feet long. Then cut four pieces about five feet in length, and four more pieces

about two and one-half feet in length. A rather large silk handkerchief and a chair complete all that is required.

It is preferred that the chair has rungs up and down the back of same; and can be with or without arms as desired.

THE PRESENTATION. Take two of the pieces of rope four feet in length and tie them together in the center with a piece of white thread. Do this also with the other two pieces four feet long as well as with the two shorter sets.

Lay these pieces of rope over the back of the chair in the following position: from left to right—the two short sets, then the next two longer sets and finally the real long piece of the rope.

The two shorter sets and one of the longer sets are prepared by taking both ends of the same rope and holding them in the same hand, so the ropes are merely held in the center by the thread. This is very much like the old Grandmother Necklace trick. Place these over the back of the chair so the joint will be hid by the back of same. The last long rope (four feet long) is just hanging over naturally, not being prepared like the others.

The first part of the trick is very old, but at the same time a very effective idea. It is used merely as a sort of introduction to test out the gentleman from the audience, as well as to convince the audience that the ropes are unprepared. The trick is well known, but a short description will be given here.

Hand the long rope to the gentleman, you retaining one end. Stretch it out over the stage to convince the spectators that it is unprepared. Then give the gentleman the handkerchief and ask him to tie your wrists together. Then pass one end of the rope between the arms, and allow the ends to be held by your assistant from the audience. He pulls the rope tight while you bend the fingers of the right hand into the palm and pull the rope into the palm and slip it over the left hand. This is done in a sort of side-to-side movement. Tell him to give a quick jerk and the rope comes free.

Next, take up the first set of ropes four feet long and pull on them. Hold them in the right hand, with the first finger under and the thumb above the center near the thread. While you ask him to step forward, your fingers separate the ropes so they are merely held by the thread. Turn your back and pass the rope around your waist, the center being right under the vest. The gentleman ties same at the back. In like manner the next set is tied around your neck, the collar concealing the center.

You then take a short set and ask him to tie your wrist; suiting the words to action, you place the rope around your wrist and hold it while he ties same at the top, your hand concealing the center. The other wrist is tied likewise.

The chair is now brought forward and placed sidewise to the audience.

Seat yourself and ask the gentleman to tie you to the chair, which he does.

He then returns to the audience and your assistant enters with the pistol. You then call attention to the manner in which you are tied, and how others require a cabinet to work in.

During this you have ample opportunity to strain on the ropes so that when you say three and your assistant fires, you get up at once. Then step forward and make your bow.

REMARKS. Do not despise the above escape on account of its simplicity. It will be found to create quite a sensation.

ESCAPING AFTER BEING BOUND TO A CHAIR BY A COMMITTEE.

The performer exhibits an ordinary chair and a piece of cotton rope. He then seats himself in the chair, asking a committee, previously selected from the audience, to bind him to the chair. After the performer is securely bound, a screen is placed in front of him and in a comparatively short time he appears in front of the screen free from his bondage.

THE SECRET. Note how the arms are kept in front of the body. Sit halfway in the chair, leaving a space between your own back and the back support of the chair (see Figs. 82 and 83); expand the muscles, throw out the chest

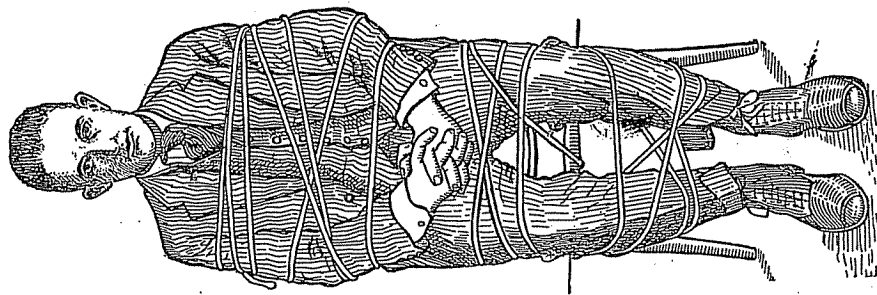


Fig. 82

and keep your legs slightly apart. After you have had some of your friends tie you several times, following the directions closely, you will be surprised how easily you can escape from a rope tie of this kind.

However, you may be unfortunate enough at some time to have a spectator come upon the stage to tie you, who is thoroughly familiar with knots and who binds you so securely that you apparently cannot possibly free yourself. Even for such a predicament we have a simple solution. Carry an ordinary penknife in a pocket, where it is easily available from the position in which you have your hands. Have an exact duplicate of the piece of rope you have passed for examination concealed somewhere in your clothes. What you do is to cut the rope, thus freeing yourself, and pass out the duplicate rope for examination by the audience.

You may be bound so tightly that you cannot manipulate the knife with your hands. You will have to put it in your teeth, although this is very seldom necessary.

NOTE. You can offer suggestions now and then to the committee as to the tying of the rope, and it will help you to be bound in whatever way you desire.

THE MYSTERIOUS TRAVELING RING. This is a favorite drawing-room trick and is better adapted for house parties than for use on the stage. It is because of the fact that no preparation whatever is required for the trick that makes it ideal for social entertainment.

THE EFFECT. The performer is seated in a chair and requests a member of the party to tie his hands to the back of the chair in any manner he desires, using any type of knot. (See Fig. 84.) He then borrows a ring, which is placed between his teeth, and asks to have a screen placed in front of him. When the screen is in position, he asks the

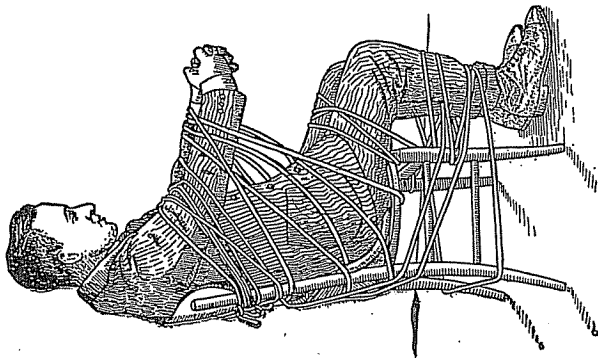


Fig. 83

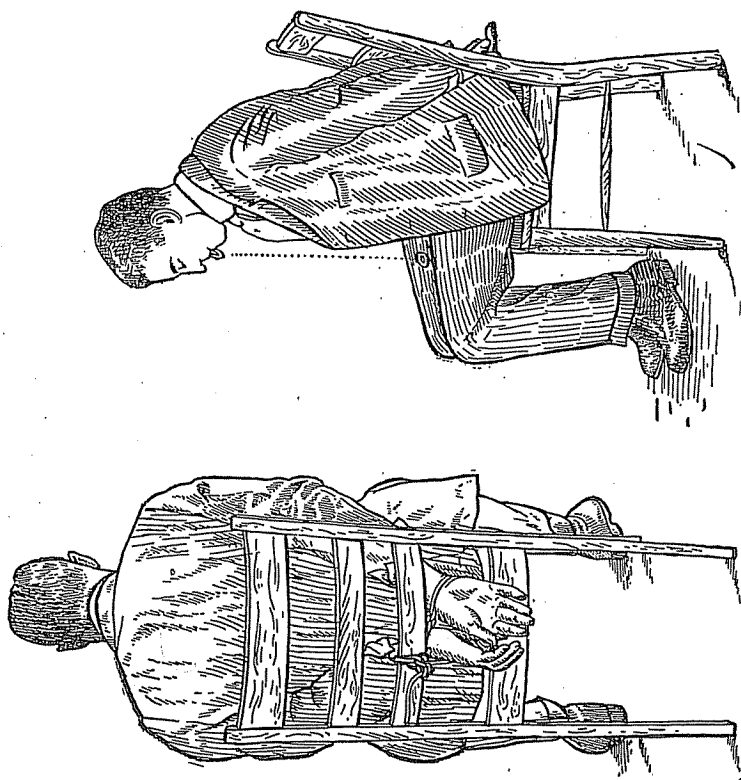


Fig. 84

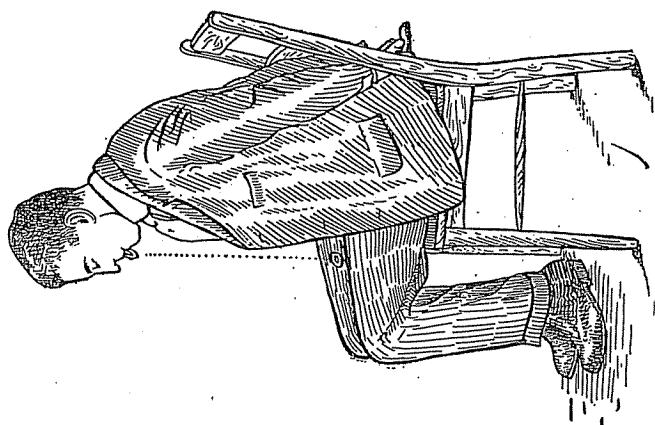


Fig. 85

spreading the legs apart it is allowed to fall to the seat of the chair. Raise the body, at the same time pushing as far as possible to the front of the chair, until you are in position to sit directly upon the ring.

audience upon which finger they would like to have the ring appear. As soon as they have announced their desire, the screen is removed and the ring is found upon the finger designated.

THE SECRET. The trick is not in the knots. In fact, everything about it is absolutely fair. (See Fig. 85.) As soon as the screen is in position, the first move is to drop the ring upon your lap. By

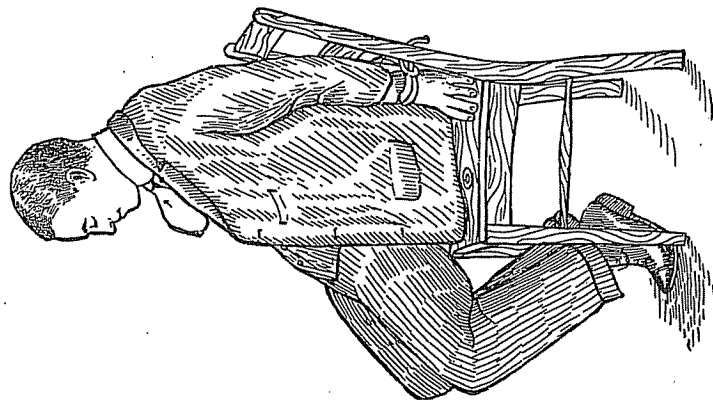


Fig. 86

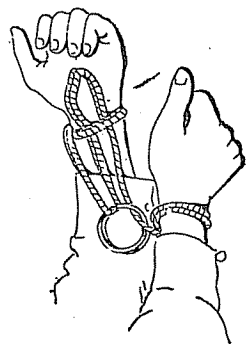


Fig. 88

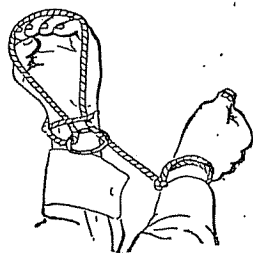


Fig. 89

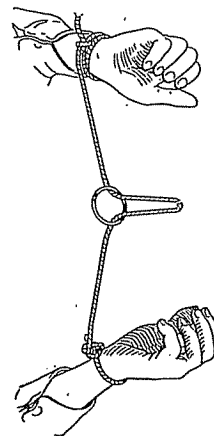


Fig. 87

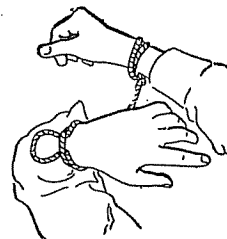


Fig. 90

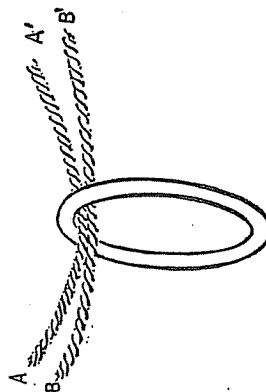


Fig. 91

GILBERT KNOTS AND SPLICES

61

(See Fig. 86.) This enables you to push the ring to the back of the chair, where you can easily place it upon the finger specified.

THE WEDDING RING KNOTTED ON A CORD. EFFECT.
A wedding ring, or in fact any small ring, is tied on a cord, which has previously been tied to both wrists.

THE SECRET. After the wrists have been securely tied with a piece of cord about two feet long, a loop is made in the center of the cord and passed through the ring. (See Fig. 87.) This loop is then passed through that part of the cord which is tied around the wrist, thence over the hand (see Figs. 88 and 89) and under the band on top of the wrist (see Fig. 90), finally back over the hand again. Pull the wrists apart and the ring will be found tied in the center of the cord connecting the wrists.

THE RINGS AND CORD TRICK. EFFECT. Three rings and two cords about eight feet in length are casually shown to your audience. The cords are threaded through one ring, a double knot is tied; the two other rings are slipped on the cord and the ends of the cords passed down the sleeves of a coat held by the committee. The two ends protruding from the right sleeve are held by one member of the committee and the two ends protruding from the left sleeve are held by the other member of the committee. A single knot is tied in one of the cords and at the words "Mysto Magic," the cords are pulled and the rings fall into the performer's hands. The cords are separated from the coat and are found free of knots.

HOW THE TRICK IS WORKED. Really four rings are used. Four curtain rings should be secured, and one split or cracked. This can be done by dropping the ring on the floor, and if done correctly no one will notice the crack. This we will call the key ring, which you can safely pass for examination, if you wish. A fourth ring is concealed in the inside of your coat. The cords should be of fine silk or stay strings, that is, corset strings.

Two cords are strung through the fake ring. (See Fig. 91.) For convenience in explaining this trick we will call the two

ends of the cord on one side of the ring AB and the two ends of the cord on the other side of the ring A'B'. The performer retains hold on the ring. A single knot is then tied with both cords. (See Fig. 92.) (The knot is not drawn taut in the illustration, so that the method of tying it will be clearly seen.)

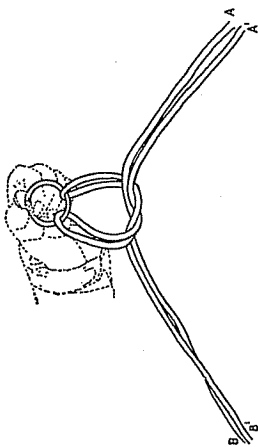


Fig. 92

you have one ring over cord BB' and one ring over cord AA'. (See Fig. 93.) You now run cord BB' down the right sleeve of the coat and AA' down the left sleeve of the coat. (See Fig. 94.)

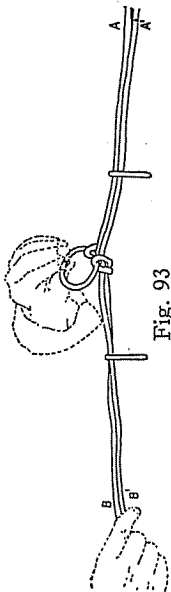


Fig. 93

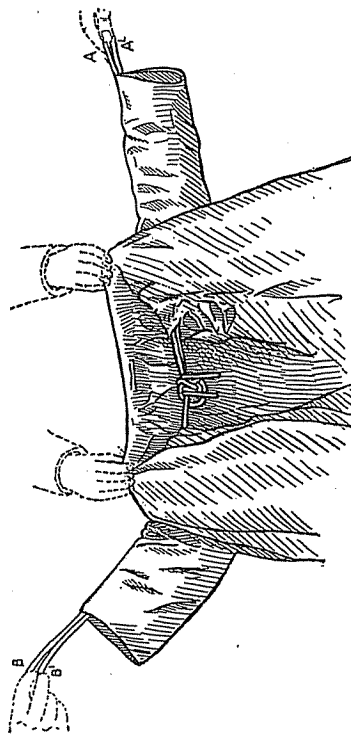


Fig. 94

You have three rings in the back of the coat, all clustered together, with the two ends of the cords hanging from the coat sleeves. You hand the two ends BB' to one member of the committee and the two ends AA' to the other member of the committee. (See Fig. 94.) You take one end B' from one and the other end of cord, A', from the other and tie a single knot in front of the coat, handing back to the member of the committee who is holding B the end A', and to the member holding A the end B'. (See Fig. 95.) They are told to firmly hold the cords.

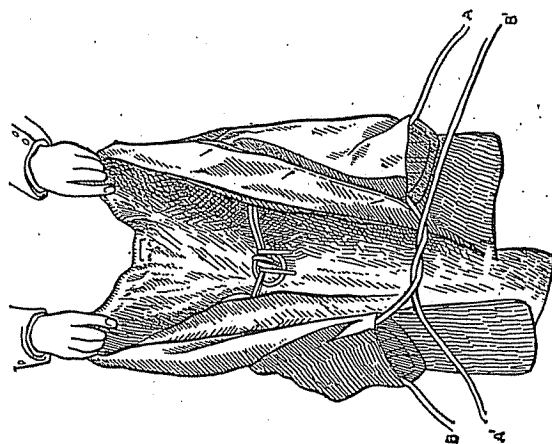


Fig. 95

The next move is to go underneath your coat and pull the key ring away from the knots. This allows all three rings to fall into your hand. In the act of removing the key ring, your coat should be held in such a position that the hands are well concealed. Exchange

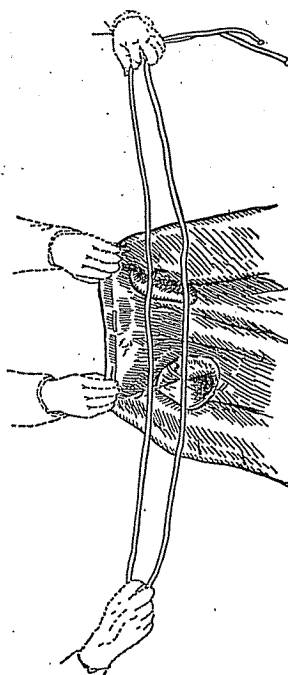


Fig. 96

the key ring for the solid ring which you have hidden in a convenient pocket and pass the three solid rings for examination, having first disposed of the cracked ring. The members of the committee are then requested to pull on the ends of the cords, which become separated from the coat and are free of all knots. (See Fig. 96.)

THE VEST, CORDS, AND RING TRICK. This trick is a modification of the foregoing trick and may be used, if you wish to alter your program slightly.

EFFECT. Two cords, about ten feet in length, are passed for examination. These cords are passed through the armholes under your vest and a single knot is tied in one of the cords in front. The ends of the cords are held by two of the spectators who have agreed to act as a committee, and they are

asked to stand as far away from you as the length of the cords will permit. A ring is given to each member of the committee and he is asked to thread the ring on the cord. You place a coat in front of you for a couple of seconds and, upon removing the coat, to the surprise of your audience, the cords, with the rings still remaining on them, have been released from the vest and are in full view of the audience. For effect the rings may be left either on the cords or permitted to fall to the floor, according to the wish of your audience.

THE SECRET. Two cords, AA' and BB', are laid parallel and tied in the center with a piece of silk thread, either gray or white. (See Fig. 97.) The cords are grasped in the center with the hand concealing the thread. (See Fig. 98.) The cords are then shaken about in the hand until divided (see Fig. 99), the hand still concealing the thread, ends AA' hanging

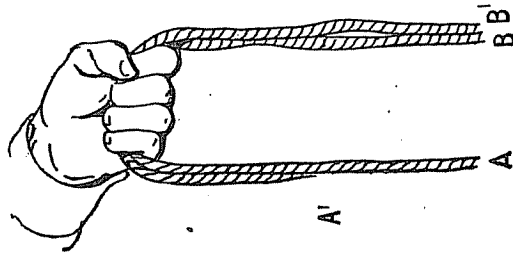


Fig. 98

down the left side and ends BB' hanging down the right side. The cords are then passed under the vest and through the armholes, the hand concealing the joint in the ropes until the same is covered by the vest. (See Fig. 100.) You now ask your audience if they wish to have the rings remain on the cords or fall to the floor when you remove the cords from the vest.

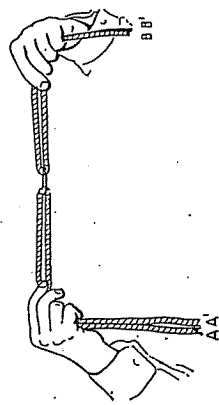


Fig. 99

(It is well to ask this question before tying the knot in the cords, because if the rings are to fall to the floor they must be threaded on the cords before tying the knot; if the rings are to remain on the cords, the knot is tied first and then the rings are threaded on afterwards.) You now make the single knot by taking the ends A and B. If the rings are to remain on the cords they should now be threaded and the two ends A and B handed

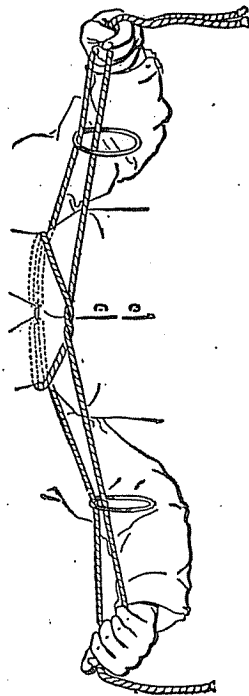


Fig. 100

to one of the committee and the ends A' and B' handed to the other member of the committee, and they should be requested to step as far away from you as possible. The knot should be pulled up quite tight. Holding a coat in front of you for a few moments, you expand your chest and break the thread which holds the divided cords together and upon taking away the coat the cords will be found released from the vest and the rings remain on the cords.

A CLEVER ROPE TIE. This is a clever little parlor trick, which can be worked with practically little preparation. Ask any one in your

party to securely tie your wrists together with a handkerchief. Next pass for examination a cord which is placed between your wrists, back of the tied handkerchief, and ask some one to hold the two ends securely. Now have a large cloth or handkerchief thrown over your hands so it will conceal everything, except the two ends of the rope which are being held by the spectator. After a few seconds, ask the person holding the ends of the cord to give a pull, and, much to his surprise, the cord comes off, and when the cloth or handkerchief is removed, your wrists are found to be still securely tied together.

SECRET. The wrists are tied together with any type of knot that the spectator desires to make. A rope is placed behind the handkerchief and the ends handed to the spectator, telling him to hold onto them tightly. As soon as the wrists are covered with a handkerchief or cloth, the arms are pulled as far apart as possible, and enough slack will be gained to allow you to separate your wrists. You are now able to force the index finger of the right hand between your wrists and connect with the cord. The cord is then pulled through the bandage around your wrists, slipping it over your hand, so that when the spectator pulls on the cord it will readily slip off your hands, leaving the wrists tied as in the beginning.