

ARTIFICE
RUSE AND SUBTERFUGE
AT THE
CARD TABLE

A TREATISE ON THE SCIENCE AND ART OF
MANIPULATING CARDS

BY

S. W. ERDNASE

EMBRACING THE WHOLE CALENDAR OF SLIGHTS THAT
ARE EMPLOYED BY THE GAMBLER AND CON-
JURER, DESCRIBING WITH DETAIL AND ILLUS-
TRATION EVERY KNOWN EXPEDIENT,
MANOEUVRE AND STRATEGEM OF
THE EXPERT CARD HANDLER,
WITH OVER ONE HUNDRED
DRAWINGS FROM LIFE
BY M. D. SMITH

PUBLISHED BY THE CONJURING ARTS RESEARCH CENTER

DESIGN & LAYOUT COPYRIGHT, 2007, BY CARC

ENTERED AS ISBN 0-9742551-2-2

Entered according to the Act of the Government
in the year Two Thousand and Seven,
by CARC, in the Office of the
Minister of Produce.

PREFACE.

In offering this book to the public the writer uses no
sophistry as an excuse for its existence. The hypocritical
cant of reformed (?) gamblers, or whining, mealy-mouthed
pretensions of piety, are not foisted as a justification for
imparting the knowledge it contains. To all lovers of
card games it should prove interesting, and as a basis of
card entertainment it is practically inexhaustible. It may
caution the unwary who are innocent of guile, and it may
inspire the crafty by enlightenment on artifice. It may
demonstrate to the tyro that he cannot beat a man at his
own game, and it may enable the skilled in deception to
take a post-graduate course in the highest and most artistic
branches of his vocation. But it will not make the innocent
vicious, or transform the pastime player into a professional;
or make the fool wise, or curtail the annual crop of suckers;
but whatever the result may be, if it sells it will accomplish
the primary motive of the author, as he needs the money.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Introduction	9
CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.	
Professional Secrets.....	13
Hold-outs	14
Prepared Cards	15
Confederacy	18
Two Methods of Shuffling	19
Primary Accomplishments	20
Possibilities of the Blind	20
Uniformity of Action	21
Department	21
Display of Ability	22
Greatest Single Accomplishment	22
Effect of Suspicion	22
Acquiring the Art	23
Importance of Details	23
TECHNICAL TERMS. Definitions of	24
POSITION FOR SHUFFLE	26
BLIND SHUFFLES. ERDNASE SYSTEM OF	28
I. To Retain Top Stock	28
II. To Retain Top Stock and Shuffle Whole Deck	29
III. To Retain Bottom Stock and Shuffle Whole Deck	31
BLIND RIFFLES AND CUTS. ERDNASE SYSTEM OF.....	32
I. To Retain Top Stock	33
II. To Retain Bottom Stock	35
BLIND CUTS	39
I. To Retain Bottom Stock. Top Loosing One Card	39
II. To Retain Complete Stock	41
III. To Retain Top Stock	41
IV. To Retain Bottom Stock	43
V. Combination Riffle and Cuts	45
FANCY BLIND CUTS	45
I. To Retain Complete Stock	45
II. To Retain Complete Stock	46
FANCY TRUE CUT. ONE-HANDED	47

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
TO INDICATE THE LOCATION FOR THE CUT	49
I. By Crimp	49
II. By Jog	52
III. By Crimp	53
IV. By Jog	53
BOTTOM DEALING	55
Top and Bottom Dealing. One Hand	58
SECOND DEALING	60
ORDINARY METHODS OF STOCKING, LOCATING AND SECURING	62
STOCK SHUFFLE	68
STOCK SHUFFLING. ERDNASE SYSTEM OF	71
Two Card Stock	71
Three Card Stock	74
Four Card Stock	75
Five Card Stock	76
Twelve Card Stock	77
Euchre Stock	78
Euchre Stock	78
CULL SHUFFLING. ERDNASE SYSTEM OF	79
To Cull Two Cards	81
To Cull Three Cards	81
To Cull Four Cards	82
To Cull Nine Cards	83
PALMING. ERDNASE SYSTEM OF	84
Top Palm, First Method	84
Top Palm, Second Method	87
Bottom Palm, First Method	87
Bottom Palm, Second Method	90
Bottom Palm when Cards are Riffled	92
TO MAINTAIN THE BOTTOM PALM WHILE DEAL- ING.....	95
TO HOLD THE LOCATION OF CUT WHILE DEAL- ING.....	96
SHIFTS	98
Two-Handed Shift	98
Erdnase Shift, One Hand	101
Erdnase Shift, Two Hands	104
TO ASCERTAIN THE TOP CARDS WHILE RIF- FLING AND RESERVE THEM AT BOTTOM	106
MODE OF HOLDING THE HAND	107
SKINNING THE HAND	109

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE PLAYER WITHOUT AN ALIY	113
Dealing Without the Cut	113
Replacing the Cut as Before	113
Holding out for the Cut	114
Shifting the Cut	114
Dealing Too Many	115
Crimping for the Cut	116
Replacing Palm when Cutting	117
The Short Deck	119
THREE CARD MONTE	119
Mexican Monte	124

LEGERDEMAIN.

SHIFTS	130
Single-Handed Shift	130
The Longitudinal Shift	132
The Open Shift	134
The S. W. E. Shift	136
The Diagonal Palm Shift	140
THE BLIND SHUFFLE FOR SECURING SELECTED	
CARD.....	144
FORCING	145
PALMING	146
The Back Palm	147
CHANGES	149
The Top Change	149
The Bottom Change	150
The Palm Change	151
The Double Palm Change	152
TRANSFORMATIONS. TWO HANDS	154
First Method	154
Second Method	155
Third Method	156
Fourth Method	157
Fifth Method	158
Sixth Method	158
TRANSFORMATIONS. ONE HAND	160
First Method	160
Second Method	161

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
BLIND SHUFFLES. RETAINING ENTIRE ORDER	163
First Method	163
Second Method	165
Third Method	167
Fourth Method	168
Fifth Method	168
METHODS FOR DETERMINING A CARD THOUGHT	
OF.....	169
A. By the Riffle	169
B. By Springing Flourish	170
C. By the Cut	171
D. By the Gaze	172
TO GET SIGHT OF SELECTED CARD	172
THE SLIDE.....	173
FAVORITE SLEIGHTS FOR TERMINATING TRICKS.....	174
Catching Two Cards at Finger-ends	174
Leaving Selected Card in Hand of Spectator	174
The Revolution	174
Cards Rising from the Hand	174

CARD TRICKS.

EXPLANATORY	176
THE EXCLUSIVE COTERIE	176
THE DIVINING ROD	179
THE INVISIBLE FLIGHT	181
THE PREARRANGED DECK	182
THE TRAVELING CARDS	188
THE ROW OF TEN CARDS	191
THE ACROBATIC JACKS	193
A MIND READING TRICK	195
POWER OF CONCENTRATED THOUGHT	197
THE ACME OF CONTROL	198
THE CARD AND HANDKERCHIEF	199
THE TOP AND BOTTOM PRODUCTION	201
THE THREE ACES	204
THE CARD AND HAT	205

INTRODUCTION.

The passion for play is probably as old, and will be as enduring, as the race of man. Some of us are too timid to risk a dollar, but the percentage of people in this feverish nation who would not enjoy winning one is very small. The passion culminates in the professional. He would rather play than eat. Winning is not his sole delight. Some one has remarked that there is but one pleasure in life greater than winning, that is, in making the hazard.

To be successful at play is as difficult as to succeed in any other pursuit. The laws of chance are as immutable as the laws of nature. Were all gamblers to depend on luck they would break about even in the end. The professional card player may enjoy the average luck, but it is difficult to find one who thinks he does, and it is indeed wonderful how mere chance will at times defeat the strongest combination of wit and skill. It is almost an axiom that a novice will win his first stake. A colored attendant of a "club-room," overhearing a discussion about running up two hands at poker, ventured the following interpolation: "Don't trouble 'bout no two han's, Boss. Get yo' own han'. De suckah, he'll get a han' all right, suah!" And many old players believe the same thing. However, the vagaries of luck, or chance, have impressed the professional card player with a certain knowledge that his more respected brother of the stock exchange possesses, viz.— manipulation is more profitable than speculation; so to make both ends meet, and incidentally a good living, he also performs his part with the shears when the lambs come to market.

INTRODUCTION.

Hazard at play carries sensations that once enjoyed
30 are rarely forgotten. The winnings are known as “pretty
money,” and it is generally spent as freely as water. The
32 average professional who is successful at his own game
will, with the sublimest unconcern, stake his money on
34 that of another’s, though fully aware the odds are against
him. He knows little of the real value of money, and as a
36 rule is generous, careless and improvident. He loves the
hazard rather than the stakes. As a matter of fact the
38 principal difference between the professional gambler and
the occasional gambler, is that the former is actuated by his
40 love of the game and the latter by cupidity. A professional
rarely “squeals” when he gets the worst of it; the man
42 who has other means of livelihood is the hardest loser.
Advantages that are bound to ultimately give a percentage
44 in favor of the professional are absolutely essential to his
existence, and the means employed at the card table to
46 obtain that result are thoroughly elucidated in this work.
We have not been impelled to our task by the qualms of a
48 guilty conscience, nor through the hope of reforming the
world. Man cannot change his temperament, and few care
50 to control it. While the passion for hazard exists it will
find gratification. We have neither grievance against the
52 fraternity nor sympathy for so-called “victims.” A varied
experience has impressed us with the belief that all men
54 who play for any considerable stakes are looking for the best
of it. We give the facts and conditions of our subject as we
56 find them, though we sorrowfully admit that our own early
knowledge was acquired at the usual excessive cost to the
58 uninitiated.

When we speak of professional card players we do not
60 refer to the proprietors or managers of gaming houses.
The percentage in their favor is a known quantity, or can
62 be readily calculated, and their profits are much the same
as any business enterprise. Where the civil authorities
64 countenance these institutions they are generally conducted

INTRODUCTION.

by men of well known standing in the community. The card
tables pay a percentage or “rake off,” and the management 66
provides a “look out” for the protection of its patrons.
Where the gaming rooms must be conducted in secret the 68
probabilities of the player’s apparent chances being lessened
are much greater. However, our purpose is to account for 70
the unknown percentage that must needs be in favor of the
professional card player to enable him to live. 72

There is a vast difference between the methods employed
by the card conjurer in mystifying or amusing his audience; 74
and those practiced at the card table by the professional, as
in this case the entire conduct must be in perfect harmony 76
with the usual procedure of the game. The slightest
action that appears irregular, the least effort to distract 78
attention, or the first unnatural movement, will create
suspicion; and mere suspicion will deplete the company, as 80
no one but a simon-pure fool will knowingly play against
more than ordinary chances. There is one way by which 82
absolute protection against unknown advantages may be
assured, that is by never playing for money. But a perfect 84
understanding of the risks that are taken may aid greatly in
lessening the casualties. An intimate acquaintance with the 86
modus operandi of card table artifice does not necessarily
enable one to detect the manipulation, but it certainly 88
makes plain the chances to be guarded against, and with
this cognition the mere suspicion of skill should at once 90
induce symptoms of cold feet. This knowledge, or thorough
comprehension of the possibilities of professional card 92
playing, can be imparted only by practical illustration of
the processes employed, and the reader desiring a complete 94
understanding should take the deck in hand and work out
for himself the action as it is described. 96

To discriminate and show clearly the two phases of card
manipulation, the first part of this work is devoted to an 98
exhaustive review of the many advantages that can be,
have been, and are constantly taken at the card table, and 100

INTRODUCTION.

to those particular methods of obtaining these advantages
102 that are least liable to arouse suspicion. The exact manner
in which each artifice is performed is fully described in
104 minutia. Part second describes the sleights employed in
conjuring and many very interesting card tricks.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

Professional Secrets. — The secrets of professional card playing have been well preserved. Works on conjuring invariably devote much space to the consideration of card tricks, and many have been written exclusively for that purpose, yet we have been unable to find in the whole category more than an incidental reference to any card table artifice; and in no instance are the principal feats even mentioned. Self-styled “ex-professionals” have regaled the public with astounding disclosures of their former wiles and wickedness, and have proven a wonderful knowledge of the subject by exhuming some antiquated moss-covered ruses as well known as nursery rhymes, and even these extraordinary revelations are calmly dismissed with the assertion that this or that artifice is employed; in nowise attempting to explain the process or give the detail of the action mentioned. If terrific denunciation of erstwhile associates, and a diatribe on the awful consequences of gambling are a criterion of ability, these purified prodigals must have been very dangerous companions at the card table.

Of course it is generally known that much deception is practiced at cards, but it is one thing to have that knowledge and quite another to obtain a perfect understanding of the methods employed, and the exact manner in which they are executed. Hence this work stands unique in the list of card books. We modestly claim originality for the particular manner of accomplishing many of the manœuvres described, and believe them vastly superior to others that

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

have come under our observation. We do not claim to know
30 it all. Many professionals have attained their success by
improving old methods, or inventing new ones; and as
32 certain artifices are first disclosed in this work so will others
remain private property as long as the originators are so
34 disposed.

We betray no confidences in publishing this book,
36 having only ourselves to thank for what we know. Our
tuition was received in the cold school of experience. We
38 started in with the trusting nature of a fledgling, and a
calm assurance born of overweening faith in our own
40 potency. We bucked the tiger voluntarily, and censure no
one for the inevitable result. A self-satisfied unlicked cub
42 with a fairly fat bank roll was too good a thing to be passed
up. We naturally began to imbibe wisdom in copious
44 draughts at the customary sucker rates, but the jars to our
pocketbook caused far less anguish than the heartrending
46 jolts to our insufferable conceit. After the awakening our
education progressed through close application and constant
48 study of the game, and the sum of our present knowledge is
proffered in this volume, for any purpose it may answer, to
50 friend and foe, to the wise and the foolish, to the good and
the bad, to all alike, with but one reservation, — that he has
52 the price.

Hold Outs. — Many mechanical contrivances termed
2 “hold outs” have been invented to aid the card player. The
simplest form is a steel spring with an awl-like attachment
4 at one end which can be pressed into the under side of
almost any table in an instant. The spring snaps up against
6 the table, the end curving slightly downwards to receive the
cards. The thumb of either hand can put in or take several
8 cards from the apparatus without the hands leaving the
table.

10 A more complicated table machine passes the cards from
below completely over the edge of the table, and the hands,
12 held naturally on the table top, receive and make the discard

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

without a sign to denote the procedure.

“Hold outs” that are adjusted to the person are of most ingenious construction and very expensive. A sleeve machine which passes the cards into and from the palm by spreading the knees may be worth from seventy-five dollars to several hundred dollars. Some are worked by arm pressure, some pass the cards through an opening in the vest about the usual height the hands are held. One of the most novel and perfect machines ever constructed makes the “sneak” by simply expanding the chest an inch or two, or taking a deeper breath than usual.

In almost all cases where “hold outs” are used the principal skill possessed by the player is that of working his apparatus perfectly and secreting the extra cards while in his hands; but to employ a machine successfully requires considerable address, and especially nerve. However, a full description of these devices or their uses is not contemplated by us. They can be purchased from the dealers in “club-room articles,” and, anyway, the expert professional disdains their assistance. They are cumbersome, unnecessary, and a constant menace to his reputation.

Prepared Cards. — The subject of prepared cards is almost as foreign to the main purpose of this work as the preceding one of “hold outs,” but a cursory review of the commoner kinds and their uses may not be out of place.

Marked cards, generally known as “readers,” can be distinguished by the backs as readily as by the faces when the key is known. Printed cards are manufactured, but these are rarely used by professionals. The designs are not the same as those now of standard make, and consequently would be difficult to introduce. The usual plan is to mark the standard decks by hand. For the benefit of the unenlightened or curious reader we shall describe the process. It is not at all difficult, and a deck can be “doctored” in an hour or so.

Nearly all standard cards are red or blue. Marking

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

16 inks absolutely indistinguishable from the printer's ink can
be obtained from any of the dealers. Cards of intricate
18 design are best adapted for the purpose. Each card is
marked at both ends, so as to be read in any position. The
20 peculiarity of the figures or design across the end is first
closely considered, and twelve fairly distinct points, or
22 dots or dashes, are noted and located. Then the four Aces
are laid out, and with a fine pen the first point located is
24 shortened barely enough to notice. The point is white and
the background red or blue, the color of the ink used; and
26 the slightest shortening of a single point or the obliteration
of a single dot on a card, is undetectable unless it is known.

28 The four Aces are treated in this manner, then turned
end for end, and the operation repeated. Then the Kings
30 are doctored, the second point located being shortened in
this instance. Then the four Queens at the third point,
32 and so on throughout the deck for the twelve values; the
absence of any mark denoting the Deuce. Now the suits are
34 marked. Three additional points are located, possibly close
to one corner. The first point marked say for Diamonds, the
36 second for Clubs, third for Hearts and Spades left natural.
Thus the operator at a glance, by noting the location of the
38 two "blockouts," can instantly name the cards as they are
dealt.

40 Combination systems lessen the number of points to
be located. The design of the particular deck will suggest
42 whether a dot, line, or blockout, would be least noticeable.
It is seldom that two operators work alike. Cleverly done,
44 it is almost impossible to detect, and unless suspicion is
aroused quite so. Most of the supply houses keep a skilled
46 operator constantly employed, and will mark any deck to
order for about one dollar.

48 Some players make a practice of marking cards during
the process of the game. The most desirable cards are
50 creased or indented at certain locations as they happen
to come into the player's possession, with the finger or

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

thumb nail, which is kept pointed for the purpose; and in 52
the course of an hour the principal cards can be readily
distinguished. Another plan is to darken the edges with 54
different prepared inks that are conveniently adjusted
in pads. These manœuvres, while making nothing sure 56
in a given instance, always net the operator a favorable
percentage in the long run. 58

Prepared cards known as “Strippers” are much used by
certain players. The desired cards are placed aside and the 60
rest of the cards trimmed slightly along the sides; then the
briefs are trimmed from nothing at middle of sides to the 62
width of the cut deck at ends. This leaves a slight hump at
sides of the desired cards when shuffled in the deck, and 64
they can be drawn out at will and placed on top or bottom
at option. The trimming is done with machines made 66
for the purpose, and the cutting leaves the edges and the
corners as smooth as glass. 68

There are many other methods of doctoring cards to
meet the requirements of particular games, and the skill, 70
or rather want of it, of the operator. By roughening the
faces of some of the cards they will hold together, and are 72
more easily retained while shuffling. Faro cards, used in
connection with a certain form of “brace” box, are treated 74
in this manner. In the construction of the various kinds
of control boxes the acme of ingenuity and mechanical 76
skill has been reached, and most extravagant prices are
demanded and paid, for these innocent-appearing little 78
silver-plated articles. Strippers may be used in Faro with
little fear of detection, as the cards are never shuffled or 80
cut by the players. A “crooked” box and a clever dealer
can give the house a percentage that would impoverish a 82
prince. Millions of dollars are wagered annually at Faro
in this country. It is the most fascinating of layout games. 84
However, we have reason to believe it is generally dealt on
the square in gambling rooms that are run openly. The 86
bank’s percentage is satisfactory to the proprietors.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

88 The “Cold Deck” is a pre-arranged pack that is
introduced at an opportune moment. The cards are not
90 marked, but two or more hands are set up ready for dealing.
The name is probably derived from the fact that the deck
92 must await its opportunity long enough to contract a chill in
the interim. Little skill is required in making the exchange.
94 It is almost invariably done quite openly, and in company
where the attendants and players are in collusion. In most
96 gaming rooms the decks are exchanged every hour or less.
Sometimes the players will call for a new deck, but usually
98 the exchange is made at the instance of the management.
When the “cold deck” is sprung a “blind” shuffle is made
100 by the dealer, a “blind” cut by an ally, and the hands fall in
the desired order. Of course an exchange may be made by
102 sleight-of-hand, but the player who can accomplish this feat
successfully is generally well versed in the higher orders of
104 card-table artifice, and will dispense with such makeshifts
as “cold decks” or any kind of prepared cards.

Confederacy. — When two card experts work together
2 their difficulties are greatly lessened. The opportunities of
securing the desirable cards on the outset, that is before
4 the shuffle, are doubled, and this is half the battle. If they
understand each other perfectly they can often arrange
6 one or two hands ready for dealing, and find little or no
trouble at all in getting several desirable cards together
8 while apparently gathering up the deck in the most careless
manner. If sitting together so that one cuts on the other’s
10 deal the possibilities become so great that ordinary chances
will be taken in perhaps nineteen deals out of twenty. Two
12 or three coups in the course of an evening will not flush the
quarry, and are quite sufficient to answer all purposes.

14 Advantages without dexterity can be taken in almost
any card game when two or more players are in collusion,
16 by the use of any secret code of signals that will disclose
the hand of each to the others. For instance, in Poker the
18 ally holding the best cards will be the only one to stay,

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

thus playing the best hand of the allies against the rest; quite sufficient advantage to give a large percentage in favor of the combination. Again, the allies may resort to “crossfiring,” by each raising until the other players drop out. There are hundreds of small but ultimately certain advantages to be gained in this manner, if collusion is not suspected. No single player can defeat a combination, even when the cards are not manipulated.

Two Methods of Shuffling. — As the reader obtains an understanding of the art of “advantage playing” it will be seen that the old-fashioned or hand shuffle gives the greater possibilities for running up hands, selecting desirable cards and palming. Many players never used the “riffle,” that is shuffling on the table by springing the ends of two packets into each other, though this method is now by far the more prevalent among men who play for money. While the “riffle” cannot be employed for arranging the cards, save to a very limited extent, it is equally well adapted for retaining the top or bottom portion, or even the whole deck, in any pre-arranged order; and the “blind riffle” can be performed just as perfectly as the “blind” shuffle. A clever bottom dealer will usually employ the “riffle,” as he rarely takes the trouble of running up a hand. His purpose in that respect is sufficiently answered by keeping the desired cards at the bottom. If he has an ally to “blind” cut, everything goes well, but if playing alone he must either palm the bottom cards for the cut or make a “shift” afterwards. The “shift” is very rarely attempted in any kind of knowing company, and it is awkward to make a palm when the “riffle” is used. The deck must be tilted on its side, and while the movement may pass as an effort at squaring up, it is not quite regular. The hand shuffle avoids the difficulty, as the deck is held naturally in easy position for palming, and not an instant is lost during the operation. The hand shuffle is almost ideal for “stocking” and “culling,” and the curious or interested reader may learn how a perfect knowledge is maintained of

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the whereabouts of any particular cards, and how they are
30 collected or separated, or placed in any desired positions,
while the deck is being shuffled apparently without heed or
32 design.

Primary Accomplishments. — The first acquirement
2 of the professional player is proficiency at “blind” shuffling
and cutting. Perfection in performing the “blind” shuffle,
4 whether the old-fashioned hand shuffle or the “riffle”
supplemented by a thorough knowledge of “blind” cutting,
6 makes it impossible for the smartest card handler living to
determine whether the procedure is true or “blind.” This
8 ability once acquired gives the expert ease and assurance
in any kind of company, and enables him to lull into a state
10 of absolute serenity the minds of many players who may
be naturally suspicious. Nothing so completely satisfies
12 the average card player as a belief that the deck has been
thoroughly shuffled and genuinely cut.

Possibilities of the “Blind.” — It is surprising to find
2 among card players, and many of them grown gray at
the game, the almost universal belief that none but the
4 unsophisticated can be deceived by “blind” shuffling.
These gentlemen have to “be shown,” but that is the last
6 thing likely to happen. The player who believes he cannot
be deceived is in great danger. The knowledge that no one
8 is safe is his best protection. However, the post-graduate
in the art is quite conscious of the fact that he himself
10 cannot tell the true from the “blind” shuffle or cut, when
performed by another equally as clever. In fact, sight has
12 absolutely nothing to do with the action, and the expert
might perform the work just as well if he were blindfolded.
14 Nevertheless “blind” shuffling and cutting, as explained
by this work, are among the simplest and easiest feats the
16 professional player is required to perform; and when the
process is understood the necessary skill can be acquired
18 with very little time or effort. Given the average card player
who can shuffle or “riffle” in the ordinary manner, with

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

some degree of smoothness, he can be taught a “blind” in 20
five minutes that will nonplus the sharpest of his friends.
But there are many players who cannot make an ordinary 22
shuffle or “riffle” without bending, breaking, exposing or
in some way ruining half the cards, and such bunglers must 24
learn to handle a deck gracefully before attempting a flight
to the higher branches of card manipulation. 26

Uniformity of Action. — The inviolable rule of the
professional is uniformity of action. Any departure from 2
his customary manner of holding, shuffling, cutting or
dealing the cards may be noticed, and is consequently 4
avoided. The player who uses the old-fashioned hand shuffle
will never resort to the table “riffle” in the same company; 6
and vice versa. The manner of holding the deck will always
be the same, whether the action is to be true or “blind.” In 8
dealing, one particular position for the left hand fingers is
ever adhered to, and the action of the right hand in taking 10
off the cards and the time or rapidity of the dealing is made
as uniform as possible. In cutting the rule holds good, 12
and the true cut is made with the same movements as the
“blind.” Whether the procedure is true or “blind” the same 14
apparent action is maintained throughout.

Deportment. —The deportment of the successful
card player must be as finished as his skill. A quiet, 2
unostentatious demeanor and gentlemanly reserve are best
calculated to answer his purpose. Especially the entire 4
suppression of emotion over gains or losses. Without
ability to control his feelings the “advantage player” is 6
without advantage. Boldness and nerve are also absolutely
essential. Ability in card handling does not necessarily 8
insure success. Proficiency in target practice is not the
sole qualification of the trap shooter. Many experts with 10
the gun who can nonchalantly ring up the bull’s eye in a
shooting gallery could not hit the side of a barn in a duel. 12
The greater the emergency, or the greater the stakes, the
greater the nerve required. 14

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

Display of Ability. — Excessive vanity proves the undoing of many experts. The temptation to show off is great. He has become a past master in his profession. He can laugh at luck and defy the law of chance. His fortune is literally at his finger ends, yet he must never admit his skill or grow chesty over his ability. It requires the philosophy of the stoic to possess any great superiority and refrain from boasting to friend or foe. He must be content to rank with the common herd. In short, the professional player must never slop over. One single display of dexterity and his usefulness is past in that particular company, and the reputation is liable to precede him in many another.

Greatest Single Accomplishment. — If requested to determine from what single artifice the greatest advantage is derived we would unhesitatingly decide in favor of bottom dealing. But skill in that respect would be useless without knowledge of the bottom cards, and to retain them necessitates the ability to “blind” shuffle. Again, the bottom cards may be lost by the cut, hence the necessity of “blind” cutting. Proficiency in palming often takes the place of an ally to “blind” cut, but palming in itself is much more difficult to acquire than “blind” cutting, and is practiced only when the player is alone, and after other ruses, which are less risky, have proven unsuccessful. Hence it will be seen that proficiency in one artifice does not finish the education of the professional card player, and almost every ruse in the game is more or less dependent upon another one.

Effect of Suspicion. — To be suspected of skill is a death blow to the professional. His opportunities are dependent upon belief prevailing among the company he is in that the chances are even. Players may be alert and watchful, which is quite natural in all money games, without disconcerting the expert in the least; but where there is knowledge or even mere suspicion among the players of his ability as a manipulator, it will suggest retirement at once rather than

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

playing against the handicap of being especially watched, and a further possibility of getting his congé from the company. But though under certain circumstances a past-master at the card table may be suspected, detection in any particular artifice is almost impossible, and proof of the act is wholly wanting. For those reasons knowing players require nothing more than a bare suspicion of skill to immediately seek a less misty atmosphere.

Acquiring the Art. — To attain the highest degree of excellence at card manipulation much study and practice are necessary; but proficiency in the art quite sufficient for the purpose of entertainment or amusement may be acquired with very little effort if a thorough understanding is first obtained of the best and simplest methods of accomplishing the sleights. The only proper way to practice is to be seated in the usual manner at a card table with a looking glass opposite; and much time and labor are saved by this plan. The correct positions and movements can be accurately secured, and the performer becomes his own critic.

The beginner invariably imagines his hands are too small or too large, but the size has little to do with the possibilities of skill. Soft, moderately moist hands are best adapted for the purpose. When the cuticle is hard and dry, or excessively humid, the difficulties increase. A simple preparation to soften the hands and good general health usually produce the desired conditions. Of course dry fingers may be moistened, or damp ones dried, but either operation is objectionable.

For superior work the cards should be new, thin, flexible and of best quality. Cheap cards are clumsy and not highly finished. Cards that have been handled two or three hours become more or less sticky, and the slightest friction is a detriment to perfect manipulation.

Importance of Details. — The finished card expert considers nothing too trivial that in any way contributes

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

to his success, whether in avoiding or allaying suspicion,
4 or in the particular manner of carrying out each detail;
or in leading up to, or executing, each artifice. Therefore
6 the writer has expended much time and care in illustrating
many manœuvres that at first may seem unimportant, but
8 all of which are essential to the curriculum of artistic card
handling.

TECHNICAL TERMS.

Many of the methods of card manipulation explained in
2 this work originated with us, and we have, in describing the
various processes and conditions, used certain terms for the
4 sake of brevity, to designate the particular matters referred
to. The reader desiring to follow the action intelligently
6 must clearly understand the meaning of the terms. A
careful perusal of the following definitions will save much
8 time and perplexity in comprehending the processes
described:

10 **STOCK.** — That portion of the deck that contains
certain cards, placed in some particular order for dealing;
12 or certain desirable cards placed at top or bottom of the
deck.

14 **RUN.** — To draw off one card at a time during the
process of the hand shuffle. There is little or no difficulty
16 in acquiring perfect ability to run the whole deck through
in this manner with the utmost rapidity. The left thumb
18 presses lightly on the top card, the right hand alone making
the movement necessary to shuffle.

20 **Jog.** — A card protruding a little from any part of the
deck, about quarter of an inch, to fix the location of any
22 particular card or cards. While shuffling, if the top card
is to be jogged, it is pushed over the little finger end of deck
24 by the left thumb, the little finger preventing more than
one card from moving. If the first card is to be jogged,
26 that is, the first card in the right hand, it is done by shifting

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the right hand slightly towards either end of the left hand packet during the shuffle, so that the first card drawn off by the left thumb will protrude a little over the end of the left-hand packet.

IN-JOG. — The card protruding over the little finger of the left hand.

OUT-JOG. — The card protruding over the first finger of the left hand.

BREAK. — A space or division held in the deck. While shuffling it is held at the end by the right thumb. It is formed under the in-jog when about to under cut for the shuffle, by pushing the in-jog card slightly upwards with the right thumb, making a space of from an eighth to a quarter of an inch wide, and holding the space, by squeezing the ends of the packet to be drawn out, between the thumb and second and third fingers. The use of the break during a shuffle makes it possible to throw any number of cards that are immediately above it, in one packet into the left hand, without disarranging their order. The break is used when not shuffling, to locate any particular card or position, and is infinitely superior to the common method of inserting the little finger. A break can be held firmly by a finger or thumb of either hand, and entirely concealed by the other fingers of the same hand. It is also the principal aid in the blind riffles and cuts.

THROW. — To pass from the right hand to the left, during a shuffle, a certain number of cards in one packet, thereby retaining their order. A throw may be required at the beginning, during the process, or at the end of a shuffle; and the packet to be thrown may be located by the jog, or break, or by both.

CULLS. — The desired cards. To cull is the act of selecting one or more desired cards, and may consist simply in making the selection as discreetly as possible while gathering up the cards for the deal, or it may be the operation of a much more obscure and apparently

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

impossible feat — that of gathering the desired cards
64 rapidly and easily, from various positions in the deck, to
the bottom, during the process of a shuffle that appears
66 perfectly natural and regular.

BLIND. — Any method of shuffling, riffling, cutting or
68 culling, designed to appear regular, but in reality retaining,
or arranging, some preconceived order.

70 UPPER CUT. — To take or draw off a packet from the
top of the deck.

72 UNDER CUT. — To draw out a packet from the bottom
of the deck, during the process of a shuffle.

74 RUN CUT. — To draw off several or many small packets
from the top of the deck.

76 TOP CARD. — The card on top of packet held in the left
hand, or the original top card of the full deck, which is
78 about to be shuffled.

FIRST CARD. — The card on top of packet held by the
80 right hand to be shuffled.

SHUFFLE. — The old-fashioned method of shuffling the
82 cards from hand to hand.

SHUFFLE OFF. — To shuffle without design, in the
84 ordinary manner.

RIFFLE. — The modern method of shuffling on the
86 table by springing the ends of two packets into each other.

SHIFT. — To return the two portions of the deck to the
88 positions occupied before the cut was made.

CRIMP. — To bend one or a number of cards, so that
90 they may be distinguished or located.

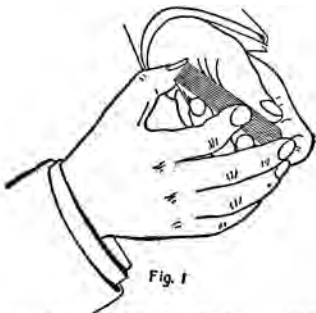
ERD NASE SYSTEM OF BLIND SHUFFLES.

POSITION FOR SHUFFLE.

The deck is held much as usual in the left palm, but
2 more diagonally, so that the first finger from the second
joint lies up against the outer end, the first joint of the
4 little finger curled in against the inner end, the second and
third fingers slightly curled in against the bottom, and the

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

thumb resting on the top, near the outer end, about the 6
middle. The right hand, when about to shuffle, seizes the 8
under portion at the ends between the thumb and second 8
and third fingers, and the first finger rests on the upper 10
side. (See Fig. I.) This position, and especially that of the 10
first and little fingers of the left hand, is essential for the 12
process of blind shuffling and stocking. The first and little 12
fingers hold and locate the Jogs, which, in connection with



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

the Break, the Run, and the Throw, make this new mode of 14
stocking and culling possible. The position is easy and quite 14
natural in appearance. There is no strain on the fingers. 16
The deck fits fairly on its side, across the palm, and the left- 16
hand fingers are in much the same position as they would 18
naturally take when the hand is about half closed. It is an 18
excellent manner of holding the deck for the true shuffle, 20
and should be strictly adhered to on all occasions.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

BLIND SHUFFLES.

The objects of blind shuffling are to retain a top stock, i.e., to retain in the same order the upper portion of the deck which has been prearranged for dealing: or to retain a bottom stock, which usually consists of certain desired cards placed together at the bottom, to be taken from that position at will, during the deal, by bottom dealing; or to retain the whole deck in a certain order, which is rarely attempted, though quite possible. Under the respective headings of "Stocking," and "Culling," it will be learned how the blind shuffle runs up the cards in any desired order, and gathers certain cards from any position to the bottom; but the several methods of retaining the top and bottom stocks are treated separately.

1. To Retain Top Stock.

Under cut about half deck, in-jog first card and shuffle off. Under cut to in-jog and throw on top.

This is the very simplest form of the blind shuffle and leaves the upper portion of the deck in the same order. The shuffle may be continued ad libitum.

The reader who has prepared himself with a knowledge of the position given for hand shuffling, and the definitions of the list of terms, will have no difficulty in understanding the above directions, and executing the blind at the very first attempt. However, as a first lesson in the A, B, C of card manipulation, the following description of the action is given at length, viz.:

Hold the deck in the manner described for the Shuffle. Seize about half the deck from beneath with the right hand (under cut), draw out and shift the right hand a little inwards over packet in left hand, so that when the first card is drawn off by the left thumb it will protrude slightly over

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the little finger (in-jog). Then shuffle off the balance of the cards in the right hand on top of those in the left. (See Fig. 2.) Then seize with the right hand all the cards beneath the in-jog card, which protrudes over the little finger of the left hand, and throw them in one packet on top. When seizing the under cards beneath the in-jog, its location is found by the right thumb solely by the sense of touch, and without



Fig. 2

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

the least hesitation or difficulty. The in-jog card is held in position by the little finger, and is concealed by the cards on top of it.

The weak point about the foregoing blind is that the last movement is a throw, or under cut, and it may be noticed that only part of the deck is actually shuffled. This objection is entirely overcome by the use of the break, which is illustrated in the following blind shuffle.

II. To Retain Top Stock and Shuffle Whole Deck.

Under cut about three-quarters of deck, in-jog first card and shuffle off. Under cut again about three-quarters

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

of deck, forming break at in-jog (see Fig. 3), shuffle off
4 to break and throw balance on top. This blind apparently
shuffles the entire deck, but really leaves the top portion in
6 the original order.



Fig 3

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

There should be no difficulty in forming the break.
8 The right thumb presses slightly upward on the in-jog card
when seizing the under portion, and the space created is
10 held by squeezing the ends. It should be done altogether
by touch, although from the position it is in, the operator
12 might glance at it without being noticed. It is practically
impossible for a spectator to see it unless immediately
14 behind the performer. When shuffling off to the break,
the right hand holds the cards firmly and the right thumb
16 gives the warning by the sense of touch when the break is
reached. If desired, the right hand may shuffle off, quite
18 carelessly, several cards at a time, and throw the last lot
up to the break, by slightly decreasing the pressure on the
20 ends. Above all, a uniformity of time and action must be
maintained, though it is not at all essential to the blind to
22 shuffle rapidly.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

III. To Retain the Bottom Stock and Shuffle Whole Deck.

Under cut about three-quarters of the deck and shuffle off about two-thirds, then in-jog one card and throw balance on top. Under cut to and include in-jog card (see Fig. 4), and shuffle off.



Fig. 4

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

This blind retains the bottom stock and apparently shuffles the whole deck. The only difficulty in the action is in including the jog card in the second under cut. The jog card is pulled back by the thumb, creating a space above it; then as the under cut is made, the thumb tip is pressed into the opening by squeezing the ends of the under packet, and the upper packet is not disturbed, because the thumb nail slips easily across the card above it as the lower packet is drawn out.

When a jog is formed during the process of any shuffle, and the right hand is shifted a little in or out as the case may be, to allow the jog card to fall in the proper place, the right hand does not at once return to its former position, but

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

18 gradually works back as the shuffle progresses. This leaves
the cards in the left hand a little irregular at the ends, and
20 effectually conceals the fact that any one card is purposely
protruding. The ablest shuffler cannot keep his cards quite
22 even, and the irregularity appears even more natural than
if in perfect order.

23 As blind shuffles for retaining the whole deck in its
original order are never practiced at the card table, and are
24 only adapted to conjuring purposes, the methods will be
found fully explained in the second part of this work.

25 The foregoing shuffles are simple and easy, and when
perfectly performed, absolutely indistinguishable from the
26 true.

ERDNAME SYSTEM OF BLIND RIFFLES AND CUTS.

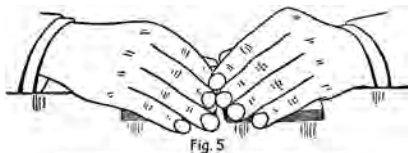
The riffle, i.e., shuffling the cards on the table by
2 springing the ends of two packets into each other, is by
far the more prevalent method in use among regular card
4 players. The possibilities of the riffle, for all practical
purposes at the card table, are limited to retaining the top
6 or bottom stock; but in these respects it is quite equal to
the hand shuffle as a blind, and the apparent process of
8 thoroughly mixing the cards may be indulged in to any
extent without disturbing the order of the top or bottom
10 portion, as the case may be. The order may be arranged
to a very limited extent, but the expert who uses the riffle
12 cares little for stocking. His usual procedure is to place
the desired cards at the bottom and retain them there.
14 However, if the opportunity has occurred for arranging a
top stock, it can be retained during the riffle just as easily.
16 A blind cut should always be alternated with each, or every
second riffle.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

BLIND RIFFLES.

I. To Retain the Top Stock.

Upper cut about half the deck with right hand, place two packets end to end on the table in the usual position for riffling. Seize both packets at sides close to adjoining ends between the third finger and thumb of each hand, and rest the hands on the outer ends of packets. Raise the thumb corners, and at the same moment in-jog the top card of the left-hand packet by drawing it in a little over the left thumb, with the first finger of the left hand. The first and second fingers of the left hand conceal both the jog and the action. (See Fig. 5.) Then begin to release, and spring or riffle into each other the ends of the lower cards with both thumbs;



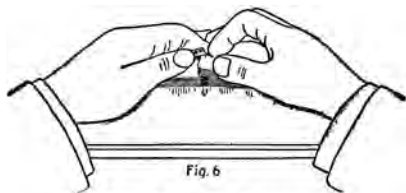
Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1909.

but more rapidly with the left thumb, so that the left packet, with the exception of the top card (which is retained on top of the left thumb) will have been riffled in before the right thumb has released the cards of the top stock. Continue the action with the right thumb until all are released, then

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

release last card held by the left thumb. (See Fig. 6.)

18 This action places one extra card on original top stock.
To square up in the ordinary manner would expose the fact
19 that the upper portion had not been riffled. Drop the left
thumb on the top card to hold the deck in position and shift
20 the left hand so that the edge of the palm will rest on the
table at the end of the left packet and the second and third



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

22 fingers come along the side. Then with the right hand in
much the same position as the left, but held more openly,
24 push the right packet in and square up. (See Fig. 7.) Each
time this riffle is made it leaves an extra card on top, and
26 the top stock is usually arranged to require two or three
extra cards. But if not required the extra card is gotten rid
28 of by "Blind Cut No. I." After each or every second riffle
execute blind cut "No. III To Retain the Top Stock."

30 This riffle, though requiring considerable explanation,

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

is quite simple, and as easily executed as the true. There is no hesitation in the thumb action, although one moves more rapidly than the other. The movements are natural; the positions of the hands are regular, and even the manner of pushing in the cards is the customary one of many players.

But, as intimated, to retain the top stock in the riffle is the exception. In most instances, when the blind is used, it is to retain the bottom stock, and that process which is next described, is even simpler and easier of execution, and more perfect in deception.



Fig. 7

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

II. To Retain the Bottom Stock.

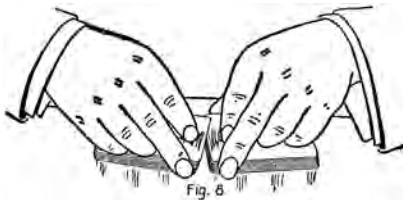
Upper cut about half deck with right hand and place the two packets end to end in position for riffle. Seize both packets at sides close to adjoining ends between second finger and thumb of each hand, the third and little fingers curled in, with the first joints resting on top of packets. Raise thumb corners and release bottom stock first with

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

8 left thumb, then continue action with both thumbs until
all cards are riffled in. (See Fig. 8.) Push both packets
10 together in the ordinary manner and square up.

There is no necessity of covering the bottom stock as in
12 the instance of the top stock, when squaring up; because
unless it is very large it is not noticeable, and more than
14 a half dozen cards are rarely held there. However, the
same plan used to conceal the top stock may be adopted if
16 desired.

Perhaps a simpler way to perform the blind is to leave



CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the bottom stock on the table without riffling it at all, 18
and the left thumb to pick up the cards above it. The right
thumb, of course, picks up the entire right packet. This 20
method prevents any possible difference in the sound of the
riffle, though when cleverly performed it is imperceptible to 22
the ear.

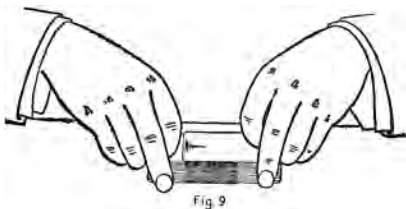
This riffle can be varied by drawing out the bottom 24
half with the right hand and leaving, or first releasing,
the bottom stock with the right thumb. However, all blind 26
riffling should be occasionally alternated with blind cuts,
and when the action is gracefully executed without either 28
haste or hesitation, it is absolutely impossible for any eye to
follow the action or detect the ruse. Execute blind cut "No. 30
IV To Retain the Bottom Stock" with this riffle.

In performing the Top Stock Riffle, the use of the third 32
fingers and the positions of the hands and other fingers, are
very important, as concealment is an essential of the blind. 34
But in the Bottom Stock instance, and especially when the
stock is small, the action of not interlacing the bottom cards 36
is not perceptible, and the handling of the deck should be as
open and artistic as possible. Hence the use of the second 38
fingers and the curled up positions of the third and little
fingers. 40

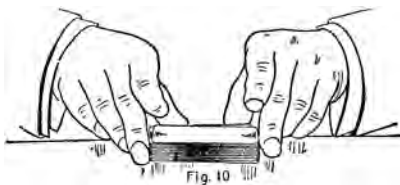
Just here we are reminded that comparatively few card 42
players can make an ordinary riffle with any degree of
grace or smoothness, and especially few understand how to 44
square up properly. But the whole process is of the simplest
nature, and so much easier than clumsy force, if the right 46
method is adopted.

The position given for the Bottom Stock Riffle is the 48
proper one for all ordinary occasions. (See Fig. 8.) The
entire work should be done by the second fingers and 50
thumbs. The least possible pressure should be exerted when
springing the corners together, the cards being hardly
perceptibly bent. When the corners are interlaced, shift 52
the hands to the outer ends, seizing the side corners with

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.



54 thumbs and second fingers, and telescope the two packets
about two-thirds. (See Fig. 9.) Now shift the hands again,
56 bringing the thumbs together at inner side, and a second
finger at middle of each end, and square up the deck
58 perfectly by sliding the thumbs outward along the side,
and the second fingers inwards along the ends (see Fig. 10) until
60 they meet at the corners, squeezing or pressing the cards
into position in the action.



CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

The blind process of riffing the two packets truly 62
together, and squaring up in a slightly diagonal position,
then withdrawing the packets, throwing the original top 64
one on top again; or pushing the two packets completely
through in the diagonal position, leaving the order of the 66
whole deck the same, is quite possible, but very difficult to
perform perfectly. But there is seldom a desire and never a 68
necessity of preserving the complete order at a card table,
and the foregoing methods are much easier to execute, more 70
perfect as a blind, and answer every purpose.

BLIND CUTS.

The blind cut is a natural sequence to the blind shuffle
or riffle. As the cards are cut in almost all games, there 2
would be little advantage derived from clever shuffling,
were the order to be subsequently disturbed in cutting. The 4
able card handler with a player on his right to blind cut,
has the game well in hand. Yet though the advantages are 6
greatly increased by the assistance of an ally, the reader
will learn how it is quite possible to play alone and still have 8
a very tolerable percentage of the chances in one's favor.
Both hands are invariably used to make a blind cut. The 10
first described is an excellent one for retaining either the top
or bottom stock and is in common use among professional 12
players.

I. To Retain Bottom Stock. Top Losing One Card.

Seize the deck with left hand at sides, near end, between
second finger and thumb, the first finger tip pressing on 2
top. Seize the upper portion of deck with the right hand,
at sides, near end, between the second finger and thumb. 4
Raise the deck slightly with both hands and pull out the
upper portion with the right hand, but retain the top card 6
in the left hand by pressing on it with the left first finger

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

- 8 tip. (See Fig. 11.) Immediately drop the left-hand packet on
the table and bring the right-hand packet down on top with
10 a slight swing, and square up.



Fig. 11

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

The action is very simple and easy to execute, the
12 movements are perfectly natural and regular, and, if
performed gracefully, is very deceiving. The process
14 displaces the top card, sending it to the middle, and if this
blind is used when the top stock is to be retained, an extra
16 card is placed there during the shuffle.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

II. To Retain the Complete Stock.

The following is a very bold and bare-faced blind, but if cleverly executed it appears natural: 2

Seize the deck at sides near the ends between the second finger and thumb of each hand, but the left hand seizing the under portion, and the right hand the top portion. Draw out the under portion rapidly with the left hand and place it quickly over towards the dealer, the right hand following slowly and with an upward swing, drops the top portion again on top. 4 6 8

The movements are natural and the blind can be accomplished very neatly. If the plan of drawing off the top portion with the left hand is tried, and then the right following more slowly with the under packet, it will be seen that the identical movements are made in the true cut. It is the movement towards the dealer that makes the blind possible. 10 12 14 16

III. To Retain the Top Stock.

The next two methods of blind cuts are among the most subtle and undetectable manœuvres in card handling. The design and use of the break originated with us, and by its aid blind run cuts can be alternated with the blind riffle, until the most critical skeptic will admit that any prearrangement or knowledge of the cards must be hopelessly lost in bewildering confusion. 2 4 6

Seize the deck with both hands, at sides, near the ends, between the thumbs and second fingers; raise it a little from the table and draw off the top stock with the thumb and second finger of the left hand, dropping the left-hand packet on the table, and bring the right-hand packet down on top of it, but retain firm hold with the right hand, and form the break with the right thumb while squaring up 8 10 12 14

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the deck. (See Fig. 12.) The left thumb helps to form the
16 break, by holding the space between the two packets while
the right thumb is getting the new hold on the whole deck.
18 Then raise the whole deck again with the right hand, and
with the left, draw off the upper portion in small packets
20 between the thumb and second finger until the break is

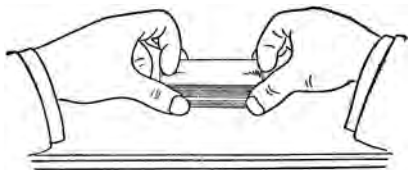


Fig. 12

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

reached, dropping the small packets on the table, one on
22 the other (see Fig. 13); and then throw the balance on top
with the right hand. This leaves the top stock intact.

24 Properly performed, it is impossible to detect the ruse.
The break is formed on the inside, and at one end only, and
26 is effectually concealed at the end by the right-hand fingers.
To see the break the observer would have to be stationed
28 directly behind the operator. The performer himself cannot
see the break, unless his hands are well advanced on the

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

table. When drawing off the small packets, the break is found by the left thumb solely by the sense of touch. The action should not be hurried, and this method of cutting is quite commonly used by many players for the very opposite purpose.

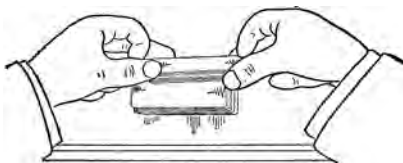


Fig. 13
Copyright, by S. W. Erduase, 1902.

IV. To Retain the Bottom Stock.

Seize deck at sides, near the ends between the thumb and second finger of each hand, raise a little from the table and draw out the bottom stock with the thumb and finger of the right hand and let the left-hand packet fall on the table. Bring the right-hand packet down on top, retaining the hold until the break is formed by the left thumb, which is held at the edge of the under packet in readiness. Square up the deck and raise it again from the table with both hands; draw off top packet to the break with the left hand and drop it on the table. Then continue the left-hand action, drawing off small packets, dropping them one on the other, and throw the last packet on top with the right hand. This leaves the bottom stock intact. The action is much the same

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

14 as the preceding blind, the difference being in the position
of the break.

16 It is very important to adopt the proper positions for
the fingers in these cuts. The deck should be as much
18 exposed as possible, and the open manner of the whole
process makes the blind so much more effective. The cards
20 are handled solely by the second fingers and thumbs. The
third fingers are curled up against the ends of the deck and
22 assist in squaring up, and keeping the cards even. The first
fingers are curled up on top so as to be out of the way and
24 not obstruct the view.

To form the break, keep the left hand in the position
26 it occupies as it drops the packet on the table, the finger
and thumb held open apparently to seize the deck again
28 when the right-hand packet is placed on top. This enables
the left thumb to aid in forming the break the instant the
30 two packets are brought together. The right-hand packet is
placed on top with a sidling movement instead of straight
32 down, which greatly facilitates the forming of the break,
and also prevents the sound from indicating that a space
34 is held. There is nothing difficult about the performance
of these blinds. With a perfect understanding they can be
36 fairly well executed on the first attempt.

This method of blind cutting is particularly adapted for
38 working in with the blind riffle. It appears to assist in mixing
the cards, and inspires the most positive conviction of good
40 faith in the performance. The following combination of the
riffle and cut will illustrate the point:

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

COMBINATION RIFFLE AND CUTS.

V. To Retain Bottom Stock. Riffle II and Cut IV.

Execute Riffle II. Then execute Cut IV. Then Riffle II again. Then draw off with left hand about half the deck in small packets, bring the right hand over on top with the balance, and form a break in squaring up. Then pull out under packet with the right hand and execute Riffle II again. Then pull out a small packet from the middle of deck with the right hand and throw on top. Then draw out about half from the bottom with right hand and form break. Square up, draw out under part again with right hand and execute Riffle II and so on to any extent.

FANCY BLIND CUTS.

The next blind described is in common use among advantage players, and while it has an excellent appearance to the uninitiated, we consider it far inferior to Cuts III and IV as a card table ruse. The principal objection is that, once known as a blind, it can never be worked again, as the action is showy and easily recognized.

I. To Retain the Complete Stock.

Seize the deck at sides, near ends, between second finger and thumb of each hand. Draw out about one-third of deck from bottom with right second finger and thumb, and place on top but retain hold. Then hook up about half of the under part, with the third finger and thumb of right hand, and raise the whole deck from the table with both hands. Now suddenly draw out the middle packet with the right second finger and thumb, the lower packet with the left second finger and thumb, and release the top packet

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

10 with the right second finger, which will allow it to fall on
the table. (See Fig. 14.) Drop the left hand packet on top,
12 and then the right packet.



Fig. 14

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

The hands must be separated rapidly, and with some
14 degree of skill, to allow the top packet to fall fairly on the
table, but this is the only hurried movement in the cut.
16 The other two packets are thrown on top carelessly and
without haste. A little practice is required to execute the
18 ruse gracefully. It is pretty and well worthy of an effort
to acquire. We have elaborated upon this cut, and the
20 following formula for a four throw blind is the outcome:

II. To Retain the Complete Stock.

Seize the deck at sides, near ends, between the second
2 finger and thumb of right hand, and the second and third
fingers and thumb of left hand. Draw out about one-
4 quarter of deck from bottom with right hand and place on
top, retaining hold. Then slightly raise about one-third of
6 the under packet with the second finger of the left hand,
then seize about one-half the remaining lower packet with

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the third finger of the right hand, holding the last or under 8
portion firmly with the third finger of the left hand. Raise 9
the whole deck from the table and separate both hands 10
suddenly (see Fig. 15), letting the upper packet which is 11
released by the right second finger fall on the table. Then 12



Fig. 15

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

drop lower packet in left hand, then packet in right hand, 13
then last packet in left hand, one on the other, and square 14
up. Some practice is necessary to form the divisions rapidly, 15
and the fingers must take hold of the packets without an 16
instant's delay. The action of dropping the packets one on 17
the other should be rather slow. The appearance of the cut 18
is brilliant, and the fact that the order of the whole deck 19
remains intact will puzzle more than the unsophisticated. 20

ONE-HANDED FANCY TRUE CUT.

A very pretty true cut is made in the following manner.
Seize the deck at sides, close to end, so as to expose the 2
whole deck, between the thumb and second and third finger

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

- 4 tips of right hand, the fingers close together, but the second
- finger tip coming only half way down the side. Hook up
- 6 the top portion with the second finger tip so that the corner

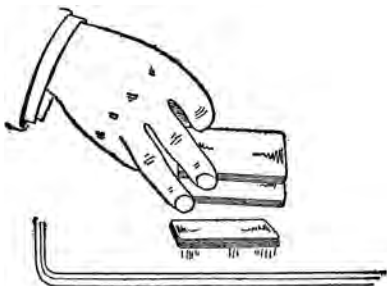


Fig. 16

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

- will come out free of the third finger, thus dividing the deck
- 8 in two. (See Fig. 16.) Then give the hand a slight swing or
 - jerk downwards and inwards, releasing the upper portion

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

with the second finger, allowing it to fall on the table. Then 10
drop under portion on top. In seizing the deck, if it is slid 10
to the table edge and tilted over slightly, the thumb and 12
fingers take hold much easier, and are certain of raising 12
all the cards. In making this cut the deck is held but a few 14
inches from the table, and the action must be nicely made 14
to have the cards fall flatly. The run cut can be made in 16
the same way, dropping the packets one on the other. The 16
action is the same when the cut is made by seizing the ends, 18
but it is a little more difficult. No haste should be taken. 18
The movements should be deliberate, so that the truth of 20
the cut is apparent. The only advantage the cut possesses is 20
its beauty, and a possible aid at times, by giving an excuse 22
to square up with both hands. The run cut is liable to leave 22
the cards uneven, and a left palm holdout can be replaced 24
in this way. The only drawback is the danger in making a 24
display of even such simple ability. 26

TO INDICATE THE LOCATION FOR THE CUT.

While on the subject of cuts, we shall consider the 2
various methods by which a true cut can be made by an 2
ally, and still leave the complete stock intact. The dealer 2
prepares for this by making an extra cut when his shuffle is 4
complete, and indicates by one of the following methods the 4
point at which he wishes his ally to reverse his last action, by 6
making a true cut. 6

1. This is located by the crimp. — When using the hand 2
shuffle make an extra under cut of about half the deck, and 2
when throwing the under packet on top shift the right hand 2
slightly inwards and form an in-jog, the left little finger 4
helping to hold the location between the two packets. Then 4
turn the left hand slightly downwards, bringing the right 6
hand over on top of the deck, and seize the ends between 6
thumb and second and third fingers, apparently to square 8
up. As the right thumb comes against the inner end it pulls 8

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

10 up the in-jog slightly, forming a break. (See Fig. 17.) Then

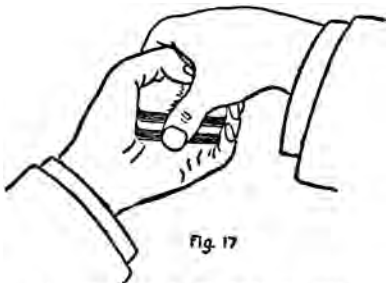
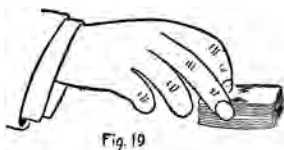
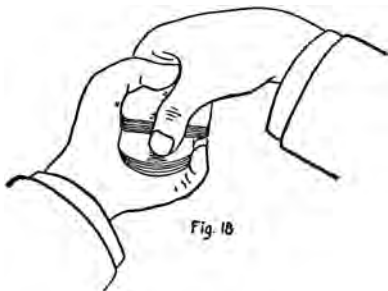


Fig. 17

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

with the fingers of left hand crimp, or squeeze the under
12 packet against palm of hand so as to leave the under packet
slightly concave. (See Fig. 18.) The right hand effectively
14 conceals this action of the left. Lay the deck down perfectly
square to be cut. The ally makes the cut at the ends with
16 one hand, and locates the crimp by touch. There is little or
no difficulty in finding the crimp. It is the most probable
18 place the cut would be made, even if left to chance, and
many an unsophisticated player has unconsciously cut
20 into a crimp and aided in his own undoing. If the deck is
placed before an innocent player so that his hand naturally
22 seizes the ends, the chances are in favor of his cutting to
the opening. (See Fig. 19.) A professional will calculate on
24 this probability when his right-hand neighbor is not an ally.
The main objection to the crimp is that the bent cards may
26 be noticed. The dealer immediately crimps in the opposite
direction when squaring up after the cut.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.



The same result can be achieved by putting in a convex 28
crimp in the under portion. It is led up to in the same
manner, and the first finger of the left hand aids in forming 30
the crimp by being curled up and pressed against the under
packet to bend it upwards. In this case the ally cuts at the 32
sides, and locates the crimp accurately by pressing the

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

- 34 second or third finger tip on the top near the outside edge.
This tilts the upper packet a little, and enables the thumb
36 to find the crimp without an instant's hesitation. (See Fig.
20.)



Fig. 20

- II. *This is located by the jog.* — When using the hand-
2 shuffle change the position slightly so that the four fingers
will lie flatly against the bottom of the deck. Make the
4 extra under cut and bring tips of the second and third left
fingers in against and slightly above packet remaining in
6 left hand. In throwing the right-hand packet on top, let
it slide a little across the left finger tips, so that a jog is
8 made by the bottom card or cards, which are prevented
from going completely over. (See Fig. 21.) This is perfectly



Fig. 21

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

hidden by the right hand. Square up the deck by the ends 10
only and lay down to be cut, thereby not disturbing the jog.
The ally cuts with the left hand, seizing the upper packet by 12
the sides, the left thumb easily and instantaneously locating
the jog by touch. 14

The action of both players must be rapid and careless in
appearance, but not hurried. The irregularity of the side 16
edges made necessary by the jog does not attract attention
or expose the ruse, as in ordinary play the deck is rarely 18
perfectly square when given to cut.

III. This is located by the crimp. — When the riffle is
used, the crimp is put in by first concaving the whole deck. 2
This is a natural procedure, as the cards have a tendency
to get convex, and it is quite customary for the players to 4
straighten them up. By drawing the deck to the edge of
the table the concave tendency can be put in the whole deck 6
first, then as the extra cut is made a convex crimp can be
put in the under part by pressing it quickly downwards 8
with right thumb against the table edge as it is drawn out.
The ally cuts by the ends. 10

IV. This is located by the jog. — Perhaps the best
manner of locating the cut when the riffle is used, is to 2
jog the top card by pushing it slightly over the right-hand
end, with the left first finger. Then make the extra cut with 4
the right hand, throwing the under portion on top, and
squaring up at sides and left-hand end only. The deck is 6
passed to the ally by the sides with the right hand, which
conceals the jogged card. The ally cuts by the ends, his 8
thumb easily locating the jog, and seizing the packet above
it. 10

The particular manner in which the dealer forms the
crimp, or jog, to locate the cut, matters little if it is done 12
in a natural manner and without attracting attention. But
a single irregular movement, or a moment's hesitation, 14
may ruin the play. Hence, however simple and easy the
particular action may be, the execution should be carefully 16

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

planned and practiced beforehand, and when put into
18 effect should be performed almost mechanically. For these
reasons we have devoted much space to many details that
20 may at first appear of little moment.



Fig. 22

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.



Fig. 23

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

BOTTOM DEALING.

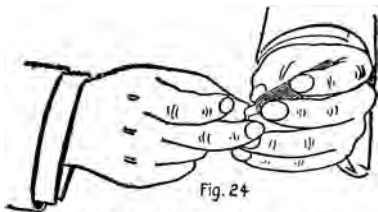
The art of dealing from the bottom, although not the most difficult to attain, is perhaps the most highly prized accomplishment in the repertory of the professional. The bottom is the most convenient place for retaining desirable cards during the shuffle or riffle, and perfection in dealing from that position obviates to a great extent the necessity of stocking, as the cards can be dealt at will, and consequently need not be run up in a certain order. Like acquiring many other feats, a perfect understanding of the exact manner in which it is performed will avoid the principal difficulties. Practice will soon do the rest.

Hold the deck in the left hand, resting one corner against the middle of the first joint of the second finger, the other corner of the same end in the second joint of the first finger, the first two joints of which rest idly along end of deck. Press the deck outward as much as possible and rest the opposite inner end corner against the palm below the base of thumb. Rest the thumb on the top of deck, pointing towards the second finger tip, which just shows at top of corner. Bring up little finger against the side, and the third finger midway between the second and little fingers. The deck is held in position principally by the corners, between the second finger and the palm below base of thumb. The little finger may aid in holding the deck, but it must be released when the bottom card is pushed out. (See Fig. 22.)

The second finger and thumb do the work. Draw back the thumb a little and push the top card over in the usual position to seize with the right hand for dealing. Then draw back the third finger, which action is concealed by the overhanging card, until the tip rests against the edge of the bottom card. (See Fig. 23.) Press up and slightly inwards against that card and push it out, at same time releasing

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

34 the little finger and holding the deck firmly between second
36 finger and palm. If this is done properly it leaves the top
and bottom cards in the same relative position, the top card
effectively concealing the under one. Now advance the right
38 hand apparently to take off the top card. (See Fig. 24.)
Draw back the top card with the left thumb, and at the



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

40 same instant seize the bottom card instead with the right
thumb and second finger and deal it in the usual manner.
42 (See Fig. 25.) This can be done so perfectly that the quickest
eye cannot detect the ruse. It requires some practice. The
44 main thing is to understand the action thoroughly and hold
the deck correctly.

46 The position is an excellent one for ordinary dealing,
and should never be changed. The corner pressed against
48 the palm should be as far from the wrist as possible. Each
time a card is pressed out from the bottom, the deck will
50 have a tendency to slip towards the wrist, and must be held,
or worked back into position again.

52 The left hand does nine-tenths of the work. After the
hold is established, the main task is in acquiring facility to
54 push out the bottom card with the second finger tip. The

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

cards may come out in numbers, or appear to stick fast; but the process is very easy when the knack is once obtained. 56
The second finger tip comes around the corner to the side, just barely sufficiently to hold the deck in place, and when 58



Fig. 25

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

the third finger tip releases the bottom card from the hold of the second finger, it slips out quite freely. The thumb of 60
the left hand plays a very important part in the blind, by drawing back the top card at the proper instant; and it is 62
this action that makes the deal appear perfectly regular. The thumb movement is identically the same as in the true 64
deal, and the drawing back of the top card is undetectable when properly and rapidly executed. A very slight up and 66
down movement of the left hand as the cards are taken, aids in concealing the action. Hoyle makes a point of instructing 68
that a dealer should always keep the outer end of the deck, and the cards, as dealt, inclined towards the table. Following 70
this rule tends to hide the work of the third finger in bottom dealing. 72

Bottom dealing is little used with a full deck. It becomes

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

74 much easier as the pack grows less, consequently the dealer
waits until the last several rounds before resorting to it.
76 It is also easier to deal the cards alternately from the top
and bottom than to take them from the bottom one after
78 the other. The movement of the third finger need not be
so rapid and is less noticeable; and should the deck slip out
80 of position, it can be worked back as the top card is being
taken. When the bottom cards must be taken consecutively,
82 it is an aid to crimp them very slightly, or to jog them a
little, i.e., to allow them to protrude about an eighth of an
84 inch at the side. But neither of the manœuvres is desirable,
or necessary to a good performer.

TOP AND BOTTOM DEALING WITH ONE HAND.

This is a very pretty method of varying the deal, and
2 carries certain advantages with it. The deck is held in
exactly the same manner as described for bottom dealing.
4 The single-handed top deal is made by pushing over the top
card with the thumb in the usual manner, and then with a
6 swing of the hand towards the player, the card is released
by the thumb and slides off the deck over the table in the
8 direction indicated. The single-handed bottom deal is made
by first pushing over the top card as usual, then instead
10 of pushing out the bottom card as in the two-handed deal,
it is sprung back a little by the third finger tip, and then
12 suddenly sprung forward and out as the hand is swung in
the direction of the player.

14 This bottom deal is really more deceptive than where
the two hands are employed, as it appears so open, and the
16 action is completely hidden by the natural swing of the hand
necessarily made towards the player, to cause the card to
18 slide in the proper direction. The action of the wrist is a
little varied as the cards are dealt to the left, opposite or to
20 the right; and the impetus and direction given to each card

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

must be nicely calculated to make the deal appear graceful. Unless the cards fall pretty fairly before each player, it would seem very awkward indeed. The swing, and the wrist action, for dealing the top and bottom cards, are just about the same.

Single and double handed top and bottom card dealing can be nicely combined, and has an advantage over the exclusive use of the one or the other. If the bottom cards are intended for, say, the third player from the dealer, he can deal the first two top cards single-handed, and then bring up the right hand and continue the rest of the round double-handed, giving the third player the bottom card as the hands are first brought together. Each round should be made in the same uniform manner. The advantage in this procedure is, that when the bottom card is wanted the dealer's hands are separated possibly eight or ten inches, and the movement required to bring them together covers up and gives time for the action of the left hand in getting the top and bottom cards in position. The finished expert can deal the bottom cards at will, under any circumstances, without a possibility of detection; but it is our desire to show the most favorable conditions under which the ruse can be employed. The single and double-handed deal is quite frequently used by players who know absolutely nothing about advantages. It looks pretty, the movements are natural, and the change of pace causes no suspicion.

When dealing Stud Poker, or turning a trump, the average player takes off the cards that are to be faced, by inverting the right hand, and seizing them with the fingers on top and thumb under, thereby turning the cards before they completely leave the left hand. This must not be attempted if the bottom card is to be dealt or turned trump. The inverted position of the hand makes it more difficult to get the bottom card out noiselessly. The cards should be taken in the usual manner by the right hand, and turned the instant they are quite free of the deck.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

SECOND DEALING.

As the term indicates, second dealing is the process of
2 dealing the second card from the top, and it is employed
almost exclusively in connection with marked cards. It is
4 obvious that the dealer will possess a very great advantage
by being enabled to reserve for himself, or an ally, any
6 desirable cards as they appear at the top. He need not
bother about acquiring skill at blind shuffling, cutting
8 stocking, or any of the other hundred and one ruses known
to the profession.

10 The deck is held by the left hand much the same as
described for bottom dealing, the tip of the thumb being a
12 little over the end of the top card. This position enables the
thumb to come in contact with the second card by pushing
14 the top card a trifle downwards. To deal, the left thumb
pushes the two cards over the side nearly together, the
16 top card perhaps a little in advance and the second card
showing a little above it at the end. The right hand seizes
18 the second card by the exposed corner, the right thumb
barely touching the edge, but the right second finger is
20 well under the second card and helps to get it out by an
upward pressure as the left thumb draws back the top card.
22 (See Fig. 26.) Then the left thumb again comes in contact
with the second card at the upper edge. The third finger
24 tip prevents more than two cards from being pushed over
the side. The top card continues to move forward and back
26 as the seconds are dealt, but the rapidity of the backward
movement prevents the detection of the action. Properly
28 executed, the appearance of the deal is perfectly regular.
An expert can run the whole deck with the utmost rapidity,
30 and still retain the top card.

Another method of second dealing is to hold the cards
32 loosely in the left hand, the left thumb pushing forward
several at a time, each a little in advance of the other. As

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the right hand comes forward, the top card is drawn back 34
and the second dealt. The left thumb uses some pressure
in pushing the cards forward, but draws back the top card 36
very lightly so as to have the second card protruding. (See
Fig. 27.) The first method is decidedly the better, as it gives 38



Fig. 26

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.



Fig. 27

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

greater control of the cards, and there is less liability of
40 the right hand seizing more than one. There is a knack
in seizing the second card. The second finger of the right
42 hand comes in contact with it before the top card is drawn
back, and gives it a slight pressure upwards, thus helping to
44 prevent it going back with the top card. The right thumb
may actually touch the top card as it is drawn back and the
46 second dealt. The whole action of drawing back the top and
dealing the second card takes place at the same instant.

48 To become an adept at second dealing is as difficult a
task as can be given in card handling, but once acquired,
50 like many other arts, it is as easy as habit. To the player
who uses marked cards this accomplishment is the whole
52 thing, but without readers the time spent in acquiring the
skill is wasted as far as advantage playing is concerned.
54 Opportunities for introducing prepared cards are rare, and
the process of marking during a game, by crease, crimp,
56 or inking, is slow and detectable. However, with "readers,"
"strippers," or any kind of prepared cards the clever
58 professional who values his reputation will have nothing to
do.

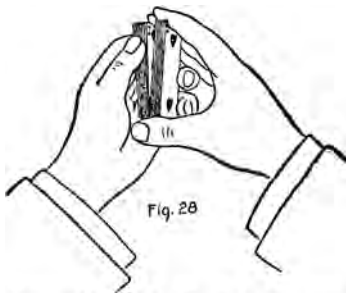
ORDINARY METHODS OF STOCKING, LOCATING AND SECURING.

The most ordinary mode of stocking consists in
2 arranging the cards as discreetly as possible while taking
tricks, or making the discard, or while gathering up for
4 the deal. There is no sleight of hand in this. A player, if he
keeps his wits about him, finds many opportunities during
6 a sitting of prearranging to some extent for his deal. With
the aid of a partner of course the possibilities are doubled.
8 But the general understanding is that the whole deck must
be tampered with before the shuffle begins. If dalliance
10 with the deck is allowed — and it is amazing how much of
that sort of thing is permitted in some games — a practiced

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

operator can run up one or two hands with incredible rapidity, and his actions will appear as mere trifling.

This is done by holding the deck in the left hand, back to palm, with thumb against one side, second, third and little fingers on the other side, and first finger curled up against the back. The right hand now covers the face, fingers at one end, thumb at the other. The left thumb then springs the cards so that the index can be seen. (See Fig. 28.) As a

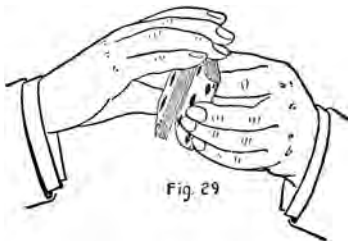


Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

desired card is located, the lower side of the deck is opened at that point, and the left second, third and little fingers inserted, and the card is drawn or slipped out to the top of

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

deck. (See Fig. 29.) Then indifferent cards to the requisite
24 number are slipped from the bottom in the same manner
on top of the first selected card. Then the next desired card
26 is located and brought to the top, and so on till the stock is
complete. Little or no skill is required, but a practiced hand
28 can locate and bring the cards to the top in a moment or two
and without the least noise.



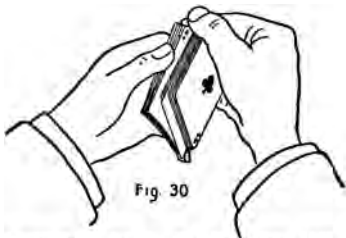
30 Two sets of threes for a Poker game may be stocked
with but four movements, if the desired cards happen to
32 be separated. Assume the game is five-handed. The dealer
glances at the index of the five top cards, or places his own
34 hand on top for the start, and finds, say, Six, Four, Queen,
Nine and Eight. He decides to run up three Fours for the
36 second player, and three Eights for himself. He springs the
cards until he locates an Eight, then inserts second and
38 third fingers, then springs the next two indifferent cards
and inserts the little finger, and slips these three cards to
40 the top. Then he locates a Four and the next indifferent
card and brings these to the top. Then the Eight again,
42 with two cards; then the Four with one card, and the stock

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

is complete. It would take an untutored player ten times as long to set up the hands if he had the deck, table and room all to himself. 44

A more artistic method of locating and securing cards, when the company will stand for dalliance at all, is to jog the desired cards and bring them to the bottom with one movement when about to riffle. It can be accomplished in the following manner: 46 48 50

Hold the deck in the left hand, back to palm, between thumb and fingers, as described for the last process, but in covering the face with the right hand bring the first three fingers straight across the outer end of the deck, the little finger against the lower side at corner and the thumb on top side at corner close to right first finger. Then spring the cards with the left thumb against right thumb. When a desired card is located tilt the packet, then held between the right thumb and little finger, about half an 52 54 56 58



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

inch outward, so that the right thumb will pass the corner of the packet held by the left hand. (See Fig. 30.) Then release the desired card with the left thumb, press down on its corner with the right thumb and bring the right-hand 60 62

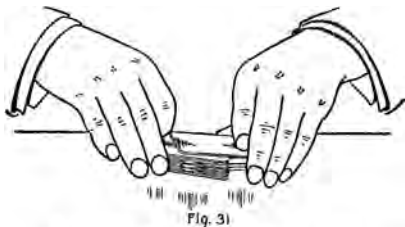
CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

64 packet back to its original position, closing up the space
entirely. In doing so it will force the desired card down
66 and out against the left-hand fingers. Release these fingers
slightly as the packets are being closed, and then press the
68 desired card up again with the left little finger. This will
cause it to protrude about half an inch at the end, but it is
70 entirely concealed by the positions of the hands. The deck
can now be again sprung rapidly with the left thumb in
72 search of the next card without disturbing the one already
jogged, and the procedure be repeated until the required
74 number are jogged in the position of the first. (See last
Figure) When toying with the deck is tolerated, no more
76 innocent-appearing action can be taken. The movements to
jog the cards are imperceptible if cleverly executed, and it
78 is quite apparent to an onlooker that the relative positions
of the cards are not changed. The fact that the springing
80 is continued after the cards are jogged, and the visible end
and the sides of the deck are squared up perfectly before the
82 riffle begins, make it appear to even a suspicious observer
that any knowledge of location would be again lost.

84 When the desired cards are jogged, jog several of the
top cards at the same end, concealing their opposite ends
86 with the right fingers, then shift the left thumb and second
and third fingers to the inner side corners, and turn the deck
88 face down, shifting the right hand to the top at the opposite
side corners in position to make a running cut. Then with
90 the left hand draw off the top packet, sliding out the jogged
cards with the same movement, dropping them on the table
92 (see Fig. 31), and make a running cut with the rest of the
deck. This leaves the desired cards at the bottom.

94 There is no difficulty at all in the action of getting out
the jogged cards. A firm hold on them is obtained by the
96 left fingers, and they are concealed by the packet coming off
the top. If the action of jogging the cards is not suspected
98 the rest is easy and absolutely undetectable. Three or four
cards can be located and brought to the bottom in this

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

manner in ten seconds. The blind riffle is at once proceeded 100
with in the usual way to retain bottom stock.

A complete Top Stock may be run up by the last method 102
if the cards chance to be separated. Assuming again that
the game is Five-Handed Poker, and say Three of a Kind 104
are desired. When the first card is located the next four
indifferent cards are sprung and the five jogged all together 106
with one movement. Then the next card is located, four
added and jogged. But when the third card of the Kind 108
is located but two indifferent cards are added. Then when
about to riffle, the jogged cards are drawn out as in the 110
last described process, but thrown on top instead of on the
table. This action appears like a simple cut. Now the "Top 112
Stock Blind Riffle" is executed twice, which action places
two additional cards on top, and these are necessary to 114
complete the Top Stock and give the Three of a Kind to the
dealer. 116

As mentioned, the desired Three must chance to be
separated by at least the four cards necessary to go in 118

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

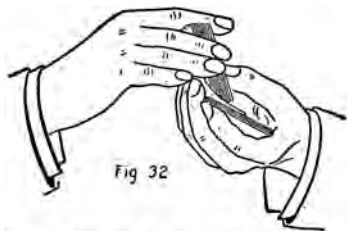
between them. However, the probabilities are that even
120 Four of a Kind will be found so removed. It is very simple to
run up Flushes in this manner, and in nine cases out of ten
122 any suit will be found sufficiently dispersed. It is very easy
to count the cards rapidly and accurately, if the position for
124 holding the deck is properly maintained; and the action is
the same in running up a stock for any game.

STOCK SHUFFLE.

Running up the desired cards in a certain order
2 for dealing, while the deck is being shuffled, can be
accomplished to any considerable extent only by the hand
4 shuffle. The method in common use by expert players is to
draw the particular cards from the bottom. This method is
6 first explained.

Seize the deck at ends between the second finger and
8 thumb of the right hand in the usual manner for shuffling,
the first finger resting on the side. Run several cards into
10 the left hand, but well down into the palm, so that the
second and third fingers protrude to the first joints from
12 underneath. Then when the right hand has made the
next downward motion, instead of drawing off the top
14 card with the left thumb press the left second and third
fingertips against the bottom card and let it slide into the
16 left hand, drawing it into position on the other cards with
the left thumb as the right hand is raised. (See Fig. 32.)
18 The right hand aids the left fingers by pressing the deck
against them and drawing up more horizontally. Then run
20 one card less than the number of players and again draw
one from the bottom, and so on until the stock is complete.
22 The left thumb goes through the same motion when the
under card is drawn, but merely slides across the top card
24 without disturbing it. When the last card has been drawn
from the bottom run as many cards as there are players
26 between the dealer and the player for whom the bottom

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

cards are intended, out-jog the next card and shuffle off
balance. Then under-cut to out-jog and throw on top. 28

This example, of course, is for a game in which the
cards are dealt one at a time to each player. If the game 30
requires two or more cards at a time the action is the same
but merely repeated. The right hand makes the movement 32
of shuffling, on the same plane, or about parallel with the
packet held in the left, and this aids in drawing the bottom 34
cards, as well as disguising that action. There is a little
difference in the sound as the cards fall from the top and 36
bottom, but it is hardly noticeable. This method requires
considerable practice, as the knack of drawing the bottom 38
cards, and but one at a time, does not come easily. But when
acquired it can be executed with wonderful facility and 40
speed, and the ruse is practically undetectable. The shuffle
may be continued to any length by under-cutting below the 42
stock, jogging the first card, shuffling off and then again
undercutting to jog and throwing on top; or the blind top 44
stock, apparent shuffle of the whole deck, may be made as
described in this work. 46

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

Two or more hands may be run up by this method, if
48 one set is placed at the top and the other at the bottom.
The process is to first draw from the top, then from the
50 bottom, in succession, until all the selected cards have
been arranged alternately at the bottom of the left-hand
52 packet, then shuffle off balance. Then run several cards
from the top for a start, and then draw the first card from
54 the bottom. Then run from the top the number that there
are players between where the first bottom card is to fall,
56 and where the second one is intended. Then draw again
from the bottom, and so on until the two sets have been
58 run up. The calculation is very simple and of course should
be made beforehand. For instance, in a five-handed game
60 of Poker assume that three Queens and three Nines are to
be stocked. The Queens are to go to the man who cuts, and
62 the Nines to the second player from the dealer. Place the
Queens on top, the Nines under. Run Queen, then draw
64 a Nine, and so on until all are under the deck. Then the
calculation would be, on every five cards that are shuffled,
66 to draw the second and fourth from the bottom. The cards
must be run up in the reverse order, so the count is made
68 to the right, the dealer being first. His card comes from the
top. Then the second card from the bottom, which is the
70 Queen, then the third from the top, then the fourth from
the bottom, which is the Nine, then the fifth and first again
72 from the top, then the second from the bottom, and so on
until fifteen cards have been run. Then out-jog and shuffle
74 off. Then under-cut to jog and throw on top.

The ability of drawing the bottom cards smoothly and
76 rapidly must be perfectly acquired before this method of
stocking can be successfully used. The most that can be
78 said for it is that it is short. A single hand can be run up
with one shuffle and a throw. By executing the blind top
80 stock shuffle, after the stock is run up, any awkwardness
in the first process may be covered. Success in all card
82 achievements depends on avoiding or allaying suspicion,

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

and the blind shuffles described, if properly performed, will satisfy the most exacting.

84

ERDNASE SYSTEM OF STOCK SHUFFLING.

The common method of stocking which has just been explained is very simple and easy to understand but extremely difficult to execute perfectly. The principal objections are that drawing from the bottom is an unnatural movement, that it requires much skill to accomplish the feat gracefully, and a great deal of practice to acquire the skill, and that this difficult and unnatural movement has to be executed for every card that is put in the stock, thereby increasing the chances of attracting attention when the stock is large. The new method about to be described is infinitely easier of execution, and the movements are so natural and regular that a very indifferent performer can defy the closest scrutiny. The cards may be shuffled with the utmost rapidity, or worked in quite slowly, without fear of exposing the action. The time required is not greater than usually taken in an ordinary shuffle, and the calculations are simple.

The principal aids in this new method are the jogs and the break, and they are used to hold and separate and locate solely by the sense of touch, the various divisions created during the shuffle. The entire stock is run up independent of sight, and, in fact, the dealer can no more follow the action with his eyes than can those who are most interested in scrutinizing his work. We will give as a first illustration the action required for stocking two cards in any game that is dealt one card at a time to each player. The position given for shuffling must be maintained.

Two-Card Stock. — The two desired cards are placed on top, under-cut about half the deck, in-jog top card, run two less than twice the number of players, out-jog and shuffle off. Under-cut to out-jog, forming break at in-jog; run one

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

less than number of players, throw to break, run number
6 of players, in-jog and shuffle off. Under-cut to in-jog and
throw on top. This action places the two desired cards so
8 that they will fall to the dealer in the first two rounds.

The reader who has mastered the blind shuffles should
10 find it a very simple matter to perform this stock. His
knowledge of the terms must be clear, and he must have
12 the slight skill necessary to make the run, jog, break,
and throw, as required in the blind shuffles. If a perfect
14 understanding of this simple stock is obtained it will make
the whole subject easy of comprehension. We will describe
16 the action at length.

Assuming that it is a five-handed poker game. Two
18 kings, the desired cards, which are placed on top. The first
action is to “under-cut about half the deck,” then “in-jog
20 top card;” that is, to push one of the kings slightly over the



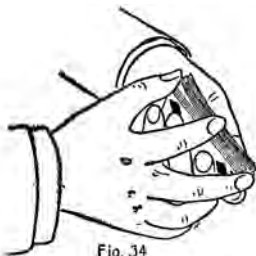
Fig. 33

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

little finger end of the left-hand packet with the left thumb.
22 It is done the instant the under-cut is made, and just before
the right hand makes the downward motion to shuffle.
24 “Run two less than twice the number of players,” which
would be eight; “out-jog,” that is, run the next card out
26 over the left first finger by shifting the right hand slightly
outward, “and shuffle off,” which means to shuffle the
28 balance of the right hand packet into the left hand without
design. The left little and first fingers now hold the in and
30 out-jogs. (See Fig. 33.)

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

The next operation is, "Under-cut to out-jog, forming break at in-jog." The right hand fingers easily find the out-jog, the right thumb presses up a little on the in-jog card, and forms and holds a space, as the under packet is drawn out. (See Fig. 34.) "Run one less than number of players,"



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

four, "throw to break," that is, pass the rest of the cards above the break in one packet into the left hand, which is done by lessening the right thumb pressure somewhat and

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

slightly accelerating the downward motion. (See Fig. 35.)
40 "Run number of players," five "in-jog and shuffle off." The
in-jog is made in this instance by shifting the right hand
42 inward so that the card drawn off by the left thumb will fall
slightly over the little finger. Then "under-cut to in-jog, and
44 throw on top" will be understood.

The only action in any of the formulas for this method
46 of stocking that will be found at all difficult is that of
jogging the top card. It must be done rapidly and just at the
48 moment the right hand is descending to shuffle.



Fig. 35

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

Three-Card Stock. — Any game in which cards are dealt
2 singly. Three desired cards on top. Under-cut about half
deck, in-jog top card, run two less than twice the number
4 of players, out-jog and shuffle off. Undercut to out-jog,
forming break at in-jog; run one less than number players,
6 throw to break, run one, in-jog running one less than twice
number of players, out-jog and shuffle off. Under-cut to
8 in-jog and throw on top. Under-cut to out-jog, run one less
than number of players and throw balance on top. This
10 gives the dealer the three desired cards in three rounds.

In the second shuffle of this stock where directed to "in-
12 jog running one less than number players," the in-jog card

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

is counted in the run. "Under-cut to in-jog and throw on top" is to make a simple cut of the deck below the in-jog card. 14

Four-Card Stock. — For any game in which cards are dealt singly. Three of the desired cards are placed on top, one on bottom. Under-cut about one-third deck, in-jog top card, run two less than twice number players, out-jog and shuffle off to last card, so that it will be left on top. Under-cut to out-jog, forming break at in-jog, run one less than number players, throw to break, run one, in-jog running one less than twice number players, out-jog and shuffle off. Under-cut to in-jog and throw on top. Under-cut to out-jog, run one less than number players and throw balance on top. This gives the four desired cards to the dealer in four rounds. 12

The action of shuffling the last card on top is not at all difficult. A little practice enables the right hand to release all but the bottom card with ease and accuracy. It must be done quite frequently, and the knack can be acquired without trouble. 16

In the examples given the selected cards are stocked to fall to the dealer, but of course this is not always desired. It is just as simple to give them to any player by adding to or taking from the top, which may be done by varying the original calculation or by continuing a blind shuffle. If one card is taken from the top the player on the right gets the cards. If one is added they go to the player on the left, and so forth. 24

The stock must be run up without hurry or hesitation, at the dealer's customary gait. Rapidity is not essential, but smoothness and uniformity are. The break is formed, and the jogs are found, in the usual time necessary for drawing out the under cut. To go through the whole stock slowly is much better than to change the pace. The four-card stock for five players can be run up in fifteen seconds or less, but 32

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

there is no reason why much greater time should not be
34 taken.

The philosophy of the action may be reasoned out or
36 not, as the student sees fit; but in any case to accomplish the
stock gracefully and expeditiously he must not stop in the
38 middle of the shuffle to calculate. The formula and figures
must be literally at his fingers' ends. Most players stick to
40 one or two games, and a little practice at that particular
stock makes it as easy as habit. The highest tribute that can
42 be paid to the method is the fact that certain players whom
we have instructed, can execute the stock with the greatest
44 facility and yet confess they cannot tell why the particular
action produces the result, and they are totally unable to
46 see what becomes of the selected cards until the shuffle is
completed. However, it requires no feat of memory, and a
48 few repetitions of the same formula enables one to stock and
talk at the same time.

Five-Card Stock. — For any game in which cards are
2 dealt singly. Four desired cards on top, one on bottom.
Under-cut about one-third deck, in-jog top card, run two
4 less than twice number players, out-jog and shuffle last
card on top. Under-cut to out-jog, forming break at in-jog;
6 run one less than number players, throw to break, run two,
in-jog one and shuffle off. Under-cut to in-jog and throw
8 on top. Under-cut about one-third deck, in-jog top card,
run two less than twice number players, out-jog and shuffle
10 last card to top. Under-cut to out-jog, forming break at in-
jog; run one less than number players, throw to break, run
12 three times number players, in-jog and shuffle off. Under-
cut to in-jog and throw on top. This gives the dealer the five
14 cards in five rounds.

The formula appears long, but much of the shuffle is a
16 repetition, very simple, and takes but a second or two longer
than the four-card stock.

18 To show the possibilities of this method, we give a fancy
stock for a game of Poker that will throw four of a kind

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

to the dealer and leave two sets of fours on the top for the draw. 20

Twelve-Card Stock. — For Draw Poker. Three sets of
fours on top, the set for the dealer to be the undermost. Take 2
whole deck in right hand, run nine and throw balance on
top, forming in-jog with throw. Under-cut about one-third 4
deck, forming break at in-jog, in-jog top card, run two less
than twice number players, out-jog, shuffle off to break and 6
throw on top. Undercut to out-jog, forming break at in-jog,
run one less than number players, throw to break, run one, 8
in-jog running one less than three times number players,
out-jog and shuffle off. Under-cut to in-jog and throw on 10
top. Under-cut to out-jog, run one less than number players
and throw on top. This gives the dealer the first of his set 12
of four on the second round, and leaves the other two sets
on top for the draw. If the dealer's set is the highest of the 14
three it matters little to him how the draw is made, as none
of the players can get a better hand even by drawing four. 16

The action is the same as the four-card stock, with the
exception of the first shuffle, which arranges three of the 18
dealer's set on the top, and his fourth card at the break on
top of the other two sets. Then — as in the next shuffle 20
the break is thrown on top — it brings the dealer's set in
precisely the same position as the first shuffle in the four- 22
card stock. The balance of the action is the same only
that the second under-cut shuffle in-jogs one less than 24
three times number players, instead of one less than twice
number players; and this is done to put the extra number of 26
cards in the stock so that the five rounds may be dealt and
leave the other sets intact for the draw. 28

We term this example a fancy stock, as it is very rarely
that an opportunity occurs for selecting three sets of four 30
of a kind; but the procedure is the same for two sets, or for
sets of three, or pairs, or, in fact, for the stocking of any 32
number or kind, with slight variation in the calculation.

The foregoing illustrations of stocking are applicable for 34

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

Whist, Hearts, Poker, Cribbage and all games wherein the
36 cards are dealt singly. It is much simpler to stock when the
cards are dealt two or more at a time, and in this class are
38 Euchre, Coon Can, Penuckle, varieties of All Fours, Piquet,
etc. We shall illustrate the simplicity of a Euchre Stock. The
40 hungriest dealer would not desire more than four cards, as
in nine cases out of ten it will give him a lone hand.

Euchre Stock. — Four-handed game. Four desired
2 cards on top. Under-cut about three-quarters of deck, run
seventeen, in-jog and shuffle off. Under-cut to in-jog and
4 throw on top. This will give three of the desired cards to the
dealer and turn the fourth for trump. The dealer takes two
6 cards the first round and three on the last, thereby getting
three of the desired cards on the last round and turning the
8 fourth for trump. The calculation is in merely counting the
number of cards required in the deal before reaching the
10 desired cards, which are for the dealer and the trump. In
a three-handed game the run would be twelve — i.e., five
12 less. In a two-handed game, seven. As described above, the
shuffle is too short. A blind shuffle should be first executed,
14 leaving the desired cards on top, and then the stock run
up. If the two bowers are among the desired cards the left
16 must not be turned for trumps, so it may be placed at any
position among the desired cards save the under one.

18 If the desired cards are to be given to the dealer's
partner the action is almost as short.

Euchre Stock. — Four-handed game. Four desired cards
2 on top for partner and trump. Under-cut about three-
quarters of deck, in-jog top card, run sixteen, out-jog and
4 shuffle off. Under-cut to out-jog, forming break at in-jog,
in-jog first card running eleven, throw to break, run three
6 and shuffle off. Under-cut to in-jog and shuffle off. This
gives the player opposite the dealer three of the desired
8 cards on the second round, and turns the fourth card for
trumps.

10 For the benefit of the reader who wishes to understand

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the philosophy of the procedure, we will explain the calculation fully. We must first determine how the desired cards must stand when the shuffle is completed. The order for dealing the first round is, three, two, three, two; and the second round two, three, two, three. Now, to give his partner three desired cards on the second round they must stand the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth cards from the top, and the fourth desired card must stand the twenty-first from the top to turn for trumps. It would be easy to stock from these figures, but there is a shorter way. As there are only thirty-two cards in the Euchre deck, the desired cards must be nearer the bottom than the top, so if we count from the bottom we will find the trump card is the twelfth, with five indifferent cards between it and the other three desired cards. The eleven cards below the trump and the five above give us the number sixteen, which is the first run in the shuffle. The second run in the shuffle is eleven, which action makes the division, and the rest of the action is for the purpose of inserting the desired cards in the divisions created.

Any one who can understand and execute the Euchre examples, should have no trouble in stocking for any of the other games wherein two or more cards are dealt at a time. The more at a time the simpler to run up more desired cards. But two good cards on each deal are quite sufficient to turn the tide strongly in favor of the advantage player, and for practical purposes stocking more than three should not be attempted. Simple ability to make the run and the in-jog, enables one to stock two or three cards in any game that deals two or three at a time.

THE ERDASE SYSTEM OF CULL SHUFFLING.

In most card games where there is a stake at issue the scrutiny is so close and the rules are so strict, that the expert card handler finds little opportunity to make an

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

4 open selection of any particular cards. The slightest action
that indicates such a purpose invites suspicion, and there
6 is an old adage much quoted that runs, "If suspected,
quit." However, we shall describe a new method of making
8 many selections without a possibility of the design being
detected, and in a manner so natural and regular that not
10 a movement is made that indicates anything more than the
purpose of thoroughly shuffling the deck.

12 The necessary preparation for the cull shuffle is to note
at what particular number the first of the desired cards
14 will stand from the top when thrown on the deck, and at
what number the next will stand from the first, and so on
16 for as many cards as are to be culled. For instance, if there
are three desired cards, the first the eighth from the top,
18 the next the fourth from that, and the next the sixth card
further down, their order is fixed in the mind as eight,
20 four, six. The lowest desired card is eighteenth card from
the top of the deck, but the count is made from one desired
22 card to the other. If the desired cards were together, the
first one the eighth from the top, and the others the next
24 two cards, the count would stand eight, one, one.

The calculation of the positions the cards will take when
26 thrown on the deck is made before the dealer gathers them
up to shuffle, or as he is doing so. It is a very simple matter
28 to note the order in which two or three desirable cards lie,
or, for that matter, five or six. In some games the note is
30 made as the tricks are taken.

In others the last cards that are faced on the table give
32 sufficient choice. For instance, if two hands are shown in a
Poker game, one holding a small pair and the other a side
34 card to match the pair, a glance would determine the order
the three of a kind would take when thrown on the deck.
36 Of course, it would not do to make up the desired cards from
one hand. Lightning don't strike in the same place often,
38 and the dealer would naturally feel a little diffident about
holding the same good cards that were contained in the last

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

hand shown. The Cull Shuffle will bring the desired cards 40
to the bottom of the deck. As a first example we will cull
two desired cards. 42

To Cull Two Cards, Numbers 8, 4. — Undercut about
half deck, in-jog first card and shuffle off. Under-cut to 2
in-jog, run one less than first number, in-jog, running one
more than second number, out-jog and shuffle off. (The 4
two desired cards are now located at top and bottom of the
middle packet, which is held by the in and out-jogs.) Under- 6
cut to out-jog, forming break at in-jog, in-jog first card (a
desired card), throw to break, and shuffle off. (The two 8
desired cards are now together, being the in-jog card and
the next above it.) Under-cut to in-jog and shuffle off. This 10
leaves the two desired cards at the bottom.

The action is a little confusing at first, but when this 12
system of culling is understood it becomes very simple. The
first under-cut and shuffle-off, in the foregoing example, 14
has no bearing on the result, but it places the cards to be
worked on well down in the deck, and this aids in making 16
the whole shuffle appear regular.

To Cull Three Cards, Numbers 7, 5, 9. — Under-cut about
half deck, in-jog first card and shuffle off. Undercut to 2
in-jog, run one less than first number, in-jog running one
more than second number, out-jog running one less than 4
third number, and throw on top. (Two of the desired cards
are now at top and bottom of middle packet and the third 6
on top of the deck.) Under-cut to out-jog, forming break at
in-jog, in-jog top card, run one, throw to break and shuffle 8
off. (The three cards are now together at in-jog.) Under-cut
to in-jog, and shuffle off, leaving the three desired cards at 10
the bottom.

It is necessary to put some little brains into so simple 12
a problem as adding two and two together, and to become
accomplished at culling one must have an understanding of 14
the cause and effect of the various actions. It is impossible
to give a formula that will answer for every situation. There 16

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

is no end to the variety of positions the desired cards may
18 be in. But with a thorough knowledge of the two examples
given, and the reason for each particular action, the student
20 will be fairly established on the road to success, and have
overcome by far the greatest difficulty.

To Cull Four Cards, Numbers 3, 6, 2, 5. — Under-cut
2 about one-third deck, in-jog first card and shuffle off.
Under-cut to in-jog, run one less than first number, in-jog
4 running one more than second number, out-jog running
one less than third number, and throw on top. (Two of
6 the cards are now at top and bottom of middle packet, one
on top of deck, and the last at its original number from
8 top card.) Under-cut to out-jog, forming break at in-jog,
in-jog top card, run one, throw to break and shuffle off.
10 (Three cards are now together at in-jog, and last card at
its number below in-jog.) Under-cut to in-jog and run one
12 less than last number and throw on top. (Three of the
cards are now at the bottom, the fourth on top.)

14 The top card can now be brought to the bottom with its
fellows by an under-cut to top card and a throw on top; or,
16 under-cut about half deck, in-jog top card, and throw on
top; then under-cut to in-jog and shuffle off.

18 To under-cut to top card and throw on top, or, in other
words, to run one and throw balance on top, if done rapidly,
20 appears like a simple cut, and the fact that but one card is
taken from the top to the bottom cannot be detected.

22 These examples of culling, if fairly well executed,
have all the appearance of an ordinary shuffle, and when
24 performed with the smoothness and grace of a clever
card handler it is absolutely impossible to detect the least
26 manipulation.

It will be noticed in the examples given that culling
28 is largely a repetition of the same actions, as the number
to be culled increases; and consequently the time required
30 is greater. But should the desired cards run together in
pairs, as threes or more, the action and time are shortened

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

proportionately. Sets of cards running together are treated 32
much as though each set were one card. If the order be 6,
I, I, I, 4, I, I, the action of getting them all together will be 34
much the same as though they were but two cards at 6, 4.
If the order were 5, I, I, I, 3, I, I, 7, I, the action would be 36
about the same as a three-card cull shuffle, though there
are nine desired cards actually run down to the bottom. 38

To Cull Nine Cards, Numbers 5, I, I, I, 3, I, I, 7, I.
— Under-cut about one-third deck, in-jog first card and 2
shuffle off. Under-cut to in-jog and run one less than first
number, in-jog running all cards to and including last 4
card of second set. (This run is nine, four in first set, two
indifferent cards, three in second set.) Out-jog running one 6
less than next number (six), and throw on top. (This places
first two sets at top and bottom of middle packet, and third 8
set on top.) Under-cut to out-jog, forming break at in-jog,
in-jog top card, run second set (three) throw to break and 10
shuffle off. (All the desired cards are now together, but the
in-jog divides the last two.) Under-cut to in-jog and throw 12
on top. This leaves one card on top and eight on bottom.

This example might well be termed a fancy cull, as 14
running down so many cards will rarely be attempted, but
it shows the possibilities of the system. Before the shuffle 16
is begun the entire action should be mentally rehearsed so
that there will be no hesitation in the procedure. 18

There is no difficult sleight-of-hand manipulation 20
connected with the operation. Any one who can shuffle can
cull, if he has the understanding. Rapidity is not nearly so
important as regularity of time and movement. 22

There are many ways of making the cull shuffle more 24
simple. The dealer can gather up the cards with a great deal
of judgment yet without apparent design. He will never face
a card or cards, or never change the positions in any group, 26
but he can pick up any card or group of cards in the order
best suited to his design without attracting attention. He 28
can note the order the cards fall, in any particular trick,

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

30 how many cards or tricks have been thrown on top of
those he desires, the order of any discard exposed, his own
32 discard, and the last cards placed on the table. There are
scores of opportunities to note the order of desirable cards
34 in any game. If the dealer has an ally the two may work
together in gathering up the cards, and the possibilities are
36 doubled.

When the desired cards are run down to the bottom the
38 dealer could continue the shuffle and run up a top stock, but
the time required for the two operations would be too long.
40 The usual practice is to deal from the bottom. Fifteen or
twenty seconds is plenty of time to execute a three-card cull
42 shuffle, and it can be done in half the time.

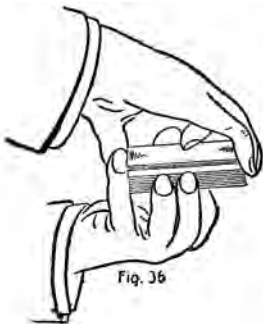
THE ERDASE SYSTEM OF PALMING.

The art of card palming can be brought to a degree of
2 perfection that borders on the wonderful. It is very simple
to place one or several cards in the palm and conceal them
4 by partly closing and turning the palm downward, or
inward; but it is entirely another matter to palm them from
6 the deck in such a manner that the most critical observer
would not even suspect, let alone detect, the action. The
8 methods following were originated by us, and we believe
them to be the most rapid and subtle ever devised.

TOP PALM. *First Method.* — Hold the deck in the left
2 hand so that the first joints of the second and third fingers
will be against the middle of one side, the thumb against
4 middle of opposite side, the first joint of little finger against
middle of end and first finger curled up against bottom.
6 Bring the right hand over top of deck, the third, second
and little fingers close together, first joint of the little finger
8 being against the end corner, the first finger curled up on
top and the tip of thumb resting idly at end, above left little
10 finger. To palm, press the right little finger, exactly at the
first joint, firmly against the top cards, pull them up about

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

half an inch at corner, freeing them from the left second and 12
third fingers, keeping the three right fingers (little, second 13
and third) perfectly straight. The cards to be palmed are 14
now held firmly between the right little finger, and the left 15
little finger. (See Fig. 36.) Straighten out right first finger, 16



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

swing left little finger with the cards to be palmed free of 17
the end of the deck, press the cards into the right palm with 18

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the end of the left third finger. (See Fig. 37.) Draw the

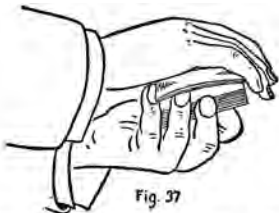


Fig. 37

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

20 deck out about half way from under the right hand, and
release the left hand entirely. (See Fig. 38.) Then the right
22 drops the deck on the table to be cut. After the hands are in
the first position the whole process does not occupy half a
24 second.

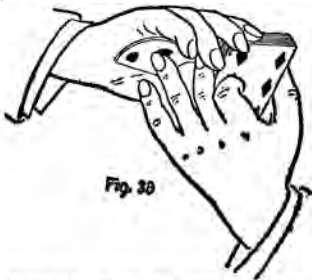


Fig. 38

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

The deck should be kept in view as much as possible, and the right first finger is curled up on top for that purpose until the instant the palm is performed. The action of drawing the deck into view when the cards are palmed is made a part of the whole movement.

TOP PALM. *Second Method.* — The positions of the hands are identically the same as the first method, a slight difference is made in the process of palming. Pull up the cards to be palmed as before, then insert the ends of the left second and third fingers. Now straighten out right first finger, press down on end of deck with all four right fingers, bending the cards to be palmed over the left second and third finger ends, and holding them in place by left little finger. Release left little finger and the cards will spring up into the right palm, the left second finger aiding the movement by pressing the cards firmly into the palm and holding them there while the deck is being drawn into view by the left hand. As described in the former method, the left hand should immediately release the deck, which is dropped on the table by the right.

We consider these methods the best for palming the top cards after a shuffle. The positions the hands assume are taken quite naturally in squaring up the cards. The right hand should seize the ends first, and the left thumb and fingers square up the sides by sliding up and down; then by moving the left little finger to the end of deck the proper position is obtained and the palm made in a twinkling.

When the cut is made reach the right hand boldly for the deck, but instead of picking it up lay the palmed cards on top and draw the deck to the edge of the table. Then the thumb naturally goes under the end and the cards can be picked up with ease.

BOTTOM PALM. *First Method.* — Seize the deck with the right hand on top, between the first joints of the second and third fingers at one end, and the thumb at the other

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

4 end; the fingers close together and the third finger and
thumb close to each corner so as to expose as much of the
6 deck as possible. Bring up the left hand and seize the deck
from beneath at the right thumb end, between the first and
8 second fingers, and the palm just under the second joint of
the thumb, the thumb lying straight across the top close to
10 the end. If this position is secured correctly the tips of the
left thumb and second finger touch the right thumb, as all
12 three are at the same corner of the deck and almost the
whole of the deck is exposed. To palm, grip the bottom cards
14 at the side of corner with the tip of the left second finger,
squeezing them in against the palm under the left thumb,
16 and pull down over end of right thumb about quarter of an



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902,

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

inch. (See Fig. 39.) This will cause the outer-end corner of the under cards to project a little at the side, under the right 18
third finger. Catch the projecting corner with the right little 20
fingertip, pressing the cards firmly against palm under the 22
left thumb, and draw them in toward right thumb, — at
the same time straightening out the left fingers — until
the under cards lie fairly along the left palm. (See Fig. 40.)
Slightly close left hand with the palmed cards and turn 24
partly over and inward as the right hand lays the deck on
table for the cut. 26



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

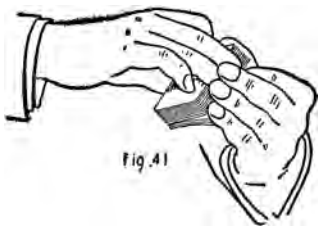
The entire action of this palm is extremely rapid, simple, 28
easy and imperceptible. The only difficulty is in establishing
the proper position for the left hand. To get this absolutely
exact, palm half a dozen cards in the left hand in the most 30
favorable position for holding and concealing. Then with one
finger of the right hand press against the little finger corner 32
of the palmed cards, and — using the diagonal corner as a

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

34 pivot — swing them out and over the first finger until the
left second finger tip can be brought against the corner, and
36 the left thumb lie across the end. Now, if the left thumb
is raised and the balance of the deck is placed on top, the
38 desired position is obtained.

After a shuffle, the position is taken quite naturally in
40 squaring up by merely pushing the deck out of the left palm
until the left thumb lies along the top close to the end.

42 This palm may be made without the aid of the right
little finger. The positions of the hands are taken exactly as
44 before, then the second left finger is dropped sufficiently to
allow the little finger to take its place. The little finger then
46 grips the corner and pulls the cards back to the left wrist
until they lie along the left fingers as before.



BOTTOM PALM. *Second Method.* — Seize the deck with
2 the right hand on top, by the middle of the ends between
the thumb and first joints of second and third fingers, first
4 finger curled up on top. Bring the left hand up against the
bottom, the left second and third finger tips resting idly on
6 the right second and third fingers, the left little finger at
first joint against the edge of the bottom cards at the same
8 end, the left first finger curled up against bottom and the
left thumb resting against the side. To palm, grip the corner

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

of the under cards with the left little finger at first joint. 10
(See Fig. 41.) Then swing finger end of upper portion of 12
deck out against left thumb, keeping right thumb stationary 12
as a pivot, until the finger ends of the two packets are just 14
past each other, straightening out the left first finger at the 14
same time. (See Fig. 42.) Then release thumb end of lower 16
packet, letting it down into left palm, or press thumb end 16
of both packets into left palm, releasing under packet, and 18
slide deck out of left hand and drop it on the table to be cut, 18
turning over left hand with the palmed cards at the same 20
moment.



The whole process is as quick as a flash, and quite 22
imperceptible. The drawback is the slightly unnatural 22
action of bringing the left fingers to the end of the deck. 24
They should be kept at the side in squaring up after the 24
shuffle, then at the last instant slipped to the end, and 26
without a moment's hesitation the palm is made.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

To replace the bottom palm, pick up the deck by the ends
28 with the right hand, and as it is placed in the left slide the
left second finger from the end of the palmed cards to the
30 side, curl the left first finger up underneath (See Fig. 43),
and as the palmed cards are slipped into position bring the
32 left thumb against one side and the left second finger to the
other, which materially aid in the rotary movement of the
34 under packet.



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

It is more difficult to replace than to palm, but the
36 action is not so liable to attract attention, as, if the palm
is not suspected, any awkwardness at replacing may be
38 covered by squaring up the cut. But replacing may be
performed just as perfectly as palming, and to become
40 proficient in either requires some practice. When the
positions and process are thoroughly understood the main
42 difficulties are overcome.

BOTTOM PALM *When Cards are Riffled.* —When the
2 cards are riffled — that is, shuffled on the table — it is
impossible to make a palm in a perfectly natural manner,
4 as there is no reason for taking the deck up into the hands

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

before the cut. The action would appear awkward, or at least unnecessary and a waste of time. But when the company is not too fast the following plan may be used with success.

After the riffle seize the deck at sides, near ends, between second finger and thumb of each hand. Raise the left-hand end until the bottom card faces the left palm, and give the



Fig. 44

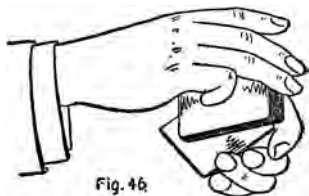
deck a gentle tap on its end on the table. (See Fig. 44.) Then release the right hand and tilt the deck outward, so that the right second finger and thumb can grasp the ends near the top corners. Now release the left fingers, retaining position of left thumb, and tap the table again with the side of deck, at the same time bringing left second and third fingers to end of deck and curling left first and little fingers against the bottom, the left third finger touching the table. (See Fig. 45.) This brings the hands into much the same position



Fig. 45

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

as the *Second Method*. To palm, grip the bottom cards with
22 the left third finger at first joint, and press firmly against
right thumb; raise whole deck slightly, swinging finger end
24 of top portion against left thumb, keeping right thumb
stationary as a pivot, until the finger ends of both packets
26 are past each other, and straightening out left first and little
fingers. (See Fig. 46.) Then press right thumb with ends of
28 both packets down into left palm, releasing under packet,
and slide the deck out of left hand to be cut, turning over
30 the left with the palmed ends at the same time.



After the deck is on its side the movements are
32 perfectly natural in appearance, and the action of tapping
the edges on the table to square up is common enough
34 to pass in most any company. But tipping the deck may
give an opportunity to note the bottom card, and the
36 action will more likely cause a suspicion of that design
than of palming. However, the tilting and tapping may
38 be accomplished without haste and in a manner plainly
evident that no one can possibly get a glimpse. The left
40 hand should completely cover the bottom card, and the

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

deck so handled that at no time does it face either the dealer or the players. 42

The actual palming can be done in a flash, and as we have said, the only objections are the necessary manœuvres 44 to obtain the position in a natural and easy manner.

The top palm can be made with the right hand in much 46 the same manner, by reversing the positions. In which case the right hand seizes the deck by the sides after the palm 48 is made. But there is little occasion for top palming in any game. In the second part of this book will be found, under 50 the caption "Changes," several methods of palming which are lightning-like in rapidity but are more applicable to card 52 conjuring than card playing.

TO MAINTAIN THE BOTTOM PALM WHILE DEALING.

The bottom palm may be held while the deal is in progress without inconvenience. The ruse is adopted for one 2 of several reasons. It may be to avoid the risk of replacing the palm immediately after the cut; as a more favorable 4 opportunity occurs just after the deal when the remainder of the deck is placed on the table. This would be of service 6 in games such as Poker or Casino. The bottom cards can be obtained on the second deal. Sometimes the palm is 8 made after the cut and maintained throughout the deal for the purpose of holding too many. The dealer's cards are 10 placed on the palmed cards, the whole "skinned" through, the discard palmed again in one or the other hand, and 12 replaced when the deck is taken up again. If the bottom palm is made before the cut and maintained throughout 14 the deal it both gives too many and avoids the necessity of bottom dealing, but it is a very poor substitute. This is fully 16 explained under caption of "Skinning the Hand."

The cards are palmed in the left hand and the deck 18 placed across them. The deal is begun immediately. The

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

20 four fingers of the left hand are kept close together with
the tips held firmly against the side of deck, and effectually
22 conceal the palmed cards. (See Fig. 47.) There is little or no
difficulty in performing this perfectly, and the deal can be
24 carried on without a sign to indicate the manœuvre. The
palmed cards will be crimped from their position and the
26 warmth of the hand. The crimp must be taken out when
squaring up.



Fig. 47

TO HOLD THE LOCATION OF CUT WHILE DEALING.

The object of holding the location of the cut is so that a
2 shift may be made at that point when the first deal has been
completed. This will bring the original bottom cards to that
4 position again, from which they may be dealt during the
second deal, and the most opportune moment for the shift is
6 immediately after the first deal, as the deck is deposited on
the table.

8 When the cut is made, pick up the packet that was
under, by the sides, near end, between second and third
10 fingers and thumb of right hand, and lay it on top of
packet cut-off, so that the then under packet forms a jog or
12 protrudes about quarter of an inch toward the right wrist.
Pick up the two packets the instant the one is placed on
14 the other, by a sliding movement, with the fingers in the

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

same position, and place the deck across the left palm with
the left thumb on top to hold it in position. Then release
sides of deck with right hand and seize ends to square up.
In doing so the right thumb comes against the inner end
and in contact with the jog or projecting under packet.
Press this down a little with the thumb and square ends of
deck, forming break at thumb end. Now shift the left hand
slightly so as to hold the break with the tip of the left little

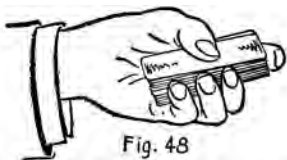


Fig. 48

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

finger at the side, close to the end, and begin the deal. (See
Fig. 48.) The break is not more than an eighth of an inch
wide, and is concealed by the left third finger. The action is
very simple, yet should be carefully studied. The slight jog
in the two packets as they are picked up is not noticeable, as
the top packet overhangs at the outer end and the one most
likely to show is hidden by the right hand. But in any case
it would not matter much, as the action of squaring up after
the deck is placed in the left palm appears genuine, and the
break can be formed without a possibility of detection. The
little finger can hold the break by pressing against the ball
of the thumb without the least inconvenience while the deal
progresses.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

SHIFTS.

There are many methods of performing the manœuvre
2 that reverses the action of the cut, but in this part of our
work we will describe but three which we consider at all
4 practicable at the card table. This artifice is erroneously
supposed to be indispensable to the professional player,
6 but the truth is it is little used, and adopted only as a last
resort. The conjurer employs the shift in nine-tenths of his
8 card tricks, and under his environments it is comparatively
very simple to perform. A half turn of the body or a slight
10 swing of the hands, or the use of "patter" until a favorable
moment occurs, enables him to cover the action perfectly.
12 But seated at the card table in a money game, the conditions
are different. The hands may not be withdrawn from the
14 table for an instant, and any unusual swing or turn will
not be tolerated, and a still greater handicap arises from the
16 fact that the object of a shift is well known, and especially
the exact moment to expect it, immediately after the cut.
18 The shift has yet to be invented that can be executed by
a movement appearing as coincident card table routine; or
20 that can be executed with the hands held stationary and
not show that some manœuvre has taken place, however
22 cleverly it may be performed. Nevertheless upon occasion it
must be employed, and the resourceful professional failing
24 to improve the method changes the moment; and by this
expedient overcomes the principal obstacle in the way of
26 accomplishing the action unobserved. This subterfuge
is explained in our treatment of the subject, "The Player
28 Without an Ally," under the distinctive heading, "Shifting
the Cut."

30 The first shift described is executed with both hands
and is a great favorite. It is probably the oldest and best in
32 general use.

TWO-HANDED SHIFT. — Hold the deck in the left hand,

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the thumb on one side, the first, second and third fingers 2
curled around the other side with the first joints pressing 4
against the top of the deck and the little finger inserted at 4
the cut, or between the two packets that are to be reversed.
The deck is held slantingly, with the right side downward. 6
Bring up the right hand and cover the deck, seizing the 6
lower packet by the ends between the thumb and second 8
finger, about half an inch from the upper corners, the right- 8
hand fingers being close together but none of them touching 10
the deck but the thumb and second finger. (See Fig. 49.) If 10



this position is properly taken the right hand holds the lower 12
packet and the left hand clips the upper packet between the 12
little finger and the other three. Now, to reverse the position 14
of the two packets, the right hand holds the lower packet 14
firmly against the left thumb, and the left fingers draw off 16

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the upper packet, under cover of the right hand (see Fig. 18 50), so that it just clears the side of the lower packet, and



then swing it in underneath. (See Fig. 51.) The left thumb
20 aids the two packets to clear each other by pressing down on
the side of the under packet, so as to tilt up the opposite side
22 as the upper packet is drawn off. The under packet being
held by only one finger and thumb, can be tilted as though
24 it worked on a swivel at each end, and the right fingers may
retain their relative positions throughout. Most teachers
26 advise assisting the action by having the fingers of the
right hand pull up on the lower packet, but we believe the
28 blind is much more perfect if there is not the least change
in the attitude of the right fingers during or immediately
30 after the shift. The packets can be reversed like a flash,
and without the least noise, but it requires considerable
32 practice to accomplish the feat perfectly. The positions must

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

be accurately secured and the action performed slowly until accustomed to the movements.

34



THE ERDNASE SHIFT. *One Hand.* — The following method is the outcome of persistent effort to devise a shift that may be employed with the greatest probability of success at the card table. It is vastly superior for this purpose, because the action takes place before the right hand seizes the deck, and just as it is about to do so, thereby covering naturally and actually performing the work before the action is anticipated. It is extremely rapid and noiseless, and the two packets pass through the least possible space in changing their position. The drawback is the extreme difficulty in mastering it perfectly. Many hours of incessant practice must be spent to acquire the requisite amount of

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

skill; but it must be remembered if feats at card-handling
14 could be attained for the asking there would be little in such
performance to interest or profit any one.

16 Hold the deck in the left hand, little finger at one end,
first and second fingers at side, thumb diagonally across top
18 of deck with first joint pressed down against the opposite
end, and the third finger curled up against the bottom. The
20 second fingertip holds a break at the side, locating the cut,
or separating the two packets that are to be reversed. (See
22 Fig. 52.) Now, by squeezing the under packet between the



Fig. 52

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

second finger and palm and pressing the upper packet with
24 the thumb at one end against the little finger at the other
end, it will be found that the two packets can be moved
26 independently. To reverse their positions, hold the upper
packet firmly by pressing with the thumb, open the two
28 packets at the break and draw out the under packet with
the second and third fingers, the second finger pulling
30 down and third finger pressing up, until the inner side of

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the under packet just clears the outside of the upper packet. (See Fig. 53.) Then press the lower packet up and over on top. When getting the under packet out and forcing it clear of the upper packet, it is turned a little by the third finger, so that the corner at the little finger end appears over the side first. The little finger aids in getting the under packet over or the upper packet underneath by pulling down on the upper packet when the lower one is just appearing over the side. (See Fig. 54.)



Fig. 53

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

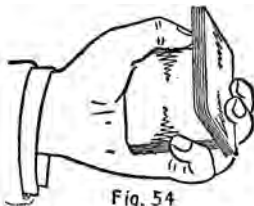


Fig. 54

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

40 Doubtless the first attempts to make this shift will
impress the student that it is impossible. The very unusual
42 positions of the fingers will appear to give them no control
over the deck; but the facts are the packets may be held with
44 vice-like rigidity during the entire operation, or it may be
performed by holding the packets very loosely, and in each
46 case either in a twinkling or very slowly.

The principal difficulty will be in drawing out the
48 under packet in such a manner that it will not fly out of
the fingers. It must not spring away from the upper packet
50 at all, but should slip along, up, and over in one continuous
movement.

52 Of course, in performing this shift at the card table
the right hand is brought over the deck just at the moment
54 of action, and the operation may be greatly facilitated by
allowing the under packet to spring very lightly against the
56 right palm; but the finished performer will use the right
hand only as a cover, and it will take no part at all in the
58 action. We presume that the larger, or the longer the hand,
the easier it will be for a beginner to accomplish this shift,
60 but a very small hand can perform the action when the
knack is once acquired.

62 The amateur who does not wish to spend the time
necessary to perfect himself in this very difficult one-
64 handed shift, may obtain nearly the same result by adopting
the following method, which is performed with both hands
66 and is very much easier:

ERDNAME SHIFT. *Two Hands.* — Hold the deck in the
2 left hand as described in the one-hand shift, except that the
first finger is curled up against the bottom and the third
4 finger is held against the side. Now bring the right hand
over the deck, the fingers held close together but in easy
6 position, and insert the tip of the little finger in the break at
side close to outer corner, just sufficiently to press down on
8 corner of the under packet. To make the shift, press down
with the right little finger, and out and up with the left first

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

finger, holding the upper packet firmly between left thumb 10
and little finger. (See Fig. 55.) The lower packet will spring

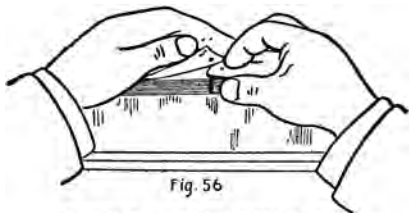


into the right palm, the top packet is lowered by the left 12
thumb and little finger, and the bottom packet closed in on 14
top by the left second and third fingers. This two-handed 14
form of the shift is comparatively very easy to execute; it 16
is extremely rapid and can be performed without the least 16
noise.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

TO ASCERTAIN THE TOP CARDS WHILE RIF- FLING AND RESERVE THEM AT BOTTOM.

During the process of a riffle an expert performer
2 can obtain a glimpse of the top cards and bring them to
the bottom in reserve for the deal. It requires a suspicious
4 and very knowing player to detect the ruse. The glimpse
is obtained by slightly in-jogging the top card of the left-
6 hand packet, as explained in treatment of "Blind Riffles,"
under caption, "No. 1 to Retain Top Stock." As the thumbs
8 raise the corners of the two packets to riffle, the top card
is slightly jogged over and raised by the left thumb, just
10 barely enough to obtain a glance at the index, and when
the cards are riffled the card seen is left on top, as it
12 naturally should be. (See Fig. 56.) It is quite possible to



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

get a glimpse without jogging the card if the cards are
14 sprung in the usual manner and the last one retained for an
instant in a slightly elevated position by the left thumb. But
16 this operation is more liable of detection. The opportune

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

moment, both to jog and to get the glimpse, is after the corners are raised and as the thumbs are about to release the cards. The top card is brought to the bottom by a ruse worked in connection with the Blind Cut, described under heading of "No. IV. to Retain Bottom Stock." An undercut is made with the right hand, and as the packet is placed on top it is done with a sidling movement, the tip of the right thumb lightly slides across the top card of the then under packet, pushing it a little over the inner side. The left thumb is at the side to receive it, and forms a break, so that it becomes the under card of the top packet when squared up. Then the Blind Cut is executed as described, the top packet to the break is drawn off first, and the rest of the deck in several packets, and the particular card is left at the bottom. The riffle is again executed, retaining this card at the bottom, the glimpse obtained of the next top card of the left-hand packet, which is brought down in like manner, and so on. These cards might be left on top, but they would be of little use there. If at the bottom, the knowledge of two or three cards is of immense advantage to an expert. When playing alone he either deals without replacing on the cut, or palms for the cut, or shifts after the cut. If he has an ally on his right a Blind Cut is made. In any case he deals the cards from the bottom, to himself if they are desirable, and to an opponent if not.

MODE OF HOLDING THE HAND.

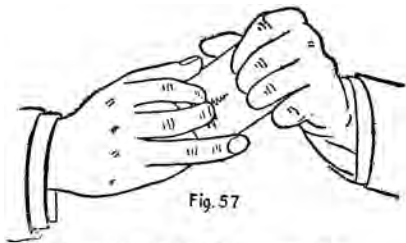
The professional player, ever conscious of the necessity of uniformity, will always hold his hand in the same manner; and as he often finds it convenient to have more than his share of the cards, the position must be one which will always disguise that possibility. The best for all purposes is as follows:

Hold the cards in the left hand, the end fitting into the third joints of the first, second and third fingers, the lower

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

corner resting on the little finger close to the third joint, and
10 the little finger curled in so that the cards rest on the first
joint also. The left thumb rests on the upper side, and the
12 first, second and third fingers are curled in so that their tips
rest against the back.

14 To read the cards, bring the right hand up, the third
finger against the under side, the little finger against the
16 end, the first and second fingers curled up on back, and the
thumb on top. (See Fig. 57.) Then, with a sliding downward



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

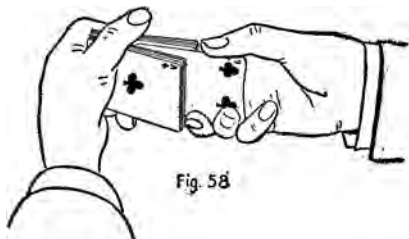
18 movement of the left thumb crimp or convex the cards
sufficiently to read the index on each; or, open the edges
20 slightly with the right thumb by springing the cards one
at a time against the left thumb, which is pressed on top to
22 keep them open. This exact position is very important for
several reasons, principally because it effectually conceals
24 the number held, and it enables the player to “skin” his
hand and palm off the extra cards without fuss or unusual
26 movements. In general appearance the hold is the same as
adopted by very many players for the excellent purpose of
28 preventing bystanders from getting a glimpse.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

SKINNING THE HAND.

When too many cards are held the hand must be sorted, the extra cards brought to top or bottom, the discard palmed and restored, smoothly, rapidly and with movements that are customary.

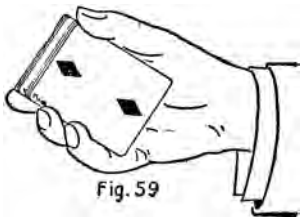
The cards are held as described for "Mode of Holding Hand." Separate the upper edges with both thumbs so that the right thumb can press against the card to be brought to the top. Bend this card slightly between right thumb and second and third fingers, so that it can be slipped from beneath the left thumb. Then, holding this card firmly, and keeping the right hand almost stationary, pull out the rest of the cards with the left hand by a backward and inward motion and by pressing the left fingertips against the back. (See Fig. 58.) Then shove the right-hand card on



top. The action is not concealed, but made openly. It is a very common procedure for arranging any hand for play or discard. If the discard happen to lie together, bring them to the top with one action.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

Now the top cards must be palmed, and one of the
20 methods already described in this work may be employed.
But for use in this particular case we would advise another
22 palm, which is most fitting for a discard, and especially the
movements leading up to the actual palming. Form a break
24 between the discard and the rest and hold the break with the
right thumb. Shift the left thumb to the outer-end corner of
26 the under packet, and slide it down about half an inch into
the right palm. Close the break, hold cards with left hand,
28 release the right and push the cards further down into the
right palm between base of thumb and third and little
30 fingers, sufficiently to allow tips of right thumb and second
finger to reach the outer-end corners over the left thumb
32 and little finger. (See Fig. 59.) Now release the left hand



entirely and turn the right palm downward. This position
34 covers the sides and the inner end completely, concealing the
quantity, and the fact that the packets overlap, and yet has a

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

very easy and natural appearance. (See Fig. 60.) The right ³⁶
hand can now nonchalantly hold the cards, while the left ³⁸
handles the chips or makes a bet. When ready to deal again, ³⁸
the left hand seizes the cards from below, at the middle of



sides, between second and third fingers and thumb, and the ⁴⁰
little finger on the protruding corner of the under packet,
and at the same moment the right four fingers are shifted ⁴²
to the outer end as if to take the fresh hold. Press down
on the outer end, hold inner protruding end with left little ⁴⁴
finger, release the upper packet which is held by the left

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

46 thumb and second and third fingers (see Fig. 61), and it
will spring up into the right palm. The left hand instantly
48 draws the under packet out sideways about half way, and
the right hand drops it on the table and then places the
50 palmed cards on the deck while picking it up. This method



of palming is excellent after the position is secured, and
52 under the circumstances just described it is better to take
this position than to make the palm immediately after the
54 hand is skinned. If it is desired to palm in the left hand, the
discard is retained and the others brought to the top while
56 skinning. Then one of the bottom palms described must be
employed.

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

THE PLAYER WITHOUT AN ALLY.

It is the general belief that it takes two to obtain any advantage in a card game with knowing players — the dealer and the man who cuts. That this is generally true cannot be denied, but it is by no means always so. There are many ways of beating the game alone, and though the percentage in favor of the single player may be less in any given instance, it is pretty constant and quite sufficient to insure a very comfortable living to many clever people, though the card table is their sole source of revenue.

The greatest obstacle in the path of the lone player is the cut. It is the *beté noir* of his existence. Were it not for this formality his deal would mean the money. Though he may run up a hand however cleverly, the cut sends him to sea again. "Put your faith in Providence, but always cut the cards," is a wise injunction. Sometimes the cut is not made, and the adept dearly loves to sit on the left of a player who is careless enough to occasionally say, "Run them" — i.e., he waives the cut. Professional players always calculate on such a possibility, and will continue to stock on every deal to some extent with that chance in view.

Dealing Without the Cut. — When the dealer has desired cards on the bottom and the cut is made without replacing the two packets, he will pick up the packet that was under and immediately proceed to deal from that alone. In this way he can get the under cards by bottom dealing. The cut is usually made in this way, and the dealer aids the play by being ready to seize the under packet as the top is lifted off. However, if the company will not stand for this, and some one says, "Carry the cut," he will, of course, do so in future and turn his attention to other manœuvres.

Replacing the Cut as Before. — A daring and yet oftentimes successful ruse of overcoming the cut difficulty is to pick up the under packet with the right hand, and

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

4 instead of placing it on the other packet it is slid across
the table into the left hand, and then the second packet
6 placed on top in the same way. The packets may be picked
up by the right hand instead of sliding them. The move
8 is made quite openly, carelessly and without haste, and is
surprisingly regular in appearance. It will not pass in fast
10 company, but the beauty of it is that if noticed it can be
attributed to thoughtlessness.

Holding Out for the Cut. — To hold out in a card game is
2 the riskiest and most dangerous form of taking advantage
that a player may attempt, but it can be, and is, successfully
4 practiced when cleverly performed and the player is not
suspected. But the only hold out that we consider really safe
6 is made by the dealer, and but for the moment of cutting.
After a blind shuffle, with the desired cards on the bottom,
8 the dealer palms in the left and passes the deck with the
right to be cut. After the cut he picks up the deck with the
10 right hand and replaces the palmed cards when squaring
up for the deal. Of course, this necessitates a perfect
12 knowledge of palming and replacing, but both actions then
become possible in any kind of company, if the player is
14 not suspected. Holding out for the cut is incomparably less
risky than holding out on another's deal; as the deck is never
16 subject to being handled or counted, and the palmed cards
remain in the dealer's possession but for the moment.

18 When there are but two or three players in a game
where the cards are dealt one at a time, a top stock of four
20 or six cards may be run up and palmed in the right hand
as the deck is passed for the cut. The top palm is replaced
22 when picking up the deck, and usually by a sliding motion.
This palming and replacing of the top stock is easier and
24 perhaps less noticeable, and does not require the bottom
work in the deal; but when there are five or six players, or
26 when the cards are dealt two or more at a time, the quantity
to be palmed would be too bulky.

Shifting the Cut. — There is a current supposition that

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the expert player employs what is commonly known as the two-handed shift to reverse the action of the cut, but there has never been a shift invented that can be executed during a card game by movements that appear quite regular. If the professional player could always sit in with neophytes, who would stand for actions that are foreign to the usual procedure, he would have little need of special ability to get the money. In the average game where the players keep their hands, and arms also, on the table there is little opportunity to shift the cut. Still there is an opportune moment in some games when the shift may be made with probabilities of being unnoticed. It is immediately after the first deal. The dealer holds the location of the cut until the hands are dealt, and makes the shift as he lays down the deck. Then the desired cards can be dealt from the bottom during the next deal. This moment, after the first deal, is the most favorable, as the players are occupied with their hands, the cut has been made quite regularly, the deal finished and consequently there is less cause for close scrutiny. But principally because the shift can be made with a much more natural action when about to lay down the deck than when picking it up, and also because the deck is much smaller after the deal and therefore so much easier to shift. In any game where cards are dealt the second time the play holds good. But, in any event, shifting is much more noticeable than palming for the cut.

Dealing Too Many. — A favorable and perhaps the most generally used advantage is in the dealer giving himself one or two extra cards on the last round. The quantity is not noticeable when lying on the table, and as the extra cards are taken on the last round there is little time for inspection. The dealer immediately picks them up with the left hand as the deck is deposited on the table by the right. The selection is made and the discard palmed and gotten rid of as described under headline, "Skinning the Hand." When holding too many in Poker, it is preferable to palm

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

and replace the extra cards on the deck when picking it up
12 to deal the draw than to make the discard and throw the
extra cards with it on the discard heap. The dealer palms
14 the extra cards, lays his full hand on the table, replaces the
palmed cards, deals the draw and his own draw, then makes
16 his discard and picks up his draw.

A second method of taking too many is by palming
18 the desired number after the deal. The left hand makes the
palm as the right is about to lay down the deck. A still safer
20 plan is to make the palm immediately after the cut when
squaring up, and maintain the palm while dealing. This
22 can be done perfectly and avoids the slightest hesitation or
movement after the deal is finished.

Crimping for the Cut. — The probability of the
2 unsuspecting player cutting into a crimp is always kept
in view. The process of crimping is fully explained under
4 caption "Indicating Location for the Cut." When crimping
for the chance of the cut being made at that point, the bend
6 is put in more forcibly, and sometimes if the company is
not too fast, the two packets may be crimped in opposite
8 directions, creating quite a space and thereby increasing
the probabilities of the player unconsciously cutting into it.
10 The packets may be crimped concave, or convex, as thought
best for the player's mode of cutting, but the deck should
12 be squared up perfectly and laid down accordingly. It is
the rule for players to cut in about the same manner each
14 time. That is, he cuts high, low or near the middle and
seizes the cards by the sides or ends. The mode of cutting
16 oftentimes becomes a habit that is unconsciously followed.
The observant dealer is thus enabled to put in his crimp high
18 or low, in about the location most favorable, and concave if
the player cuts by the ends, and convex if at the sides. The
20 deck must be laid down so that the hand which the player
habitually uses will come naturally into the most favorable
22 position to oblige the dealer. Even if the crimp is missed it
still locates the stock, and the dealer has other opportunities

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

of profiting thereby. Of course crimped cards are never 24
dealt. The crimp is effectually taken out by bending in the
opposite direction. 26

Replacing Palm When Cutting. — As a general rule the 2
card expert will not hold out except on his own deal for the
cut; however, we shall describe an exception that is at times 4
worked successfully. The player on the dealer's right may
hold out a palm in either hand, and replace it when given the
deck to cut. In games wherein the whole deck is dealt, the 6
hold out is usually palmed in the right hand back to palm.
When the deck is received he makes a running cut, seizing 8
the deck by the ends in both hands. The first pass to take
of the first small packet, is a blind, and the palmed cards 10
are dropped on the table. Precisely the same movement is
made as in taking off a small packet by the ends. Then the 12
running cut is continued, leaving the palmed cards on the
bottom. 14

Another method is to palm in the left hand face to 16
palm. The cut is made with the right hand, and then the
deck placed in the left on the palmed cards, the replacing
appearing as a square up. But this plan is risky, as there 18
is little excuse for squaring upon another's deal. If a one
handed fancy cut is made with the right hand, and the cards 20
left somewhat scattered, they may be with more propriety,
taken up into both hands and squared. 22

A third way, and the most generally employed, is for 24
the right hand holding the palmed cards back to palm to
make a cut by the ends, and then deposit the palmed cards
on the packet that was under, when picking it up to put in 26
place. This is good in any game as the palmed cards are
dealt first. 28

Cleverly executed, a hold-out can be replaced in cutting 30
without attracting the least notice, but it requires as much
practice and study as any other artifice. As the player
who cuts was the last dealer, it usually gives him a good 32
opportunity to hold out and arrange desired cards; and as

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

34 such an advantage is on another's deal, it greatly increases
the percentages of the expert. The methods described
36 can be successfully worked with as many as eight or ten
cards, though of course the greater the number, the more
38 probability of the dealer noticing the diminished condition
of the deck; but it requires a good judge to detect the
40 absence of half a dozen or so. Of course cards so held out
to replace when cutting are arranged so that the desirable
42 cards will fall to the operator.

The cautious and prudent expert makes it a rule to never
44 "hold out," or palm extra cards, or deal himself too many,
or obtain more than his share through any artifice, unless
46 the regular procedure of the game will bring the deck into
his possession, so that he can get rid of the extra quantity,
48 naturally and easily, by replacing them on the top or
bottom of the pack. To "go south" with extra cards, i.e.,
50 to drop them in the lap, or conceal them any place about
the person, or hold them palmed during the play, or even
52 to throw them on the discard heap when making his own
discard, is inartistic, and risky, and unworthy of any but
54 a neophyte or a bungler. Possibly the most closely watched
procedure, and the easiest to observe in a poker game, is
56 the number of cards that are discarded; and where there
is the least suspicion, discarding too many in the ordinary
58 way is surely detected. When playing poker the expert will
hold too many only on his own deal, and then only before
60 the draw. He can palm and replace the extra card or cards
when about to deal the draw.

62 In Cribbage the non-dealer may hold out one or two
cards, and after the crib is laid out, replace the extra card
64 when cutting for the turn-up. But in whatsoever game,
where cards are held out at all, the rule holds good that
66 they must be restored, and at a moment when the regular
procedure of the game necessitates the handling of the
68 deck.

Cassino gives the dealer many opportunities of holding

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

too many, as the deck is continuously handled during the 70
game.

The Short Deck.— A simple method of obtaining an 2
advantage in many games is that of playing with a “short” 2
deck. Several cards are removed entirely from the pack,
but retained in the memory, and the game is played 4
without them. The knowledge that these particular cards
are withheld enables the strategist to make his calculations 6
and play his own cards with a great deal more certainty.
Cards held out entirely are usually destroyed, or otherwise 8
effectually disposed of, so as to preclude the possibility of
the schemer being discovered “with the goods on him.” 10
A very bold expedient at Two Handed Cassino is to dispose
of eight cards. This runs the deck to five deals instead of 12
six. The lower cards are usually selected, and of different
denominations, say the four and six of spades, and the 14
deuce, tray, four, five, seven and eight of other suits. With
this arrangement, or depletion, an adversary enjoying 16
ordinary luck, will find in summing up his points that he
does not make “cards” or “spades” in a very long time 18
indeed, and of course he credits his opponent with three
points. The idea of so many cards being withheld from the 20
deck without being noticed, will doubtless cause certain
Cassino players to smile. We don’t think many shrewd 22
players could be so imposed upon, but we regret the truth
of the confession that once upon a time we were, and we 24
marveled greatly and also sorrowed, over a continuous and
very protracted run of “hard luck.” 26

THREE CARD MONTE.

We cannot leave the general subject of card table artifice 2
without giving some consideration to the ancient and
honorable game whose title furnishes the headline for this 2
paragraph. Only three cards are used, but the more players 4
the merrier. The banker, or dealer, shows the faces of any

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

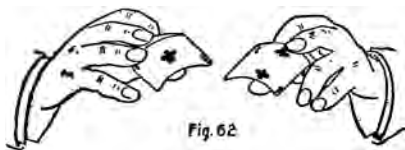
6 three cards, generally using one ace, and deals or throws
them face down in a row on the table. Now he lays even
8 money or perhaps two to one, that no player can pick out the
ace. In appearance it is the simplest and easiest proposition
10 a better could desire. In reality it is pure chance or accident
if he calls the turn. The cards are thrown so slowly, and
12 apparently so openly, that it seems like robbing the dealer
to cover his odds.

14 This is really one of the most subtle and ingenious
gambling games ever devised to win money honestly with
16 cards. We use the word “honestly” in the sense that it may
be applied to qualify any procedure in a game of chance,
18 which gives the player a known percentage for or against
him. In this instance it is two to one in favor of the dealer;
20 but as the dealer lays the odds of two to one, and the player
keeps his eyes open, it would indicate that the player has
22 the better chance of winning. The dealer lays out the three
cards, and the player takes his choice. One of them is the
24 ace, and there is no hocus-pocus after the deal. Should the
player select the ace he wins the money. But the player’s
26 chances are lessened just because he watches the deal. Were
he to make the selection at hap-hazard, his chances of one
28 to two, against the dealer’s odds of two to one, would make
it an even break. The banker’s advantage lies in his ability
30 to make the deal or throw. The cards are usually crimped
lengthwise, the faces being concave, so the dealer may pick
32 them up easily by the ends. There is no other advantage in
the crimp, and the game is sometimes dealt with straight
34 cards. When being crimped the cards are placed together,
so that all will be bent alike. The deal or “throw” is
36 performed as follows:

Lay the three crimped cards in a row on the table face
38 down. Pick up one of the indifferent cards, by the ends,
near the right side corners, with the right hand thumb
40 and second finger, and show the face of this card to the
players. Now place this card fairly over the ace, letting the

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

left sides of the two cards touch, and pick up the ace with 42
the thumb and the third finger. Now the right hand holds
the two cards, their left side edges touching, and about half 44
an inch of space between the opposite sides; the top card
being held by the second finger and thumb, and the bottom 46
card, or ace, by the third finger and thumb. Show the ace
to the company, keep the right hand suspended about six 48
inches from the table, pick up the third card with the left
hand, and show it to the company. (See Fig. 62.) Now turn 50



the faces down, move the right hand over towards the left 52
and with a slight downward swing release the upper card,
letting it drop flatly on the left side of the table by quickly 54
withdrawing the right hand to its former position; the rapid
withdrawal getting the lower card out of the way. As the 56
right second finger releases the top card it instantly seizes
the lower card and the third finger is straightened out, so
when the right hand is again stationary at its first position 58
over the table, the players may see that the finger that held
the upper card is still doing duty, and the finger which held 60
the lower card is now idle. Now move the left hand over
towards the right, and drop its card there, then again move 62
the right hand over and drop the last card between the other
two. 64

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

As described above, the blind takes place in the first
66 movement or throw. The right hand apparently drops the
bottom card first, but in reality the top is thrown. The
68 action is neither hurried or slow, and especially, not jerky.
There is no hesitation after the faces are turned down, and
70 the movements of both hands are made uniformly and
gracefully while the three cards are being laid out.

72 There is very little difficulty in acquiring the ability
to throw the top card first, or in changing the positions
74 of the second and third fingers as the top card falls, and
a little practice at the game enables an amateur to afford
76 endless amusement or entertainment to his friends with this
cunning play. The proper way to introduce it is to make
78 the throw several times in the natural order, that is, by
dropping the under card first, while explaining the game
80 to the company. The ace should be picked up by either hand
in the order it happens to fall, and be held at either the top
82 or bottom position in the right hand, and the faces shown
before each throw. Then the blind throw is made and the
84 guessing and fun begins. When the deal is performed by
a finished artist, it is absolutely impossible for the keenest
86 eye to detect the ruse. Even when the process, or nature of
the blind is understood, the player has no greater advantage
88 save that he knows enough not to bet. The particular card
cannot be followed with the eye, and if the knowing player
90 were to bet on a blind throw once, the dealer can make his
next throw regular. The dealer himself is as hopelessly lost,
92 if guessing against another who can throw equally as well.

A second method of making the throw or deal is to
94 hold the two right hand cards between the second finger
and thumb only, the right third finger taking no part in
96 the action and being held rather ostentatiously straight out.
When the top card is thrown, the left little finger is moved
98 in under the end of the third finger, and the tip catches and
holds the corner of the lower card, while the second finger
100 releases both, so as to let the top card fall. Then the second

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

finger instantly retakes its original position, and the little finger is released. The action of the little finger is completely covered by the position of the third finger. This method is perhaps more subtle, as it appears quite impossible to throw the top card without dropping both.

An addition to the game is made by putting in a crimp or upturn in a corner of the ace. Then several throws are made, and a player finds he can locate the ace "just for fun" every time. When perfect confidence is inspired, and the cupidity of the player tempts him to cover the odds, a throw is made, the player selects the card with the corner turned, and is amazed to find he has missed the "cinch." In a confidence game, the corner of the ace is turned by a "capper," who seizes an opportunity when the careless dealer turns to expectorate, or on any pretext neglects his game for a moment. But the crimp can be put in, taken out, and again put in the corner of another card during the procedure of the throw.

To crimp the corner, pick up the ace with the second finger and thumb of right hand, second finger at middle of end, and let the third finger tip rest on top of the card close to second finger. Then catch the corner with the little finger and squeeze it in, pressing down with third finger tip, and the corner is crimped upwards. The corner is turned down again by slipping the third finger tip over the end, and pulling up; and pressing down on the corner with the little finger tip. Either action can be performed in an instant as the card is picked up. Now to make the "corner" throw the ace is picked up, shown, and crimped, then the second card is picked up with the third finger and thumb and shown, the left hand picks up and shows the third card, and a natural throw is made which leaves the ace in the middle. Then the right hand picks up the right hand card, shows it, crimps the corner, picks up the ace, shows it, and the left hand picks up the last card. Now the right hand holds the two turned corner cards, but the fact that the upper one is crimped

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

cannot be seen because of the positions of the fingers, even
138 when the face of the under one, which is the ace, is shown.

This time a blind throw is made, the right hand dropping
140 the top card first with its corner turned, then the left hand
card is thrown, and long ere this the right hand has turned
142 down the corner of the ace and it is dropped innocently in
the middle.

144 The process of turning and reversing the corners
requires as much skill and cleverness as making the throw.
146 All details of the game should be perfected before it is
attempted in company, and nothing but careful practice
148 before a mirror will enable an amateur to perform the
action in anything like a satisfactory manner. But there is
150 not a single card feat in the whole calendar that will give as
good returns for the amount of practice required, or that
152 will mystify as greatly, or cause as much amusement, or
bear so much repetition, as this little game; and for these
154 reasons we believe it worthy of unstinted effort to master
thoroughly.

MEXICAN *Three Card Monte*. — When the game is played
2 in the following manner the better has no possible chance to
win, and yet it appears simpler and easier than the other.
4 An entirely different subterfuge is employed by the dealer.
The three cards are left perfectly flat. Sometimes the four
6 corners are turned the very least upwards, merely enough
to allow one card to be slipped under the other when lying
8 face down on the table, but the bend is not necessary.

The dealer now shows the faces of the three cards,
10 and slowly lays them in a row. Then he makes a pretense
of confusing the company by changing their places on
12 the table. Now in explaining the game, he shows the
faces of the cards by picking up one, and with it turning
14 over the others, by slipping it under them and tilting
them over face up. Then he turns them down again in
16 the same manner and lays down the third card. This
procedure is continued until the company understands

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

the game, and the manner of showing the cards has 18
grown customary, as it were.

When the bet is made and the player indicates his choice 20
the dealer at once proclaims that the player has lost, and to
prove it he picks one of the other cards and with it rapidly 22
turns over the player's card, and then the third card, and
the third card proves to be the ace. 24

Of course the better can really select the ace every time,
but he is not permitted to turn the cards himself, or touch 26
them at all. The dealer exchanges the card he picks up for
the player's card, and again exchanges that for the third 28
card, when apparently turning them over. The exchange is
absolutely impossible to note, and is made as follows: 30

Hold the card in the right hand between the tips of
thumb and first finger close to right inner end corner, 32
thumb on top. Slide the free side of this card under the right
side of the card on the table, until it is about two-thirds 34
concealed, but half an inch exposed at the outer end. (See
Fig. 63.) This will bring the upper, inner end corner of the 36

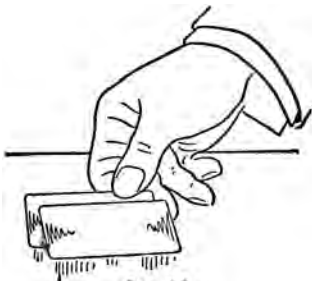
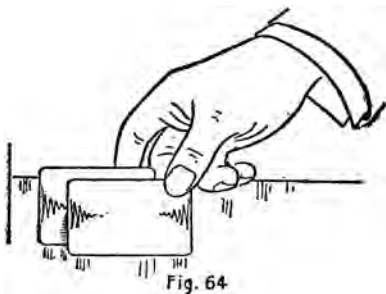


Fig. 63

CARD TABLE ARTIFICE.

table card, against the tip of the second finger. Now shift
38 the thumb to the corner of the table card, holding it against
the second finger, carrying it to the left and turning over
40 the lower card with the tip of the first finger. (See Fig.
64.)



42 Of course there is no hesitation in the action. The
slipping of the hand card under the table card, and the
44 turning over of the hand card, is done with one movement.
The table card is not shown at this stage, but is slipped
46 under the third card and the exchange is again made in like
manner. Then the last card is shown.

48 This method of exchanging can be worked with the first
method of dealing or throwing, but in such case the cards
50 are not crimped.

To perform this feat perfectly a cloth covered table must
52 be used. When the table is of polished wood the cards slip
about, and it is much more difficult to slip the hand card
54 into position under the other.

LEGERDEMAIN.

There is no branch of conjuring that so fully repays the amateur for his labor and study as sleight-of-hand with cards. The artist is always sure of a comprehensive and appreciative audience. There is no amusement or pastime in the civilized world so prevalent as card games, and almost everybody loves a good trick. But the special advantage in this respect is that the really clever card-handler can dispense with the endless devices and preparations that encumber the performer in other branches. He is ever prepared for the most unexpected demands upon his ability to amuse or mystify, and he can sustain his reputation with nothing but the family deck and his nimble fingers, making his exhibition all the more startling because of its known impromptu nature and simple accessories.

To the student who wishes to make the most rapid progress towards the actual performance of tricks, we suggest that he first take up the study and practice of our "System of Blind Shuffles" as taught in the first part of this book, acquiring thorough proficiency in forming and using the "jog" and "break," which make this style of shuffle possible. We are aware that all conjurers advise the shift or pass, as the first accomplishment, and while we do not belittle the merits of the shift when perfectly performed, we insist that all or any of the various methods of executing it, are among the most difficult feats the student will be called upon to acquire, and imposing such a task at the outset has a most discouraging effect. But so far as we can learn from the exhibitions and literature of conjurers, not one of them

LEGERDEMAIN.

knows of, or at least employs or writes of, a satisfactory substitute; hence their entire dependence upon that artifice to produce certain results.

When the blind shuffles with the coincident jog and break, are thoroughly understood, the student should take up our "System of Palming," also treated in the first part, paying particular attention to the "bottom palm," and with even a moderate degree of skill in these accomplishments he will be enabled to perform many of the best tricks that conjurers make entirely dependent on the shift.

For example, the common process for obtaining possession of a selected card when it is replaced in the deck, is to insert the little finger over it, make a shift bringing the lower packet with the selected card to the top, palm it off in the right hand, and give the deck to the spectator to shuffle. Now it may be a matter of opinion, but we think it would appear quite as natural if the performer were to shuffle the deck himself, immediately when the card is replaced in the middle, then palm off and hand the deck to the spectator to shuffle. If the spectator shuffles for the purpose of concealing any knowledge of its whereabouts, the performer's shuffle may reasonably be expected to increase the impression that it is hopelessly lost, and especially because his shuffle is made without the least hesitation, turn, swing, concealment or patter, and apparently in the most natural and regular way. Then the performer's shuffle gives a tacit reason for holding the deck while the card is inserted, instead of permitting the spectator to take the deck in his own hands. Well executed, the blind shuffle brings the card to the top or bottom at will, defying the closest scrutiny to detect the manipulation. The card is then palmed while squaring up, and the deck now handed over for further shuffling.

Should the performer wish to palm off the selected card without employing a shuffle, we believe the "Diagonal Palm Shift" is easier and far more imperceptible than the shifting of the two packets and then palming, assuming that the

LEGERDEMAIN.

different processes are performed equally well. For this reason we suggest the early acquirement of the mentioned shift. 66

However, the enthusiast will not rest until every sleight in the calendar has been perfectly mastered, so that he may be enabled to nonplus and squelch that particularly obnoxious but ever present individual, who with his smattering of the commoner sleights always knows “exactly how it is done.” Acquiring the art is in itself a most fascinating pastime, and the student will need no further incentive the moment the least progress is made. 68 70 72 74

The finished card-table expert will experience little or no difficulty in accomplishing the various sleights that lie at the bottom of the conjurer’s tricks. The principal feats have been already mastered in acquiring the blind shuffles, blind cuts, bottom deal, second deal, palming and replacing, the run, the crimp, culling, and stocking; and his trained fingers will readily accommodate themselves to any new positions or actions. But the mere ability to execute the sleights by no means fits him for the stage or even a drawing-room entertainment. In this phase of card-handling, as with card-table artifice, we are of the opinion that the less the company knows about the dexterity of the performer, the better it answers his purpose. A much greater interest is taken in the tricks, and the denouement of each causes infinitely more amazement, when the entire procedure has been conducted in an ordinary manner, and quite free of ostensible cleverness at prestidigitation. If the performer cannot resist the temptation to parade his digital ability, it will mar the effect of his endeavors much less by adjuring the exhibition of such sleights as palming and producing, single-hand shifts, changes, etc., until the wind up of the entertainment. But the sleights should be employed only as a means to an end. 76 78 80 82 84 86 88 90 92 94 96 98

The amateur conjurer who is not naturally blessed with a “gift of the gab” should rehearse his “patter” or 100

LEGERDEMAIN.

monologue as carefully as his action. The simplest trick
102 should be appropriately clothed with chicanery or plausible
sophistry which apparently explains the procedure, but in
104 reality describes about the contrary of what takes place.

The principal sleights employed in card tricks, that are
106 not touched upon in the first part of this book, are known
as "forcing," "changes," "transformations," and various
108 methods of locating and producing selected cards. We
shall also describe other methods of shifting and palming.
110 We should mention that a shift is termed by the conjurer a
"pass."

SHIFTS.

Single Handed Shift. — This is known to conjurers as
2 the "Charlies Pass," and we presume was invented by the
famous magician of that name.

4 Hold the deck in the left hand face down, between the
thumb tip at one side and first joints of second and third
6 fingers at opposite side, first joint of little finger at end, and
first finger extended at bottom. To make the shift release
8 the lower portion of the deck with the thumb, letting it fall
into the palm (see Fig. 65), then push up the finger side of



Fig. 65

LEGERDEMAIN.

the fallen portion, with the first finger tip, until it reaches 10
the thumb which is still supporting the upper portion. Now
extend the second and third fingers slightly so that the 12
thumb side of the upper portion will pass the upturned side
of the lower portion (see Fig. 66), then straighten out the 14
first finger allowing the upper portion to drop down into
the palm and the lower portion on top of it. 16



Fig. 66

The little finger held at the middle of the end is of 18
great assistance in this shift, giving better control of both 18
portions, and enabling the performer to hold the deck much 19
nearer a vertical position. The shift is invariably made with 20
a slight swing, or up and down motion of the hand. It can be 21
executed very rapidly, and is the favorite one handed shift 22
with most experts. It is usually employed to receive and 23
bring a selected card to the top. As the performer extends 24
the deck to have the selected card returned, he raises the 25
upper portion with the tip of the thumb, and the selected 26
card is naturally placed in the opening. In this position the 27
shift is half made, the condition being the same as when 28
the first movement of dropping the lower portion into the 29
palm takes place. The performer now with an up or down 30
motion, or swing towards the person, tilts up the lower 31
portion with the first finger and the shift is made, bringing 32
the selected card to the top to be disposed of as desired.

LEGERDEMAIN.

The Longitudinal Shift.— This shift, for which we have
2 to thank no one, is given a very long name, but the reader
who is interested sufficiently to practice the process, will
4 find it a very short shift and comparatively an easy one.

Hold the deck in the left hand, face down, first joint
6 of thumb at middle of one side, first joint of second finger,
and second joint of third finger, at opposite side, and the
8 lower corner of the deck fitting in between the third and
little fingers, at the base of little finger, the first finger
10 curled up against the bottom. Now bring the right hand
over; second, third and little fingers at outer end, first
12 finger curled up on top, thumb at inner end. Separate the
deck with the right thumb, at the inner end only, about
14 half an inch, and press the third joint of the little finger
in between the corners of the two packets to be shuffled.
16 (See Fig. 67.) Now the deck is ready for the shift, but the



LEGERDEMAIN.

right hand may be withdrawn without disclosing the break at the inner corner, or the fact that the little finger runs 18 between the packets. The left thumb and finger hold the packets firmly together and the deck could not have a more 20 innocent appearance.

To make the shift, bring the right thumb against the 22 side of the first finger, straighten out the first finger, press the end of the lower packet in against the left little finger 24 and down against the curled up first finger, with the four right hand fingers; and with the left little finger and thumb 26 draw off the upper packet towards the person (See Fig. 68), and as the lower packet springs into the right palm 28 bring the upper packet back underneath.



LEGERDEMAIN.

30 The right thumb takes no part in the shift, and a favorable
feature of the operation is that it may be performed without
32 the right hand appearing to be used at all. The right fingers
may be held almost straight, and the palm well away from
34 the deck, the hand being slightly closed as the lower packet
springs up. It can be made with practically no noise, and the
36 action is well covered.

If desired this shift can be made with almost the whole
38 deck exposed, by employing right second and third fingers
only at end, and keeping first finger curled up on top. In
40 this case the right thumb tip catches the end of the lower
packet as it springs up.

The Open Shift. — This is another outcome of our
2 constant but ever failing efforts to devise a perfect shift,
and incidentally one that is not readily anticipated by the
4 manner of holding the deck. The particular feature of this
method is the open position in which the cards are held, the
6 entire deck being exposed to view.

Hold the deck in the left hand, the first joint of the thumb
8 at one side, first joints of second, third, and little fingers at
opposite side, the little finger holding a break between the
10 two packets near the corner, and the little and third fingers
being separated about one inch. The first finger is curled
12 up against the bottom. Bring the right hand over, and seize
the ends of deck close to right side corners, with the second
14 finger and thumb tips, the thumb seizing only the lower
packet below the break, the first finger curled up on top.
16 (See Fig. 69.) The left third and little fingers take no part
in the action and are held idly out of the way.

18 To make the shift, curl the right first finger back over
the side of the deck, between the left little and third fingers,
20 until the root of the finger nail rests against the edge of
the top card. Now press the upper packet against the left
22 thumb and downwards by straightening out the right first
finger, at the same time drawing the lower packet to the
24 right and upwards with the right thumb and second finger

LEGERDEMAIN.

(See Fig. 70), and as the sides clear each other tilt the left



Fig. 59

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.



Fig. 70

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

LEGERDEMAIN.

26 side of the lower or right hand packet up on top. The upper
packet should not fall into the left hand. It must be caught
28 by the curled up first finger and first joints of the other left
fingers, as it clears the side of the under packet. The left
30 thumb never leaves its position against the side of the upper
packet, and the tip should be held sufficiently above it to
32 receive the lower packet as it is brought on top. The left little
finger is not inserted between the two packets, but merely
34 holds the break.

The shift can be made like a flash, and with the cards
36 in perfect order. When executed perfectly, the only sound
is the slipping of one packet over the other. There is no
38 snap or crack, and it is in every way worthy of the practice
necessary to acquire it. With the face of the deck turned
40 upward it produces a "transformation" that ranks with the
best of them.

42 The same shift may be made with the deck held flat in
the palm, the left thumb lying idly across the top, and the
44 first finger at the side with the others, but we much prefer
the former position though it is a great deal more difficult.
46 The latter position is an excellent one when it is necessary to
make a shift that is apparently a simple cut, in which event
48 the right hand does not tilt its packet on top. The hands
immediately separate and the under packet is placed on top
50 when desired.

The S. W. E. Shift. — We have not dubbed the
2 following process with our initials because we wish to
appear "big on the bills," but merely to give it a name.
4 Still, we must confess to some satisfaction in having
originated what we believe to be the most rapid, and, for
6 certain purposes, the most perfect shift ever devised. The
method is practically the same as the "Longitudinal,"
8 but as the deck is held crosswise it is much more rapid.
The position is open and natural, and the shift possesses
10 many advantages for conjuring purposes.

Hold the deck in the left hand, face down, first joint

LEGERDEMAIN.

of the thumb against middle of one end, second, third and 12
little fingers against the opposite or lower end, little finger
holding a break between the two packets at end, by the 14
corner of the lower packet being between the little and third
fingers, the little finger lying partially across the corner of 16
the under packet. (See Fig. 71.) This position, like that of

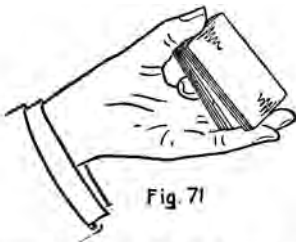


Fig. 71

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

the "Longitudinal," allows the tips of the second, third and 18
little fingers to appear over the top of the deck, and the fact
that there is a break is not apparent to a spectator. The first 20
finger is curled up against the bottom. The break is held
only at the lower end, and at the inside, the other fingers 22
and thumb holding the packet firmly together.

Now bring the right hand over the lower or right-hand 24
end of the deck, and seize the sides close as possible to the
lower corners, between the second and third finger tips 26
and thumb, the first finger curled up on top out of the
way. This leaves at least two-thirds of the deck in view. 28

LEGERDEMAIN.

(See Fig. 72.) To make the shift raise the right thumb to the edge of the side, draw the top packet in and down with the left thumb and little finger, and press the lower packet

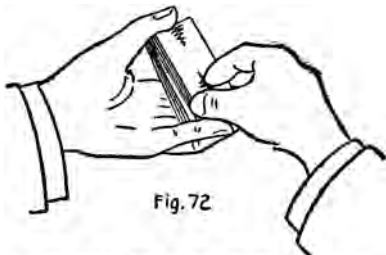


Fig. 72

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

32 out and down, between the right second and third finger
tips and the left first finger which is curled up underneath;
34 the left second finger at the end helps to control the lower
packet as it is pressed out. This action will tilt the opposite
36 sides of both packets upwards, and as they clear each other
the right thumb tip catches the under packet, and the left

LEGERDEMAIN.

third finger catches the upper packet and it is brought back 38
underneath. (See Fig. 73.)

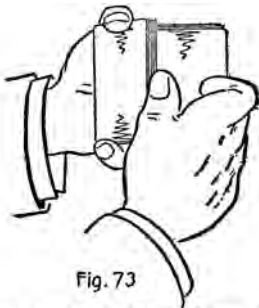


Fig. 73

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

When the shift is mastered the entire action is 40
accomplished by a pressure in opposite directions on the
lower packet, and the packets reverse like a flash, but 42
of course it must be practiced slowly until the knack is
obtained. The positions of the hands may be taken with 44
easy deliberation, as there is no indication that a shift is
meditated. It may be made with the hands stationary 46
without exposing the action. With the deck face up it makes
an instantaneous "transformation," and the position of the 48
deck permits the operator to get a glimpse of the index
without being observed. 50

The shift may be made with the right hand almost 52
entirely covering the deck, but this alters the whole
character and aim of the process, the main endeavor is to
make it as open and free from concealment as possible. 54

LEGERDEMAIN.

The Diagonal Palm-Shift. — The plan of having one
2 or several selected cards inserted in the deck, then forcing
them through slightly diagonally, and twisting them out to
4 the top or bottom, is well known to most conjurers, and by
some is treated as a blind shuffle. That the process is not
6 satisfactory is seen by the fact that it is seldom or never
employed, and but rarely even mentioned in any list of card
8 sleights. Our efforts to improve, or rather to combine the
first part of this manœuvre with a process for palming the
10 inserted cards, instead of placing them on top or bottom of
the deck, is shown in the following description. The action
12 is silent, rapid, undetectable if well performed, and takes
place under the ordinary movement of passing the deck to
14 be shuffled.

Hold the deck in the left hand, by sides, between the
16 first joints of thumb, and second, third and little fingers,
first finger curled up at bottom. Allow spectator to insert
18 selected card in outer end of deck, pushing it in until about
half an inch only protrudes. Now bring the right hand over
20 deck with the little finger at side corner of protruding card,
second and third fingers at middle of end, and first finger
22 close to end corner, and the thumb close to the inner end
corner of the deck. Apparently push the card straight home,
24 but really push the protruding end with the right little
finger, about quarter of an inch to the left, so that the right
26 first finger can push the tilted corner down the side of the
deck, the card moving slightly diagonally, and the opposite
28 corner just grazing the right thumb, and protruding about
three-quarters of an inch. The left third and little fingers
30 are released sufficiently to allow the card to protrude at the
side. The left thumb now takes the place of the right first
32 finger, pushing the corner flush with side of deck. (See Fig.
74.)

34 The diagonal position of the selected card is now
perfectly concealed, and the deck is held in a natural and
36 regular manner. A little practice at the diagonal slide

LEGERDEMAIN.

enables one to get the card in that position instantaneously. The next action is to palm the selected card in the left hand, 38 as the right passes the deck to be shuffled.



Fig. 74

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

With the left little finger against the side of card, 40 swing or turn it inwards, using the right thumb as a pivot, straighten out left first, second, and third fingers, catching 42 the outer end as it turns, and at the same time sliding pack outwards and to the right, the left hand turning over and 44

LEGERDEMAIN.

inwards with the palmed card (see Fig. 75) and the little
46 finger slipped to the end.



Fig. 75

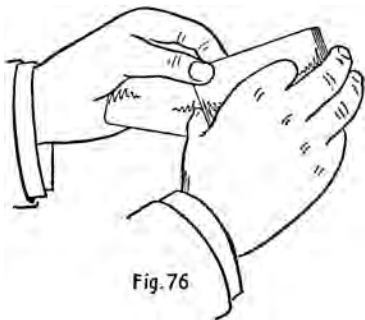
Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

There should be no force or twist employed, the card
48 running out as freely as though drawn. The card and the
deck must continue on the same plane until quite free of
50 each other. The left little finger may press the side of the
card very slightly upwards, so that as it is palmed it will
52 bend into instead of away from the left hand. As the card
is being turned by the little finger the left thumb is raised,
54 letting the right thumb with the corner of deck pass under
it, so that the card can lie parallel with, but still above, the
56 left palm. As the deck is slid out, the right thumb slides
along the side of the card, and it is not actually palmed until
58 the hands are almost free of each other.

The whole action may be made quick as a flash and

LEGERDEMAIN.

without a sound, yet when performed quite slowly is still 60
a perfect blind. The left hand may seize the deck by the 62
corner, between the first finger and thumb, as the card is
palmed, leaving the right hand free (see Fig. 76); but the 64
beauty of the shift is in the natural and simple manner of
palming the selected card, by the ordinary movement the
right hand makes in passing the deck to be shuffled. 66



We wish to particularly impress our readers with the 68
merits of this palm-shift. It is not difficult if a proper
understanding of the action is obtained, and it is of very
great assistance in card tricks. It dispenses to a great 70
extent with the regular shifts and blind shuffles, and it
can be accomplished under the very nose of a shrewd 72
spectator without an inkling of what is taking place. The
usual procedure of card-handlers is to insert the little 74
finger over the selected card, shift the two packets and
palm the card from the top in the right hand. This process 76
takes more time, the shift must be concealed by a partial

LEGERDEMAIN.

78 turn, swing or drop of the hands; and to palm, the deck
must be covered at least for an instant. In the palm-shift
80 described the card is placed in its diagonal position with
apparently the customary movement of squaring up, and
82 the rest is accomplished, as it were, by handing the deck to
be shuffled.

84 Several cards may be palmed together, when inserted at
different points, or from one point, or from top, or bottom.
86 If the top card is to be shifted, it is slipped into the same
diagonal position and held in place by the right little finger
88 being curled up on top. The action is the same. When the
single card palm-shift is acquired, the rest will come easily.

THE BLIND SHUFFLE FOR SECURING SE- LECTED CARD.

Hold the deck across the left hand and when selected
2 card is inserted, form break over it with left little finger
close to side corner. Now seize the deck by the ends from
4 above with the right thumb and second finger, and close to
right side corners; the right thumb taking up the break at
6 the end; and with the left thumb and fingers turn the deck
down on its side into the left palm in the position given for
8 blind-shuffling, the right hand remaining stationary, the
thumb and finger being the pivots, as it were, allowing the
10 deck to turn, and the right thumb still holding the break.
The action appears quite natural, and enables the thumb
12 to hold the break without moving. Immediately begin
the shuffle. Under-cut to about half portion above break,
14 shuffle off to break, in-jog first card and shuffle off. Then
under-cut to in-jog and shuffle off. This action leaves the
16 selected card at the bottom. Square up, palm bottom card
in left hand and pass deck to spectator to shuffle.

18 In making the bottom palm it matters little whether
one or several cards are palmed, and the action is quicker
20 if not particular about the number.

LEGERDEMAIN.

Of course the selected card may be brought to the top just as easily as an understanding of the "System of Blind Shuffles" makes clear. The only difference in the foregoing action would be to jog the second card instead of the first when the break is reached, and then under cut to the jog and throw on top, instead of shuffling off. But we consider the left hand work, or bottom palming, far superior to palming from the top, and the several methods given in the first part of the book will be found instantaneous, undetectable, and up to the present unknown and consequently not suspected.

FORCING.

Many of the best card tricks are dependent upon having the company select one or more certain or particular cards, which after being replaced in the deck and shuffled, are reproduced in various ways at some stage of the proceeding. Compelling the company to select such particular cards, without in the least suspecting the choice is influenced in any manner, is called "forcing." It is probably used to a greater extent than any other expedient, excepting the shift.

The usual method of "forcing" is to bring the particular card to the middle of the deck by means of a shift, and hold its location by inserting the little finger at that point. Now the performer, advancing the hands toward the spectator opens the deck slightly fanwise, pushing the cards with the left thumb one under the other into the right palm, the right fingers aiding the operation; apparently to enable the spectator to take any card he may wish. As he shows an indication of selecting one, the passing movement, which by this time has reached the located card, is stopped and the located card exposed a trifle more than the others. An unsuspecting person will naturally select the one easiest to seize. In any case, he can get no other, as the fingers and

LEGERDEMAIN.

thumbs of the performer's hands hold the balance of the
24 cards firmly. Should the spectator's fingers touch other
than the particular card the performer carelessly draws
26 back and closes the deck as though he thought a card were
seized, then, with an excuse, opens the deck again. But a
28 little practice at forcing enables a clever performer to almost
place the particular card in the spectator's hand without
30 the least show of design. The action should be easy, but
rather rapid, and if the first spectator approached shows a
32 disposition to be over discriminating he should be passed
immediately and the next one may display greater alacrity.
34 But should the first individual get the wrong card, there is
no harm done. The performer passes on to a more obliging
36 spectator and forces the particular card, and completes
the trick in contemplation. Then the first card drawn
38 is returned to the deck and used in some trick that does
not require a prior knowledge. If two or three cards are
40 noted and located together the force becomes simpler, as
a greater liberty may be allowed in the selection and, of
42 course, the order of the several cards enables the performer
to determine the particular card as it is selected.

PALMING.

In addition to the methods given in the first part of
2 our book, which we consider the best for general purposes,
we shall describe several processes that may be employed
4 advantageously under special circumstances.

The top cards may be palmed apparently without
6 touching the deck in the following manner: Hold the
deck across the left palm, the little finger well inserted
8 under the cards to be palmed, the first, second and third
fingers holding the cards firmly in place. Now move the
10 right hand, through some natural motive, over the left,
and as it passes within one inch or two straighten out the
12 left-hand fingers, forcing the cards up into the right palm

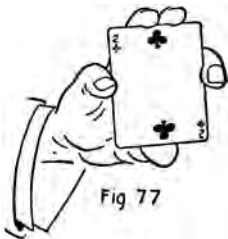
LEGERDEMAIN.

with the little finger, which is under them. The right hand either continues its movement as it slightly closes over the palmed cards or else seizes the deck in a manner to expose it fully, and the left hand makes some gesture or natural movement.

A simple way to palm one top card is to push it slightly over the side under cover of the right hand, then press down on its outer-end corner with the right little fingertip, and it will spring up into the right palm.

In all cases of palming the deck should be covered for the smallest possible space of time, and the covering and exposing should be made under some natural pretext, such as squaring up the cards, or passing the deck to the other hand, or changing its position in the hand, or turning it over.

The Back Palm. — We are afraid the above title is misnomer. The cards to be concealed are transferred to the back of the hand. Hold the card in the right hand face up between the tip of the thumb at one end and tips of second and third fingers at opposite end, the first joints of the first and little fingers hold the sides. (See Fig. 77.)



LEGERDEMAIN.

To make the “palm” slip the tips of the second and third fingers under the end of the card and curl them down until they come under the thumb, at the same time pushing the card outward with the thumb until the inner corners reach the first and little fingers, which hold it in position. (See Fig. 78.) Now, straighten out the four fingers, clipping the corners of the card between the little and third fingertips and the first and second fingertips, and the card lies along the back of the hand. (See Fig. 79.)

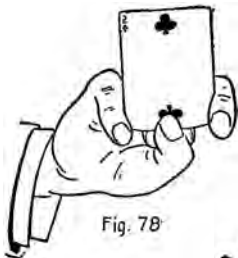


Fig. 78

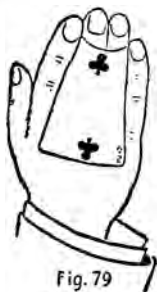


Fig. 79

LEGERDEMAIN.

To bring it to the front again curl the four fingers again 16
into the palm, straighten the first fingertip a little so that
the thumb may take its place holding the card, then draw 18
the card as far as possible toward the wrist with the thumb
and little finger, straightening out the other fingers, then 20
clip the corner between the first and second fingertips, and
slide the little finger along the side of the card until it is 22
straight out, this time clipping the outer corners between
the same fingers instead of palming in the usual way. 24

Several cards may be transferred back and forth in this 26
manner, and one at a time may be produced from the back
without showing the rest. Perfection in the feat enables a 28
performer to show both sides of the hand, transferring the
cards as it is turned over. A slight up-and-down motion and
a backward turn of the wrist is used. 30

As an exhibition of dexterity this is probably 32
unsurpassed in card manipulation, but it is of little aid in
the performance of tricks. However, everything may be put 34
to some use, and the back palm once helped us out of a
difficult situation — “but that is another story.”

CHANGES.

Under this general heading we shall describe several 2
of the best methods known for secretly exchanging one
or several cards separated from the pack, for others in the
pack or held in the other hand. 4

The Top Change. — Hold the deck in the left hand 2
crosswise, face down, the thumb resting across the top.
Hold the card to be exchanged in the right hand between the
thumb and first fingertips, thumb on top finger under. Now 4
the hands are brought together for an instant by an easy
swing, both hands moving in the same general direction 6
but one hand faster than the other. As they meet the left
thumb pushes the top card slightly over the side, the right 8
hand places its card on top and clips the protruding card

LEGERDEMAIN.

10 between the tips of the first and second fingers, carrying
it off (see Fig. 80), the left thumb retaining the now top
12 card and sliding it back into position on the deck. In theory



Fig. 80

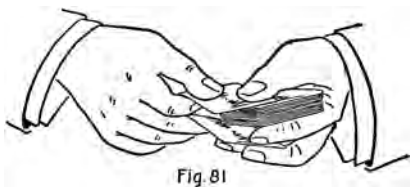
it seems that this action will be very easily noticed. In
14 practice, if cleverly performed, it is almost impossible to
detect. The general movement or swing of the hands is not
16 stopped when the exchange is made but continued until they
are separated again by some little distance, and the swing
18 should be taken naturally, with some ulterior motive, such
as placing the card on the table or giving it to some one
20 to hold. A slight turn of the person may bring the hands
easily together. The swing may be made in any direction,
22 in or out, up or down, to the right or left, the one hand
following or passing the other, but in no case stopping until
24 well separated again.

The Bottom Change. — In this process the action is
2 much the same, the difference being that the card in the
right hand is passed to the bottom of the deck, the right
4 hand carrying off the top card as before.

Hold the right hand card between the thumb and first
6 and second fingertips, first finger on top. Hold the deck
with the thumb and first finger, dropping the other fingers
8 slightly to receive the right-hand card, drawing it back

LEGERDEMAIN.

under the deck as the hands separate. The top card is pushed over as before and carried off by the right thumb and first 10 finger. (See Fig. 81.) The swing of the hands is made in the same manner. The only difficulty in this change is getting 12 the card fairly back under the deck with the left fingers.

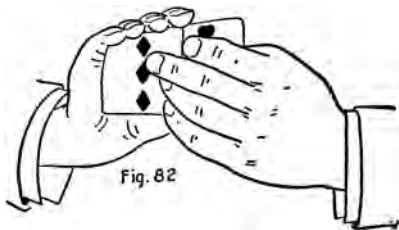


The Palm Change. — In this process an entirely different subterfuge is employed, and it is probably the 2 most ingenious ever devised for the purpose.

The two cards to be exchanged are held in the right 4 hand by the ends between the second and third fingertips and the thumb, and close together, so that when shown to 6 the company they appear as one. The right hand is now turned palm down and the left hand apparently takes the 8 card that was exposed, laying it on the table, but in reality takes the second card, leaving the other one palmed in the 10 right hand. This is done by seizing both cards between the left thumb and second and third fingers, and drawing out 12

LEGERDEMAIN.

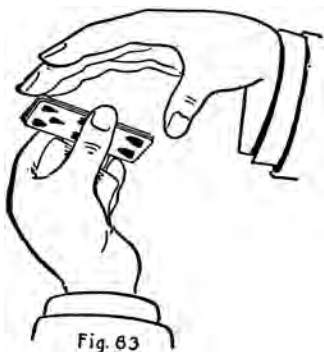
the upper one with the thumb and pressing the lower one
14 up into the right palm with the left fingers as the top one is
drawn off. (See Fig. 82.)
16 This change is one of the simplest and easiest feats in the
whole range of card slights, and yet one of the most useful
18 and undetectable. The action should be performed in about
the same time and manner that would ordinarily be taken
20 in transferring a card from one hand to the other.



The Double-Palm Change. — This method may be
2 employed to exchange one or several cards. The cards to
be exchanged lie in a packet on the table face up. The
4 other cards are secretly palmed face down in the left
hand. The left hand now picks up the packet on the table
6 by the sides, between the thumb and second and third
fingertips, and transfers the packet to the right hand.
8 As the left hand turns palm up the right hand palms the
packet just picked up and seizes the packet in the left

LEGERDEMAIN.

palm by the sides, carrying it slowly and openly away, 10
and the left hand is seen empty. (See Fig. 83.)



As the right hand palms the upper cards the left first 12
finger curls up under the palmed cards, bending them 14
upward, thus enabling the right hand to seize them easier 16
and also effectually taking out the crimp or bend that may
have been caused while so closely palmed. 16

The only objectionable feature of this change is that the 18
right hand carries the packet away by the sides, while it may
have been noticed that the packet first in view was seized by 20
the ends. But this is a splendid change for many purposes.

TRANSFORMATIONS. TWO HANDS.

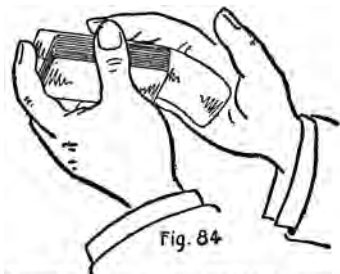
The card conjurer in many instances purposely produces
2 the wrong card, and when his error (?) is proclaimed by
the company or the individual, he coolly proposes to “make
4 good” by transforming the wrong card into the right one.
This is usually done by placing the wrong card on the top or
6 bottom of the deck and making the “transformation” with
the aid of both hands or only one.

First Method. — The right hand holds the wrong card,
2 which has just been exhibited; the left hand holds the deck
between the thumb and second, third and little fingers at
4 the sides, first finger at end, the back of deck to the palm
and the selected card on the bottom. The deck is inverted or
6 the hand turned palm down, so that the bottom card cannot
be seen. The right hand now openly places the wrong card
8 on the bottom of the deck and carelessly shows the palm
empty. Then the tips of the right-hand fingers are placed
10 against the bottom of the deck, both hands turning it up in
view, showing the wrong card that was just placed there.
12 But as the deck is turned up the right fingertips push the
wrong card up against the left first finger, about one inch,
14 so that the right palm a little below the base of the fingers
may be pressed against the selected card, which is the next
16 one. This card is drawn down slowly by pressing against
it, the downward movement being apparently to give the
18 company a full view of the wrong card. (See Fig. 84.)
When the ends of the two cards pass each other the lower
20 card is tilted on top and the right palm again covers the
whole deck, carrying the selected card along, and the left
22 first finger presses the wrong card back into position. The
performer now pronounces the talismanic word, shows the
24 right hand empty, and the transformation accomplished.

Cleverly executed, this is a very effective sleight, and

LEGERDEMAIN.

there is little or no difficulty in acquiring it. It may be ²⁶ performed rapidly or slowly, as the operator fancies.



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

Second Method. — Hold the deck in the left hand, between the thumb and second, third and little fingers, ² at sides, first fingertip against the back near end, and the back, or top card, the selected card; the wrong card being ⁴ on the bottom, or placed there and held in full view. To make the transformation bring the right hand over the deck ⁶ with the four fingertips against the end. Slide or push the selected card with the first fingertip up against the right- ⁸ hand finger ends, drawing the deck down toward the wrist until it clears the lower end of the selected card, which is ¹⁰

LEGERDEMAIN.

pressed into the right palm by the left first finger. (See Fig. 12 85.) Then slide the deck back to its first position. This sleight may be made in an instant and the action is fully covered.



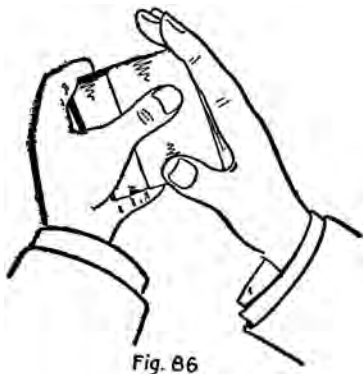
Third Method. — Hold the deck in left hand, resting
2 on its side across the third joints of the four fingers, tip of
thumb on top side, face to the company. Cover face with
4 the right hand held quite flatly; tilt top side of deck slightly
toward right hand; drop left thumb to the back, and push up
6 the top card. As it comes above the side bring the right hand
up and back over the left thumb, catching the up-coming
8 card against the side of the hand and palming it as it is
carried over, the left thumb aiding the palming by pressing
10 the card home. The left thumb then instantly retakes its
position on the top side of the deck. The movement of the
12 right hand is made apparently to show the bottom card. The
right hand now again covers the deck for an instant, leaving
14 the palmed card there.

Palming the back card in this manner may be done

LEGERDEMAIN.

very rapidly, but a slow movement is satisfactory. 16

Fourth Method. — The action of this transformation is identical with the Third Method, but the first and little fingers are held against the ends of the deck close to the lower corners, the thumb and second and third fingers at the top and bottom sides as before. In this position the deck is held much more firmly, and it becomes easier for the left thumb to push up one card at a time, the fingers at the ends restraining the other cards. The right hand performs its part as in the Third Method. The improvement is our own. (See Fig. 86.) 10

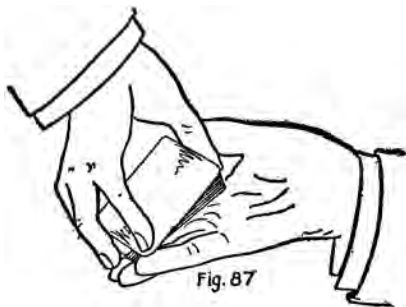


LEGERDEMAIN.

Fifth Method. — Hold the deck in the left hand, thumb
2 and three fingers at opposite sides, first finger against end.
Cover the deck with the right hand but run the right thumb
4 underneath. Now draw out the under card with the right
thumb, palming it, and again cover the deck, leaving the
6 palmed card on top.

Sixth Method. — Now we introduce another “homemade”
2 article, and consequently unknown up to the present. We
think it is very pretty.

4 Hold the deck in the left hand by the ends, between
the tips of the thumb and second and third fingers, the
6 first finger resting against the side and the little fingertip
against the bottom, close to the corner, the face of the deck
8 to the company and the finger end down. Bring the right
hand forward so that the little fingertips meet at the corner
10 of deck, the palm partly facing the company and showing
the hand empty, the wrists being about six inches apart.



LEGERDEMAIN.

Now, with the left little fingertip push the corner of the 12
lower card slightly over the side, and clip it with the right 13
little fingertip, so that it is firmly held between the two tips 14
(see Fig. 87), and press it down against the left third finger, 15
turning the right hand over and moving the upper end of 16
the deck to the left at the same time. This action will cause 17
the lower card to swing out at the upper end, and it is caught 18
and palmed by the right hand as the hand turns over. The 19
left little finger is extended as the turn is made, pressing the 20
card firmly against the right fingers. (See Fig. 88.) Now



the right hand immediately seizes the deck close to the lower 22
end, and the left hand releasing it, is shown empty. Then 23
the left hand again seizes the deck, but this time by the 24
sides, with the little finger against the lower end. The right 25
hand is now released and passed rapidly downward over the 26

LEGERDEMAIN.

deck, leaving the palmed card on top, and the right hand
28 is shown empty. The left little finger at the end aids the
replacing by catching the palmed card as the right hand is
30 drawn down.

Of course, the performer makes the movements of
32 passing the deck from hand to hand and showing the hands
empty, ostensibly to prove that no palming takes place.
34 The act of palming, if cleverly performed, is absolutely
undetectable; the right hand turning over just in time and
36 sufficiently to cover the card coming out, but not obstructing
the continued view of the face of the deck. The actual palm
38 can be made as rapidly as desired and without a sound. Our
readers should cultivate this "transformation," though it
40 may take some little practice to acquire perfectly.

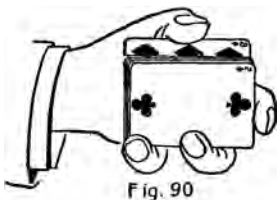
TRANSFORMATIONS. ONE HAND.

First Method. — Hold the deck in the left hand, the
2 thumb well extended across the face, first finger at end,
second and little fingers at side and third finger curled in
4 as far as possible underneath. Grip the top card with the
thumb and draw it back, tilting up the deck with the third



LEGERDEMAIN.

finger until the top card clears the side (see Fig. 89.), then 6
press the top card down between the curled-up finger and 8
deck by bringing the thumb again to its original position 8
across top. (See Fig. 90.) The third and little fingerends 10
steady the pack as it is tilted upward, but the first finger 10
takes no part in the action. The top card must be gripped 12
well into the root of the thumb and drawn back as far as 12
possible as the deck is being tilted up.



The action should be covered by a swing, and as 14
it is extremely difficult to execute without some noise 14
the company might be informed that if they cannot see 16
the “transformation” they will be permitted to hear it. 16
The rapidity of the action is proportionate to the skill of 18
the performer, and it may be made with the hand in any 18
position. 20

Second Method. — The following process is another 2
of our innovations, and it will be found easy, extremely 2
rapid and without the least noise, a rare combination in one- 4
handed manœuvres. 4

Hold the deck in the left hand, one side resting on second 6
joints of second and third fingers, tip of thumb on top side, 6
first and little fingers at opposite ends. Slip the thumb over 8
the side so that its tip rests against the bottom card, and 8

LEGERDEMAIN.

push it up and over on top, the card turning over in transit,
10 so that if it were face down at bottom it will be face up on
top. (See Figs. 91 and 92.) The ends of the second, third and
12 little fingers hold the deck in position as the card is pushed
over, and the four finger ends unite in getting it squarely in
14 place when on top.

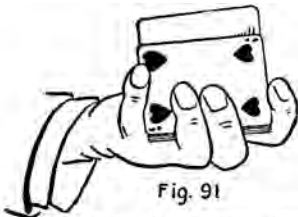


Fig. 91

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.



Fig. 92

Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

LEGERDEMAIN.

The action should take place under cover of a short arm movement. Raise the hand up and in toward the person, and shift the position of the thumb just as the hand is about to make the down and outward movement, under which the action takes place. If one card is faced before it is exposed the deck will appear to be held face up, and the transferring of cards from the bottom may be continued to any desired extent. Though the process is very easy and can be performed with a motion too rapid to see, some little practice must be put in to acquire the knack of getting out the bottom card.

Both these One-Hand Transformations are much easier performed with about two-thirds of the deck.

BLIND SHUFFLES, RETAINING ENTIRE ORDER.

In the first part of our book we described two blind shuffles for retaining either the upper or lower half of the deck in the same order, yet apparently shuffling the whole deck. Retaining the whole deck in a prearranged order is seldom or never attempted, or even desired, at the card table. But the conjurer performs many very interesting tricks through such an arrangement; therefore it is necessary to provide a blind shuffle that will not disturb any part of the deck. The following methods for retaining the entire order will be found sufficiently deceptive for his purpose, though by no means so perfect in appearance as the processes already described:

First Method. — Hold the deck in the left hand, crosswise, in the customary manner for the hand shuffle. Under cut with the right hand about three-quarters of the deck, and bring it down in the usual way of shuffling on top of the packet in the left hand, dropping a small packet from the top. Now, in raising the right hand again, still

LEGERDEMAIN.

in the ordinary manner, seize the lower packet that was
8 first left in the left hand between the right third finger
and thumb, bringing it up with the rest of the cards, the
10 packet that was dropped from the top now falling against
the left fingers, concealing the fact that the under packet is
12 withdrawn. (See Fig. 93.) Now, with the left fingers tilt the



Copyright, by S. W. Erdnase, 1902.

packet over against the left thumb, and drop another small
14 packet from the top of the right hand portion into the left
hand between its packet and the fingers, still with the usual
16 movement for shuffling. The left thumb now tilts the packet
back on the other, and the right hand makes its customary
18 movement downward, but this time drops the lower packet
that is held between the third finger and thumb, by simply
20 releasing the pressure of the third finger. Now the left hand
portion is again tilted against the thumb, the right hand
22 dropping another packet from the top, then the left hand
packet is tilted back, and the right hand throws the balance

LEGERDEMAIN.

on top. This process leaves the order the same, the deck 24
having received but a simple cut.

The right hand makes five up and down movements in 26
the ordinary or regular manner of shuffling, and without
hesitating for an instant. The left fingers and thumb 28
keep up the process of tilting its portion back and forth,
allowing the right hand packets to fall above and below 30
it. The actions of the right hand in bringing up the first
packet from the left hand, with the first upward movement, 32
and in releasing it again on the third downward movement
(instead of dropping a packet from the top) are undetectable 34
if the shuffle is performed with some degree of rapidity and
smoothness. It is not at all difficult, but some practice is 36
necessary.

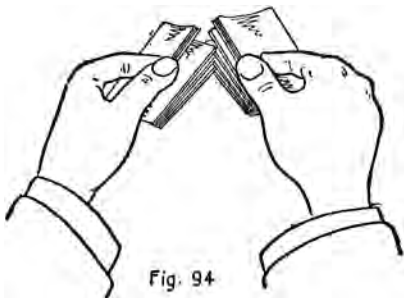
The mode of shuffling over and under the left hand 38
packet is commonly employed, and incites no notice. The
shuffle may be repeated as desired, and should be varied 40
with an occasional cut.

Second Method. — This blind shuffle, or rather riffle, 2
will require considerable practice to perform nicely, but it is
worth it.

Seize the deck with both hands, face down, second and 4
third fingers at one side, thumbs at the opposite side, little
fingers at opposite ends, held somewhat under the deck, and 6
first fingers curled in with tips on top. The second fingers
touch each other at middle of side, and the thumbs touching 8
at opposite side. Each hand occupies identically the same
position. Now divide the pack with the thumbs and draw 10
off the upper portion with the right hand; place the inner
corners of the outer ends together so that the two packets 12
form a sharp angle, but the right hand packet about half
an inch further out. Now riffle or spring the corners of the 14
left hand packet into the right hand packet, both thumbs
springing the cards, but beginning with the left thumb and 16
finishing with the right, so that the left hand holds several
cards that are not interwoven at the bottom, and about half 18

LEGERDEMAIN.

a dozen of the right hand packet are still free on top. (See
20 Fig. 94.) Now shift the left hand slightly so that the four
fingers lie across the bottom of its packet, and with the right
22 thumb spread the top cards fanwise over the left packet, at
the same time bringing the inner ends of the two packets
24 towards each other, twisting out the riffled upper corners
and replacing the right hand packet on top.



26 As the inner ends are brought together the two packets
are spread somewhat, and the right little and third fingers
28 twist out the bottom card first, and bend it in on top of
the left hand packet slightly in advance of the rest. This
30 prevents any of the other cards going wrong. The more
fanwise the packets are spread during the operation the
32 more perfect the blind. The deck should be squared up
rather slowly, the left thumb and fingers holding the
34 deck with the cards in their irregular condition, the right
hand being released and pushing or patting the cards into
36 position. Care should be taken not to riffle the corners far

LEGERDEMAIN.

into each other. The merest hold is sufficient, and in fact if the packets can be held under perfect control the cards need not be interlocked at all, and the difficulty of the twisting out process is avoided. By slightly spreading the two packets as the springing or riffling of the sides is continued the appearance of the corners being interlocked is perfectly maintained.

This shuffle can be performed very rapidly, and with perfect control of the cards, and it is an excellent one for conjuring, as these performers never riffle on the table. But, as we have mentioned, it is difficult, and if the operator is not a skillful card handler he will find it quite a task to even riffle in the two packets, and this is the simplest part of the operation.

When this riffle is alternated with the foregoing shuffle it requires very close scrutiny of a very knowing card expert to detect the fact that the operation is a blind.

Third Method. — This is another form of the second method. The deck is seized with the thumbs and fingers at the ends instead of at the sides, the little fingers going under the sides, the positions being identical, only that the deck is turned endwise.

When the deck is separated into the two packets the thumbs riffle the inner corners together, the left fingers are shifted across the bottom, the right thumb spreads the top cards over the left hand packet, and the right hand brings the outer ends of the two packets towards each other, twisting out the interlocked corners and placing the right hand packet again on top in much the same manner.

In this method the packets are easier controlled, and it is hard to say which is the better. But we think for conjuring purposes the more the methods for blind shuffling are varied the greater are the probabilities of convincing the company that the cards are genuinely mixed; providing

LEGERDEMAIN.

always, that the several methods employed appear the same
20 as those in common every-day usage.

Fourth Method. — This is a very barefaced blind,
2 simple, extremely easy, and surprisingly deceptive when
cleverly performed.

4 Rest the deck on its side in the left hand in the usual
position for shuffling, but hold the first finger against and
6 along the end. Under cut about half the deck with the right
hand, the first finger on the top side, and make the ordinary
8 movement to interlock or force the right hand cards down
among those in the left hand, bringing the sides together for
10 that purpose. Allow a few of the cards from the top of the
right hand packet to drop down on top of the other packet,
12 but prevent them from going quite to the left palm with
the left thumb. Now keep up a constant lateral movement
14 with the right hand, shifting the packet rapidly lengthwise
about half an inch each way, as though forcing the two
16 packets to interlace, but really dropping the upper cards
on top of the left hand packet, by holding the right hand
18 packet slightly diagonally over the lower one, so that the
inner corner of the right hand packet is just over the side
20 of the lower one. Drop the top cards over in this manner
until all are apparently interlocked about half way or more,
22 then strike them on the top side with the fingers held flatly,
driving them down even, and square up the deck.

24 The first finger held against the end and the first or top
cards of the right hand packet, going over immediately as
26 the sides are brought together, effectually conceal the ruse.
If the process of actually interlocking the cards is tried it
28 will be seen how perfectly the action can be imitated. An
occasional cut tends to increase the deception.

Fifth Method. — This process is very much employed
2 by many clever card conjurers who ought to know better,
and we include it only because it is in common use and to
4 suggest its rejection. It consists in pushing small packets
alternately from the top and bottom of the portion held in

LEGERDEMAIN.

one hand to the bottom and top of the portion held in the 6
other.

The deck is held in the left hand and several cards are 8
pushed over by the left thumb into the right hand. Then the
left fingers push several cards from the bottom on top of the 10
right hand cards. Then the left thumb again pushes several
from the top, but these are received under the right hand 12
portion. The left fingers now push several from the bottom
to the top of the right hand portion, and so on until the left 14
hand is empty.

This clumsy juggling might prove satisfactory if 16
performed by an awkward novice before a parcel of school
children, but it appears simply ridiculous in the hands of a 18
card conjurer, who, it is presumed, knows how to shuffle
a deck in the customary manner, and with at least the 20
degree of smoothness that any ordinary person might
possess. 22

METHODS FOR DETERMINING A CARD THOUGHT OF.

In three of the following instances the spectator has no
choice, as he is supposed to think of a card he sees, and the 2
performer shows him but one, though apparently without
design. In the fourth instance a most ingenious ruse is 4
employed, the spectator being given perfect freedom, yet
the card is determined almost as surely. 6

A. Hold the deck in the left hand, thumb across top near
inner end, and first and second fingers at side. Bring over 2
the right hand and seize deck with fingers at outer ends,
thumb at inner end, and hold so that the outer ends of the 4
cards may be sprung or "ruffled," with the faces towards
the spectator. Requesting him to think of a card, spring 6
the ends rapidly, stopping for an instant at any one place

LEGERDEMAIN.

8 (see Fig. 95), then completing the ruffle. The springing is
performed at such a pace that the spectator can recognize
10 but one card, which is more fully exposed by the momentary
lull in the springing, and at this point the performer forms
12 and holds a break with end of left second finger. At the
end of the first ruffle ask if card has been noted, and if not
14 repeat the action, but of course hesitating at some other
point.



Fig. 95

B. Hold the deck lengthwise in the right hand, face to
2 palm, between second joint of thumb and ends of fingers.
Bend finger end downwards and allow ends to escape
4 rapidly, springing them into the left hand in the usual
manner of the flourish. Hesitate, or stop the springing

LEGERDEMAIN.

for an instant, at any stage of the operation (see Fig. 96),⁶
and the only card that the performer can notice or fairly
distinguish will be the probable selection of the spectator.⁸
Of course the performer conceals his notice of the cards as
far as possible.¹⁰



Fig. 96

C. Hold the deck across the left palm face down, extend
it towards a spectator, requesting him to think of one of²
them. As he cannot see any he will naturally attempt to
take the deck in his hands, or cut off a portion. In either⁴
case let him cut only, and the moment he sees the bottom
card of his packet thank him and take back the cut, holding⁶
a break at the location.

LEGERDEMAIN.

D. This cunning and absolutely unfathomable
2 stratagem must have been devised by an individual of truly
Machiavellian subtlety. The deck is held in the left hand
4 face down and the cards are taken off in the right hand and
held face to the spectator. Each card is counted as it is taken
6 off the deck, and the right hand packet is kept well squared
up, so that but one card remains exposed to view. As the
8 cards are exposed the hands are parted some little distance,
and the action of drawing off the cards is made uniform,
10 neither rapidly nor slowly. Now the operator looks covertly
into the eyes of the spectator and he sees with surprising
12 distinctness that they follow the movements of his right
hand in taking off and exposing the cards. The moment
14 the eyes rest, or lose their intensity, the performer notes the
number of the card, but continues the drawing off process.
16 Shortly, asking if a card has been thought of, he closes up
deck, secretly counts off to the number, and produces
18 at will. Of course a break may be held at the card noted,
but the counting avoids the least change in the right hand
20 action.

TO GET SIGHT OF SELECTED CARD.

A simple plan of catching a glimpse of a selected card is
2 to have it inserted at the end and prevent the spectator from
pushing it quite home by squeezing the deck. Then, with
4 the card protruding about a quarter of an inch, covertly
turn the deck partially over by passing it to the other hand,
6 and get sight of the index.

Another and better plan is to push the selected card
8 through diagonally, and square up, leaving it protruding
at the inner end. In this case the index is at the diagonal
10 corner and more easily seen, and the fact of the card
protruding can be covered completely.

12 Still another plan is to insert the left little finger under

LEGERDEMAIN.

the inserted card and slightly tilt up inner left hand corner to note the index.

14

THE SLIDE.

Hold the deck in the left hand, back to palm, fingers and thumb at opposite sides. Show face of deck to company, then turn it down, and with tips of third and little fingers slide the bottom card half an inch or so towards wrist (see Fig. 97), and draw the next card out at end with right hand



fingers. Of course this has the appearance of drawing off the card just shown to the company. It is a form of exchange that may be occasionally employed.

8

LEGERDEMAIN.

FAVORITE SLEIGHTS FOR TERMINATING TRICKS.

Catching Two Cards at Fingertips. — A favorite manner of terminating a trick that requires the production of two selected cards is to bring one to top and one to bottom, then toss the deck in the air a yard or so straight upwards, retaining the top and bottom cards by pressure and friction of thumb and fingers, then thrusting the hand among the cards as they descend, apparently finding the selected cards in the act.

Leaving Selected Card in Hand of Spectator. — A plan for the production of a single card, as the last of a series, is to bring it to the bottom face up and request a spectator to hold the deck firmly by the corner, thumb on top. By striking the deck forcibly from above all the cards will fall from his hand save the selected card, which is retained by the friction of the fingers and left face up in his hand.

The Revolution. — This is a great favorite for terminating certain tricks, and has a very showy appearance. If the top card is pushed over the side about half an inch, and the deck dropped flatly on the table from a point of perhaps twelve or fifteen inches above it, the top card will turn over in the descent and lie fairly on top of the deck, face exposed. The turn is caused by the resistance of the air against the protruding side. The facts that the card to be produced is on top, and that a card is pushed over, are concealed.

Cards Rising from the Hand. — The selected cards are brought to top of deck and the pack is held in the left hand, thumb at one side and lying straight along with tip near end, second third and little fingers at opposite side, and first finger at back. The cards are pushed up by first finger, the thumb and other fingers being released sufficiently to allow their rising, but retaining their position. (See Fig. 98.) When the cards are raised to nearly the full length

LEGERDEMAIN.

the right hand takes them off. Some address is necessary to push up a card with one finger, but a little practice, and especially at the manner of holding the deck, so as to keep



the card in position and yet not retard its upward course, will soon acquire the ability. If the first and second fingers are placed at the back the feat becomes much easier, but of course the effect is proportionately lessened.

LEGERDEMAIN.

CARD TRICKS.

It is not our purpose to describe the various kinds of apparatus, or prepared or mechanical cards, that play so great a part in the professional conjurer's startling exhibitions. The enumeration alone of these devices would fill a volume twice this size; and anyway they would be of little service to the amateur for impromptu entertainment. But we shall describe some tricks that may be performed with an ordinary deck, under any circumstances, providing the necessary skill has been acquired to execute the sleights. However, the artist who has attained some degree of proficiency in manipulation as taught by this work, may by taxing his wits a little, devise no end of tricks for himself, with the advantage that they will not be "shop worn" articles.

The simplest sleight, if well rigged up with either plausible or nonsensical clap-trap, may be made to provide a most astonishing and elaborate card trick; whereas, if the sleight be exhibited alone, the effect is not at all commensurate with the time and labor spent in acquiring the skill. Conceal, as far as possible, the possession of digital ability, and leave the company still guessing how it is done.

For some of the following tricks we have invented names and garnished them up with a rigmarole merely to show the part that "patter" plays in card entertainments. Our readers essaying the tricks should compose their own monologue, so that it may be in keeping with their particular personality or style of address.

The Exclusive Coterie. — In Effect. The four Queens are selected and laid face down in a row on the table. Three indifferent cards are placed on each Queen. Now the company selects one of the four packets, and it is found to consist of the four Queens only.

Sleights: Palm and Shift.

LEGERDEMAIN.

Patter and Execution. — “Ladies and gentlemen, I shall endeavor to illustrate, with the aid of this ordinary deck of cards, how futile are the efforts of plebeians to break into that select circle of society known as the Beau-monde, and especially how such entree is prevented by the polite but frigid exclusiveness of its gentler members.

“We shall assume that it is the occasion of a public reception, our table the hall, our deck the common herd, and we may fittingly select the four Queens as representing the feminine portion of the Smart Set.” (Lay four Queens face down on table.) “Will some one now kindly see that there are no more Queens in the deck.” (Hand deck for inspection.) “There are no more Queens in the deck? Thanks!” (Take deck back.) “But are we all quite sure that the cards on the table are the four Queens? Please examine them.” (Hand them to one of the company, and now secretly palm three cards in right hand.) “They are the four Queens? Kindly place them on the deck.” (Extend deck in left hand and when Queens are placed on top secretly place palmed cards on top of them.) “Now, as our table is supposed to be the scene of this grand function, we shall station those four particularly exclusive ladies at different points in the room” (lay out the first three top cards face down), “giving her majesty the Queen of —” (hesitate and carelessly turn Queen face up apparently to see the suit, and allow the company to see it also, then name the suit), “the post of honor near the entrance.” (Lay first Queen on the table and make a shift, holding location of other three Queens.) “Now, as would naturally be the case, we shall besiege these high strung patrician ladies with attentions from the lower orders, which the rest of the deck represents, by first surrounding her majesty on the right with three cards from the top” (lay three cards on first table card), “and to show no partiality we shall cut the deck haphazard, and plague our second liege lady with three of the first presumptuous plebeians we may find

LEGERDEMAIN.

there" (cut off small packet and place three cards on second
44 table card) "and though the proximity or even notice of
any of these common persons are equally abhorrent to our
46 grand dames we shall treat them all alike by again cutting
and surrounding her majesty at the entrance with three
48 more rank outsiders" (this time cut to location of shift, and
place the three Queens on table Queen), "and permit three
50 more from the bottom who have been least crowding and
therefore more deserving to proffer their homage to the
52 other fair one." (Lay three bottom cards on the other table
card.)

54 "Now, ladies and gentlemen, as you have seen, I have
brutally taken advantage of these unprotected and tenderly
56 nurtured creatures by placing them in circumstances that
must be extremely galling to their aristocratic sensibilities.
58 Will they endure such conditions? Having some knowledge
of the marvelous subtlety, finesse and resources of the sex,
60 I feel confident they can, with tact and discretion, easily
elude their persecutors, and form a more congenial coterie
62 among themselves. Will some one please select two of these
packets?" (Whichever packets are selected place those two
64 that do not contain the Queens at the back of the table side
by side.) "Thanks. Now kindly tell me which of the two
66 remaining packets I shall take?" (In any case pick up the
two packets, placing the Queens at the front of the table
68 and the second packet back beside the others. The question
is purposely ambiguous.)

70 "Now we must see whether I were over-confident
in predicting that the Queens would seek each other's
72 society. If they are all found in one packet I was right.
In which packet would they be most likely to congregate?
74 As the front packet was your selection, and as it is given
the most prominent position, I think the fatal vanity of the
76 sex would tempt them to be there. We shall see." (Turn up
four Queens, then face the other three packets, showing no
78 Queens among them.)

LEGERDEMAIN.

It will have been seen by the foregoing that the presentation of a card trick may contain much more bosh than action, and indeed the performance of the one just described might be advantageously prolonged by a great deal more nonsense. In all card entertainments the more palaver the more the interest is excited, and the address and patter of the performer will count as much if not more than his skill in manipulation.

The Divining Rod. — In effect: A card is freely selected by the company and replaced in the pack, which is thoroughly shuffled. The performer is now blindfolded, shuffles the cards in this condition, then spreads them face down over the table, poises a pen-knife over the mass, and suddenly pierces the selected card through with the open blade.

Sleights: Shift, Palm and Blind Shuffle.

Execution and Patter. — “Ladies and Gentlemen. It is a fact well known to archaeologists that many very wonderful arts which were possessed by the ancients have, through the course of ages, been completely lost to modern civilization. Prominent among these superior accomplishments was the mysterious power of divining the presence of water or metals that lay hidden far under the ground. Now it may be that the assertion I am about to make will be received by you with polite but none the less absolute incredulity; but it has been my very great good fortune to discover, by the merest accident, the underlying principle of this lost art, and I have mapped out a plan of experiment and study that will in time, I trust, enable me to give once more to the world complete and scientific data for positively ascertaining the immediate whereabouts of such metals as gold, silver or copper by a process as simple as the waving of a willow wand over the prospected area.

“I do not myself as yet fully understand the exact nature of the power I have stumbled upon, but I know it to be a sort of magnetic or sympathetic attraction, and I shall

LEGERDEMAIN.

illustrate to you the principle involved by experimenting
30 with a deck of cards. Will some one please make a selection
of one card? Thank you. Now I wish you to remember
32 the name. Put it back anywhere in the deck.” (Shift and
palm off card.) “Would you like to shuffle? Mix them up
34 thoroughly.” (Take back deck, placing palmed card on top
and show large handkerchief.) “Now, ladies and gentlemen,
36 although no ordinary power on earth can find that selected
card, I am going to satisfy all present that it is a very
38 extraordinary power indeed that will assist me in producing
it. As a matter of fact, the power is entirely apart from any
40 personal ability I may possess; the merit of the feat will
be solely due to the mysterious properties of this little pen-
42 knife. To conclusively prove that I take no part in the action
I shall have some one blindfold me with this handkerchief.”
44 (Fold the handkerchief, and when it is being knotted at
back adjust fold over eyes and nose so that table can be seen
46 when looking straight downwards.) “Now, as it is utterly
impossible for me to see at all, I shall again shuffle the
48 cards” (blind shuffle and leave one extra card on top), “and
spread them out over the table.” (Spread the deck on the
50 table with a rotary motion, gradually working off top card
and retaining second card with finger or thumb, employing
52 both hands so that selected card can be almost wholly
covered. Keep exposed corner in sight and spread balance
54 of cards still further over table. Now take open pen-knife in
hand.) “Please observe that I do not touch the cards at all.”
56 (Poise knife daintily between finger and thumb, circle about
with hovering motion, and suddenly pierce card through its
58 exposed part. Remove handkerchief, request name of card
and slowly turn it up on point of blade.)

60 We consider this trick a capital one if performed with
some address. Of course the patter is all a matter of taste
62 and any invention may answer. The possibility of getting
a perfect view of the table when the eyes are bandaged
64 is never suspected by the uninitiated, but it is a fact well

LEGERDEMAIN.

known to conjurers. The slightest glint is quite sufficient, as the head may be moved about freely so as to take in the whole plane below. Under any circumstances it is difficult to fold a handkerchief so that no ray of light will enter from beneath.

This trick may be performed without getting sight of the card, by retaining the selected card under finger of one hand and then the other, and when spreading is complete retaining its position well exposed, and piercing by mechanical judgment of its location.

The Invisible Flight. — In effect. A card is selected by the company. The performer places it on the table to the right. Another card is selected and performer places it on table to the left. The first drawn card is now placed on top of the deck, which was lying on the table, and the two selected cards are commanded to change places and found to have done so.

Slights: Top Change and Palm Change.

Execution: Stand behind the table facing the company. Have a card selected by a spectator to the right, hold deck in left hand, take back drawn card in right hand, show it first to the company on the right, then to company on the left, then exchange it for top card of deck when making half turn again to the right and deposit card with same movement on the table at the right side. Now have the second card selected by some spectator to the left, palm the top card in right hand when closing the deck, and hold deck in right hand by ends, face down. Take back second drawn card in left hand, showing it to company on left. Now drop deck on middle of table, and take second selected card from the left hand into the right, seizing it by the ends, and depositing palmed card on top of it. Hold closely together and show as one card to company on the right. The right hand now contains the two selected cards. Make "Palm Change," taking first selected card in left hand, and deposit it on left side of table. Immediately pick up card on right side of table by ends,

LEGERDEMAIN.

with the right hand, and drop it openly from several inches
28 above, on top of deck. Pick up deck by drawing it with
sliding movement to edge of table, depositing palmed card
30 on top, and place the pack on the table to the right. As the
exchange is now made finish the trick as desired.

32 The first exchange is made by employing the "Top
Change," and the tacit excuse for bringing the hands
34 together for the instant is obtained by showing the card
first to the company on the right, then to the left, and
36 then depositing the card on right side of table. The second
exchange is made very slowly, or at least in the usual time
38 required to pass a card from one hand to the other. The
entire company should be permitted to see the card about to
40 be palmed; then the hand is naturally turned down as the
left fingers apparently carry away to the left the card just
42 shown. When the table card is dropped on the deck, it may
be permitted to fall unevenly, giving one reason for picking
44 up the deck, i.e., to square up. Transferring the deck from
the middle of the table to the right side is the second tacit
46 excuse.

This trick is usually performed by having one duplicate
48 card, and forcing it, in which case the assistance of the deck
for the third exchange is not required. But as we confine
50 our list to those that may be performed with an ordinary
deck, the foregoing method will be found satisfactory.

TRICKS WITH THE PREARRANGED DECK.

The usual plan is to arrange the whole pack in the order
2 suggested by the following jingle, viz.:

4 "Eight Kings threatened to save
Ninety-five Queens from one sick Knave."

Thus indicating the order of the thirteen values, as
6 Eight, King, Three, Ten, Two, Seven, Nine, Five, Queen,

LEGERDEMAIN.

Four, Ace, Six, Jack. The suits are taken in a regular order, say, Diamonds, Clubs, Hearts, Spades. To arrange the deck, lay the Eight of Diamonds face up on the table, then place the King of Clubs face up on that, then the Three of Hearts on that, then Ten of Spades, Two of Diamonds, Seven of Clubs, Nine of Hearts, Five of Spades, Queen of Diamonds, and so on, continuing until the fifty-two cards are laid out, the last card being the Jack of Spades.

Any arrangement is as good as another so long as the values do not run in their regular order, i. e., one, two, three, four, five, etc., and though the above arrangement is well known, it does not matter in the least when performing. Only those who are well versed in card tricks would recognize the order, and such persons cannot be deceived with any kind of arrangement. The tax on the memory is very slight, there being but thirteen names to commit, and conning them over for half an hour or so should impress their order on the mind permanently. The deck so arranged makes every thirteenth card the same value, and of the next suit in the order of suits; every fourth card the same suit, and every second card the other suit of the same color.

Cutting does not disturb the order and the top card is always next in the regular order to the bottom, and the performer, secretly noting the bottom card, has the key to the situation. We shall describe several very startling effects that may be caused by the employment of the prearranged deck in the hands of a really clever operator.

Of course, the prearrangement must be carefully concealed. The performer first blind shuffles, then requests some spectator to cut. Then spreading the cards fanwise with both hands, requests the spectator to select any number of the cards, and permits him to do so but from only one position in the fan, withdrawing the deck immediately as the cards are drawn, so as to prevent any attempt to select from different positions. The performer now separates his hands and the deck, at the point where the cards were

LEGERDEMAIN.

drawn, and the right hand carelessly places the cards which
44 were above those drawn, under the left-hand portion. He
now secretly notes the bottom card, barely sighting the
46 index at the base of the left thumb, then raises the inner
corner of the top card slightly with the left thumb, getting a
48 glimpse of its index. There is little or no fear of this action
being noticed, as the company is not yet informed of the
50 nature of the trick, and the principal attention is taken by
the cards selected. The performer may now finish the trick
52 in any manner. He has learned the number of cards drawn,
and what cards they are, by naming over mentally in the
54 prearranged order, beginning from the bottom card that
he has noted, the cards that should be between it and the
56 top card, which he has also noted. He may first pretend to
determine the number drawn by weighing those that are
58 left, and then take back the selected cards one at a time,
boldly proclaiming that though the difference in the weight
60 of each card is infinitely little, still there is a difference; and
delicately ascertaining its suit and value by this means as
62 he holds it poised in the right hand. Or he may assume the
power of mind-reading, determining first the color then
64 the suit, then the value of each card. Or he may terminate
the trick by simply naming the cards in their order. There
66 are a hundred and one variations, and in carrying them
out the performer must see that the arranged order is not
68 disturbed, so that he may continue his experiments with the
deck. There is no reason that he should not look at the cards
70 when they are returned, but they are rarely changed from
the order drawn.

72 The performer may now request the company to call for
any particular card, and he can locate it almost instantly
74 from his knowledge of the bottom card, and he makes the
two-handed shift; bringing it into view. He may hold the
76 deck face up in the left hand, and slightly spring the outer
corners under cover of the right hand, glancing at the index;
78 or hold it face down and spring the inner corners. In either

LEGERDEMAIN.

event he has only thirteen cards to run through before finding one of the same value as that called for, and if the suit is not the same it instantly tells him that it must be the thirteenth, or twenty-sixth card from the one found.

The performer may, of course, name every card in the deck, taking them off one at a time and calling the value and suit before he throws it face up on the table; but rather than make the trick so long, and such a constant repetition, it is preferable to name half a dozen or so, then execute a blind shuffle, have the deck cut again, and begin once more. By assuming to determine the value and suit by the sense of smell, or any chicanery, is more misleading, and has a better effect.

But the most remarkable feats that may be accomplished with the prearranged deck have yet to be described. The performer executes a blind shuffle thoroughly, requests a spectator to cut, and lays the deck face down on the table. Now some member of the company is requested to give any number between one and fifty-two, and the performer immediately names the card that will be found at that number. When this has been verified, and the shuffle and cut are again made, the performer lays the deck on the table and this time desires the company to give the name of any card in the pack. The performer at once calls the number at which it will be found, and proves his accuracy by slowly and openly counting the cards until it is reached. Of course, in each instance the performer has noted the bottom card after the cut was made, and before he placed the deck on the table. We have formulated the following rules for determining the card that will be found at the number given, and for ascertaining the number at which any particular card called for will be located.

To determine the card that is at any particular number, its suit is first determined. Divide the number by four, and if there is no remainder the suit is the same as the bottom card. If the remainder is one, the suit is the next in the

LEGERDEMAIN.

order of suits. If the remainder is two, the suit is the second
116 in the order of suits, or the other suit of the same color. If
the remainder is three, the suit is the third in the order of
118 suits, or the preceding suit, always calculating from the
suit of the bottom card.

120 Now having ascertained the suit of the card at the
number given, we proceed to learn its value. First divide
122 the number by thirteen. If there is no remainder, the value
is the same as the bottom card; but this is very improbable.
124 If there is a remainder, name over mentally in the arranged
order, as many cards as the remainder, beginning with the
126 top card (which is next in order to the bottom), and the last
card mentally named will denote the value of the card at the
128 number given. Then the value and suit, or the name of the
card at the number, is proclaimed to the company and the
130 prediction verified.

To ascertain the number at which any particular card
132 called for will be found, we first determine where the first
card of that value is, and the suit of that first card. To find
134 the number at which this first card of like value is located,
mentally name over the arranged order, starting with the
136 top card (which is next in order to the bottom) until the card
of like value is reached. Of course, the number will be less
138 than thirteen. Then find the suit of this card by dividing its
number by four, as explained in the first rule. Now if the
140 suit chances to be the suit of the card called for, the task is
completed, but the odds are three to one against it. If the
142 required suit is the next in the order of suits, add thirteen
to the first number. If the suit required is the second in the
144 order, add twenty-six to the first number; and if the suit of
the card called for is the third in the order of suits, or the
146 preceding suit, add thirty-nine to the first number, and in
each instance it will be the number at which the card called
148 for will be found.

We shall first give an example of determining the card
150 that will be found at any particular number. Assume that

LEGERDEMAIN.

the company gives the number thirty-five, and the bottom card is the King of Spades. Following the rule, we divide 152 the number thirty-five by four, and get a remainder of three. This gives us the suit as the third in order from the 154 bottom suit, or the preceding suit which is Hearts. Now to determine the value of the thirty-fifth card. The rule 156 is "divide the number by thirteen," and this gives us a remainder of nine. Now we mentally name our nine cards 158 in their order, from the King at the bottom: "Three, Ten, Two, Seven, Nine, Four, Queen, Four, Ace." The Ace being 160 the ninth card determines the value. Hence the thirty-fifth card is the Ace of Hearts. 162

Dividing any number under fifty-two by thirteen is very simple; remembering that it goes evenly into thirteen, 164 twenty-six, and thirty-nine, the remainder can be instantly calculated. When mentally running the order, the values 166 only are rehearsed, thereby taking half the time that would be required to rehearse both value and suit of each 168 card. The suit having been obtained by the first division by four, only the value remains to be determined. A clever 170 performer can name the card almost instantly.

As an example of determining the number at which any 172 particular card will be found, we shall assume the company calls for the Ten of Diamonds, and the bottom card is the 174 Six of Clubs. The rule is to "first, determine where the first card of the same value is, and the suit of that card." We 176 mentally rehearse the order from the Six at the bottom until we reach the first Ten, viz.: "Jack, Eight, King, Three, 178 Ten," finding the first Ten is the fifth card. Now to learn its suit, we divide by four, getting the remainder of one. 180 This gives us the suit as the first in order from the bottom card. As the bottom card is a Club, the Ten located is a 182 Heart. Now, as the card called for is the Ten of Diamonds, and Diamonds is the second suit from Hearts, we apply the 184 rule and add twenty-six to the first number found (five), and get thirty-one, which is the number at which the Ten of 186

Diamonds will be found.

188 The card conjurer's repertory is never complete without
 employing the prearranged deck to some extent, and we
 190 believe the rules here given for determining the card at any
 number given, and the number of any card called for, are
 192 the first ever formulated for a fifty-two-card deck.

The Traveling Cards. — In Effect: A card is selected and
 2 replaced in the deck, which is then thoroughly shuffled.
 Performer now causes the cards to fly up his sleeve,
 4 one, two, or several at a time, producing them from the
 shoulder. The selected card is called upon to leave the deck
 6 at the company's desire, and the operation is continued until
 the last several cards, which are noted, disappear from the
 8 hand and are slowly produced from the shoulder.

Sleights: Masterly feats of Palming and Unflinching
 10 Audacity.

Execution and Patter: "Ladies and Gentlemen: I am
 12 constantly importuned by some of the most curious and
 least discerning of my auditors to explain the manner by
 14 which the results in certain tricks are achieved. While I
 consider it unprofessional to make these disclosures, I accede
 16 somewhat to the prevalent demand, and to-night I am going
 to take you especially into my confidence and expose one of
 18 the most important secrets in the whole realm of conjuring.
 Although many professors of the art vehemently deny the
 20 imputation, it is nevertheless a fact that the coat sleeve of
 the magician is to him much the same as a Saratoga trunk
 22 to a summer girl. Where does he get his bouquets of roses,
 baskets of eggs, dishes of swimming fishes? 'Up his sleeve.'
 24 How do his rabbits, bird cages and cannon balls disappear?
 'Up his sleeve.' The saying is as true as it is ancient, and
 26 I shall prove my assertions by demonstrating the process;
 and though you may doubt my veracity, you certainly
 28 cannot question your own eyes.

"As a preliminary, I wish some one to kindly oblige by
 30 selecting a card from the deck. Any one you wish. Now

LEGERDEMAIN.

please remember the name and place it again in the deck.”
(Card is inserted, shifted and palmed.) “Will you shuffle 32
for me?” (Deck is shuffled and returned. Place palmed card
on top and palm off eight or ten more with it in right hand, 34
hold deck in left.) “Now to illustrate the point in question,
ladies and gentlemen, I am going to cause these cards to fly 36
up my sleeve and out through the armhole here.” (Indicate
place by thrusting the right hand into the shoulder of coat, 38
and leave palmed cards there.) “Now, attention, please, and
you may see them fly, or if you do not see them, you may 40
hear them. First card, go!” (Click corner of deck with left
little finger, carelessly show right hand empty, passing it 42
rather quickly under coat to shoulder and produce bottom
card. Show it and throw on table.) “Well, you see the first 44
card obeyed me. Second card, pass!” (Produce another
from bottom.) “Third card!” (Produce; each time clicking 46
deck with finger as cards are ordered to pass, and showing
cards as produced.) “But we have had a card selected and 48
shuffled in the deck, and though we have no idea where it is
I shall command it to fly up my sleeve at whatever number 50
you may elect. What shall it be — four, five, six or seven?
The sixth? Very well. As three cards have already passed, 52
the selected card shall be the third one. Pass!” (Produce.)
“Pass !” (Produce.) “Oh, what is the name of the card you 54
selected? Jack of Hearts! Well, Jack of Hearts, it is your
turn, sir. You will please oblige the company by flying up 56
my sleeve.” (Produce top card, showing it to be the one
called upon.) 58

“To show the ease with which the cards travel I shall
order several to pass together.” (Palm eight or ten in left 60
hand from bottom.) “I have only to speak a little louder.
Pass!” (Take deck in right hand and thrust left into right 62
shoulder, withdrawing two or three of the palmed cards,
leaving balance there.) “You see, I have three cards this 64
time, and they travel equally well through either sleeve. Go!
Four cards passed. Go! Three cards. It may be thought that 66

LEGERDEMAIN.

I have duplicate cards concealed in my coat above, but that
68 is easily disproved. You see there are no cards there. (Throw
open fully right side of coat, from which all cards have been
70 taken, and left side partially.) “Besides, if you watch the
deck you will notice that it is gradually growing less. To save
72 time I shall hasten their activity. *Go!*” (Take deck again in
left hand and produce balance in left shoulder, then palm
74 again in left hand.) “Three cards that time. *Pass!*” (Thrust
palmed cards in right shoulder and produce about half of
76 them, then palm from top with right hand.) “Five that
time. *Go!*” (Produce half with right hand, leaving balance.)
78 “Four. *Pass!*” (Produce balance from left shoulder.) “Five
cards. *Pass!*” (Change hands and produce balance from
80 right shoulder.) “Now, how many have we left — one, two,
three, four, five, six. Six only. Please note what they are.
82 The King, Tray, Seven, Ten, Ace, and another Seven. Shall
I pass them all at once, or one at a time? All together? Very
84 well. Now, all of you, be gone!” (Bring left hand down
below right, then when repassing right with quick outward
86 movement propel cards into right palm with left first finger,
making snapping noise, point right index finger at empty
88 left hand for instant, then thrust right into left shoulder and
slowly produce, showing cards are same as named.)

90 Although this trick is one of the oldest, it is one of the
prettiest; and in the hands of a really clever artist never
92 fails in producing a most pleasing and brilliant effect. Some
performers produce the cards from the bosom beneath the
94 vest, but we think the shoulder preferable. The cards can be
slipped partially into the coat sleeve near top of shoulder,
96 and their position securely maintained while the arms are
moved about at will. The hand that holds the deck should be
98 extended as the cards are commanded to pass. Using both
sleeves gives excuse for changing deck from hand to hand,
100 creating favorable and natural opportunities for palming,
and also preventing the spectators anticipating which hand
102 will produce the cards until it is too late.

LEGERDEMAIN.

The Row of Ten Cards. — In Effect: The performer shuffles the deck and lays the first ten cards face down in a row on the table. The performer now turns away while any number of the cards are transferred from one end to the other. Then, without having seen the action, or being aided in any manner, the performer immediately turns up one card whose value indicates the number of cards that were transferred; permitting this action to be repeated as often as desired, and determining the number moved each time.

Execution: Arrange ten cards in consecutive order from Ace to Ten, and place on top of deck, the Ten being uppermost. Blind shuffle and lay out the ten cards face down in a row on the table, beginning at the left, so that the Ten is the left end card of the row. Explain to company that any number may be transferred from the right to the left end. As the order must be maintained, it is well to insist that but one card must be moved at a time. This will preserve the order, and not be likely to impress the company that there is any certain arrangement.

The rules for determining the number transferred from right to left are, first: The left end card will always indicate the number of the first transfer: i.e., when the first transfer of any number of cards is made, the value or number of spots of the card at the left end will be the number of the cards that were transferred; so that by turning up the left end card when the first move is made, the performer indicates the number that were transferred. On the second or any subsequent transfer, the card to turn is determined by adding the value, or number of spots, of the last card turned, to the number of the place it occupies in the row.

For example, the cards, when first laid out, will stand:

TEN, NINE, EIGHT, SEVEN, SIX, FIVE, FOUR, THREE, TWO, ONE. Assume the company transfer four cards, the order will then be:

FOUR, THREE, TWO, ONE, TEN, NINE, EIGHT, SEVEN, SIX, FIVE, so that when the rule for determining the first

LEGERDEMAIN.

transfer is applied, and the left end card turned, it would
38 indicate that four cards were transferred.

When the card is turned the calculation for determining
40 the next transfer is at once made by the second rule, "adding
the value of the card turned (four) to the number of its place
42 in the row" (one), making five. When the next transfer is
made the fifth card is turned and it indicates the number
44 transferred. Let us prove this by assuming that two cards
are now transferred. The new order will be:

46 SIX, FIVE, FOUR, THREE, TWO, ONE, TEN, NINE, EIGHT,
SEVEN. Now, counting from the left, we turn the fifth
48 card in the row, and find the Two, indicating the number
transferred. Again add the number of turned card (two)
50 to its place in the row (five), and we get seven, which
will be the number in the row to turn, when the next
52 transfer is made.

Of course, if this is continued, the number will in time
54 be greater than ten; in which case ten is subtracted from
the number, and the remainder indicates the position of the
56 card to turn.

If the company should test the performer's ability by
58 making no transfer, or by transferring the ten cards, the
card turned will always be the Ten; and in such case the
60 performer will at once state that transferring all or none
was not a part of the conditions made, thus concealing
62 the fact that he cannot tell whether all or none were
moved.

64 The first move should always be made by the performer
when explaining the experiment to the company, and
66 thereby avoid turning up the end card. As the performer
makes the first transfer, he simply adds one to the number
68 moved, one being the position of the card that otherwise
would be turned, and he has the position for the turn when
70 the company makes the first transfer.

Much effect may be obtained with this trick if the
72 proper address and by-play are indulged. The performer

LEGERDEMAIN.

may affect to accomplish the feat by mind reading, and
increase the interest by failing to fathom the subtlety of 74
some lady's intellectual faculty, and easily wresting the
secret from the coarser calibre of some gentleman, even 76
against his will; and by pretending to have determined the
number transferred before turning the card, and making 78
the finding of the particular card also dependent upon some
extraordinary power. 80

The trick is one of the very best of those not requiring
sleight of hand. 82

The Acrobatic Jacks. — In effect: The Jacks are placed
by the company at top, bottom, and middle of the deck, 2
and keep constantly changing positions in most remarkable
manner. 4

Sleights: One and Two Hand Shifts.

Patter and Execution: "Ladies and Gentlemen: You 6
have all doubtless been interested or amused, at one time
or another, by the remarkable performances of educated 8
animals. The dog, the pony, the elephant, and even the
pig, have all been carefully trained to understand and 10
obey each word or sign of their masters. But have you ever
witnessed the performance of an educated pack of cards? 12
You do not know that cards can be educated? I assure you
that it is quite possible, and I shall demonstrate the truth of 14
my assertion. Moreover, I have discovered in my efforts to
educate my fifty-two pupils, that they, like the members of 16
any other family, possess certain individual characteristics
or temperaments, and I have endeavored to develop the 18
special talents of each, in the direction most in keeping with
the natural bent. 20

"I shall select the four Jacks for the purpose of
illustrating how an original athletic tendency that was 22
early manifested by them has been developed by a system
of training, until they have acquired a degree of skill in 24
acrobatic feats that is truly remarkable. I wish two ladies
or gentlemen in the audience to assist me, by each holding 26

LEGERDEMAIN.

two of the Jacks.” (Give two red Jacks to spectator, whom
28 we shall designate as A., and two black Jacks to second
spectator, whom we shall call B. Then to A.) “Will you,
30 sir, place one of the red Jacks on top of the deck? Thank
you. And will you (to B.) place one of the black Jacks in the
32 middle of the deck?” (Open pack with left thumb bookwise,
ready for the “Charlier Shift,” and when Jack is inserted
34 shift packets.)

“Now, ladies and gentlemen, we have a red Jack on top,
36 and a black Jack in the middle, and as a first display of
their intelligence and training, I shall order them to change
38 places. Ready. Go!” (Click deck with little finger and show
change has taken place. Hand Jacks back to A. and B.) “You
40 see that they are quite active and very obedient. We shall
try them again and place them farther apart. (To A.) Place
42 your red Jack at the bottom. (To B.) Place your black Jack
on top. Now observe, I shall not touch the cards,” (Make
44 gesture with the right hand as if to show that this hand
would be the one necessarily employed, and as attention is
46 attracted to it, shift with the left.) “but shall command the
Jacks to perform a somersault from the top and bottom and
48 meet in the middle. Attention. Go!” (Click deck, show top
and bottom cards, then show Jacks in middle. Close deck
50 with little finger between Jacks, and shift with both hands.)
“That was a forward somersault, ladies and gentlemen, but
52 they perform backwards just as easily. I shall show you.
Ready. Go!” (Click deck and show Jacks again at top and
54 bottom.)

“I trust I have impressed you somewhat with the
56 intelligence and agility the Jacks possess in themselves,
but for fear you may fancy that I have anything to do with
58 their performance, I shall call upon all four Jacks to execute
their ground and lofty tumbling at the same time, and I
60 need not say to you, ladies and gentlemen, that however
clever I might be, I could not possibly, of my own power,
62 instantaneously change the positions of four cards at four

LEGERDEMAIN.

different points.” (Give back Jacks to A. and B., and have A. place his at top and bottom, and B. place his two in middle. Insert little finger between middle Jacks and make shift with both hands.) “Now, please remember the order. The two red Jacks are at the top and bottom, and the two black Jacks are in the middle. This time I shall order the four to play leap-frog, and each take the place of the other. Ready. Go!” (Make click and show the changes have taken place.)

“I cannot doubt, after this demonstration, that you are quite satisfied the Jacks have been fairly well trained; and I am now going to make them perform their acrobatic feat very slowly, so that you may all see just how it is done.” (Give back Jacks to A. and B. Then to A.) “Place your two red Jacks again at the top and bottom;” (then to B.) “and now we shall have yours again in the middle. But stop! On second thought, as you are to see how it is done, I shall have the Jacks execute their somersaults while the deck is in your hands. I assure you they will perform equally well, and the moment you place your cards in the middle I wish you to hold the deck yourself.” (Apparently cut deck in the middle, but really make two-handed shift without bringing the two packets together again, holding the right-hand packet a few inches over the left when shift is made. Have Jacks placed between, and immediately close packets, putting deck in B.’s hands.) “Now, sir, don’t hold them too firmly, and watch them perform. I shall order all four to come together at the middle. All ready. Go! Did you see them go? Nor even feel them go? That is strange, for they certainly obeyed me. Look at the top and bottom cards. They have gone! Now look in the middle and you will find them all together as commanded.”

A Mind-Reading Trick. — Sleights: Stock Shuffle.

Execution and Patter: “Ladies and Gentlemen, I shall next attempt an experiment in mind-reading, and though I do not claim to be an adept in the art, I have managed

LEGERDEMAIN.

to obtain an understanding of its fundamental principles,
6 and I shall endeavor to demonstrate that under favorable
conditions I can actually read the thought that is most
8 prominent in the mind of a willing subject. I wish some
gentleman in the audience who is desirous of giving my
10 ability a fair and impartial test, to take this deck of cards
in his own hands and select any four he may wish for the
12 purpose of my experiment." (Give deck to spectator, who
selects four cards at will, and take back deck.) "Now, sir,
14 will you please make a mental note of any one card of the
four you have selected, and as an aid to impress it most
16 firmly, think of the one that to you may appear the most
easily remembered. If you can associate one of them with a
18 prominent date, or some incident in your own life, so much
the better; and, if possible, disabuse your mind completely
20 of the other three. Have you done this? Thank you. Now
insert the four anywhere in the deck." (Have cards replaced
22 in middle, form break above, with right thumb at inner
end, turn on side in left hand in position for blind shuffle.
24 Under cut to about half portion above break, shuffle off
to break, run two, in-jog running, say, seventeen, out-
26 jog and shuffle off. Under cut to in-jog and throw on top.
Under cut to out-jog, run seven and throw balance on top.
28 This action places two of the selected cards the ninth and
tenth from the top, and the other two the eighteenth and
30 nineteenth.) "Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have doubtless
quite satisfied you, and most certainly myself, that the four
32 cards drawn, including the particular one thought of, are
hopelessly lost in the shuffle; but before attempting to read
34 the mind of the gentleman who is so kindly assisting me in
the experiment, I wish to be assured that he has got the
36 card firmly established in his memory. Please watch these
cards as I expose them. I shall not attempt to determine
38 the card should it appear, by any outward sign you may
make; in fact, I shall not look at either you or the cards."
40 (Expose seventeen cards, one at a time, throwing them

LEGERDEMAIN.

carelessly one on the other, face up, on the table. Note the two selected cards, the ninth and tenth, as they fall on the table, paying no attention to the others.) “Did you see the cards you thought of?” (If he did, it is one of those noted. If not, it is one of the next two selected cards, which are now on top of deck. In either event.) “Well, I see that you are not at all uncertain about your memory.” (Now assuming the thought card is on the table; if they are of different color, by ascertaining the color of the thought card, its identity is established. If of the same color, but different suit, the suit will fix its identity. If both color and suit are the same, the value must be different, and the first question is asked concerning the point of difference. In whichever particular they differ, color preferred, gaze intently into the individual’s eyes.) “Please think of the color. Was it red?” (In event of it being so, it will be presumed that the guess was certain knowledge. Should he answer “No,” step close to him, taking his hand.) “Kindly permit me to come in contact with you, and I am certain to obtain a perfect impression of your thought.” (In either event the answer to the first question discloses the identity of the thought card.) “Oh, now I obtain a startlingly clear impression of the color, and the suit is Diamonds.” (Or, as the case may be.) “Now, please think solely of the value.” (Then, meditatively.) “Was it a Court or a Spot card? Now, as I close my eyes to prevent the confusion of external objects, I see it is covered with spots; one, two, three, four, five, six, seven. Yes, it is the Seven of Diamonds.” (Or as the case may be.)

Should the thought card not have been one of those exposed, and the chances are even, get a glimpse of the two top cards when replacing the table cards, or by shifting them to the bottom, and proceed in the same manner to ascertain which is the one thought of.

Power of Concentrated Thought. — In Effect: A spectator is requested to think of a card. Performer now

LEGERDEMAIN.

lays deck on the table and requests another spectator to
4 think of a number. Both spectators are now requested to
whisper the name and number to each other, and mentally
6 command the card thought of to take its position in the deck
at the number thought of. The performer, who has not been
8 near the deck in the interim, now requests the name and
number, and permits a spectator to take the deck in hand
10 and ascertain for the company that the silent injunction has
been obeyed.

12 Execution: When requesting the first spectator to think
of a card, employ one of the several methods given for
14 “Determining the Card Thought Of.” Bring this card to the
top. Secretly count seven cards at bottom and shift to top.
16 Lay deck on the table, and request second spectator to “think
of a number between one and ten.” The trick is based on
18 the very strong probability that he will think of seven. Now
babble nonsense about the power of concentrated thought
20 upon even inanimate objects, requesting parties to whisper
name and number, and mentally urge the required action.
22 Now request name and number. If the number is seven, tell
him to count off the number thought of, and turn the next
24 card. If the number is eight, tell him to turn the card at the
number thought of. However, should the number be more
26 or less than either, the performer must pick up the deck
himself, and when handing it to the spectator shift one from
28 the bottom if the number is nine, or the requisite number
from the top if less than seven. But the chances are ten to
30 one that seven will be the number thought of.

The Acme of Control. — In Effect: A spectator selects
2 two cards. Then takes the deck in his own hands, inserts
the cards himself, shuffles to any extent, and returns deck
4 to performer, who produces the selected cards instantly.

Sleights: Force and Palm.

6 Execution: Secretly place Five of Diamonds and Four
of Hearts, at top or bottom of deck, and Four of Diamonds
8 and Five of Hearts, in middle. Force the two middle cards

LEGERDEMAIN.

on spectator, palm the other two when closing deck, and immediately hand the pack to spectator, telling him to insert the drawn cards and shuffle. Give him as little time as possible to meditate on his selection, as the trick is based on the similarity of the forced cards and the palmed ones. When the deck is returned, finish the trick as desired, and when producing the two palmed cards, boldly proclaim them as the ones drawn. If the trick be performed properly, not one in fifty will discover the imposition unless in the secret. The difference between the cards forced, and the cards produced, is so little remarkable that it is seldom or never detected. The Sevens and Eights, or the Deuces and Trays, or any two pairs of the spot cards of the same color, would probably answer as well.

The performer may engage to cause the selected cards to appear together at top, or bottom, or middle of deck, at the option of the company, and shift the palmed cards to such position as decided upon; or he may “pass” the cards under some object on the table, or to the pocket of a spectator, in which latter events he will have secretly placed the cards there beforehand instead of on top or bottom of deck.

The Card and Handkerchief. — In Effect: A card is freely selected, restored to the deck and thoroughly shuffled. The deck is now wrapped up in a borrowed handkerchief, which is held suspended by the corners, and upon command the selected card is seen to slowly project itself through the handkerchief and flutter to the floor.

Execution: Borrow a rather large handkerchief first. Place it in full sight in vest or on table, then have card selected and replaced in deck, shift to top, palming in right hand, and return deck to be shuffled. Now take corner of handkerchief in each hand, show both sides by crossing right hand over left, keeping right palm to person, then throw handkerchief over right palm, one corner lying along right arm, and diagonal corner hanging down over right fingers the hand being about the middle. Now take back deck with

LEGERDEMAIN.

16 left hand and place it on handkerchief lengthwise over right
hand, seizing it by ends with that hand, and squaring up
18 palmed card against it, at same time taking out the crimp
so that it will lie flatly. Then, with the left hand, bring up
20 the overhanging corner of handkerchief, covering the deck,
and showing the right-hand fingers; seize sides of deck with
22 left hand, gather back the folds of handkerchief with right
so that the selected card will be retained at its inner end and
24 suspend the deck by the folds with the right hand, holding
well above the pack. (See Figs. 99 and 100.) Now command



Fig. 99

LEGERDEMAIN.

the selected card to appear, first requesting the drawer to 26
give its name, and by giving slight up and down jolts to the
deck, the card will slowly emerge from the back, having all 28
the appearance of forcing its way through the center of the
handkerchief at the lower end of the suspended deck. 30



Fig. 100

The Top and Bottom Production. — In Effect: Four 2
persons freely select two cards each. All are restored to the
deck, which is thoroughly shuffled. The top and bottom
cards are now shown not to be any of those selected. The 4

LEGERDEMAIN.

performer then causes the several pairs to instantly appear
6 at top and bottom as called for.

Sleights: Two-Handed Shift, Palm and Blind Shuffle.

8 Execution and Patter: "Ladies and Gentlemen: For
the purpose of this experiment, I shall request several
10 individuals in the company to each select two cards. I wish
you to take particular note of those you draw so that you
12 will know them again." (Allow four persons, whom we
shall call A., B., C. and D., to freely select two cards each.
14 When all are selected, take them back in the reverse order,
saying to D.) "Will you kindly place your two in the deck?"
16 (When this is done, shift, palm off, and hand deck to be
shuffled. Take back deck, replace palmed cards on top, turn
18 to C.) "Please place your two in the middle." (Shift without
closing two packets, appearing as a simple cut, and have C.'s
20 cards now placed on D.'s. Again shift to top, and execute
blind shuffle, jogging first card, and leaving selected cards
22 in the middle. Now cut to, and include jog card, and have
B.'s cards placed on first two pairs. Repeat the action taken
24 last and have A.'s cards replaced in same manner, then shift
and blind shuffle, and run three extra cards on top of the
26 four pairs which are now on top of the pack.)

"Now, ladies and gentlemen, we have had eight cards
28 selected by four of you, and all have been thoroughly
shuffled in the deck. It is needless to say that I do not know
30 which cards were selected, or that I have no idea where
they are. However, we shall look at those near the top and
32 bottom to see if any are in that position." (Turn deck over
and show two or three of the bottom cards, turn deck back
34 and take off top three in right hand, showing faces; then
as replacing, push over next card with the left thumb, so
36 that left little finger may be inserted under it, and shift all
four to the bottom. This will leave A.'s two cards at top
38 and bottom.) "Were any of the selected cards among those
I have just shown? No? Well, I am about to perform what
40 under ordinary circumstances would be a very difficult

LEGERDEMAIN.

feat indeed, but with this trained and perfectly educated deck, becomes ridiculously simple and easy. It is to cause the selected cards to appear at the top and bottom, in any order that you may desire.” (To A.) “If you will tell me, sir, what cards you drew, I shall call upon them to appear instantly. You say they are the Seven of Diamonds and the Jack of Spades? Well, now, Seven and Jack, come!” (Hold deck in left hand, click with little finger, show bottom card, take off top and show with right hand, push next card over side when replacing and shift two to bottom. This leaves B.’s cards at top and bottom.) “You see how willingly the cards obey me. Now, sir (to B.), let me know the cards you selected and we shall see if they are as active?” (When names are given, produce as before. Now execute blind shuffle again, running three extra cards on top. Again show several at bottom, then show top three, and this time push over two cards with left thumb when replacing top cards, and shift five to bottom. This leaves B.’s cards in position.) “We have still another pair to find, and though they seem excessively modest in keeping away from the top and bottom, I have no doubt they will be in evidence when called upon. What two did you draw, sir?” (to C. When names are given show as before, then shift two cards to bottom, leaving D.’s at top and bottom. Now affect to have forgotten about D.’s cards, and drop the deck on the table as though the trick were terminated. When reminded by the company that D.’s cards were not produced, show some slight embarrassment.) “Yes, that is true. I had forgotten that all were not produced, and as the deck has been out of my possession, I cannot exact the same obedience from them. However, if you will tell me the names of the last two cards, I shall try to find them myself.” (When names are given, seize deck with right hand, toss it a yard or so straight upwards, retaining top and bottom cards in hand by friction, thrust hand among descending pack and apparently find the last two in the act.)

LEGERDEMAIN.

The Three Aces. — In Effect: The Ace of Diamonds,
2 Ace of Clubs and Ace of Spades are shown to the company
and laid face down on the table. Then one is picked up and
4 inserted in the middle of the deck, another is placed on the
bottom, and the third is placed on the top. A single true cut
6 is now made and the three Aces are found together.

Sleight: Prearrangement.

8 Execution: Secretly place the Ace of Diamonds on
top of the deck. Arrange the other three Aces in the left
10 hand, fanwise, face up, the Ace of Hearts below the other
two, and showing in the middle. The figure of the heart is
12 inverted and shows at the angle made by the other cards,
so that the part seen is diamond-shaped. The corner of the
14 Ace on the left of the fan just covers the small heart figure
of the index, but fully exposes the small letter "A." (See
16 Fig. 101.) This arrangement can be made in a moment. The



LEGERDEMAIN.

appearance is most innocent and surprisingly deceptive.

Turn the faces to the company, and then lay the three 18
cards face down on the table, still in the same fan position,
and with the same hand. Now take up the deck, and, if 20
desired, execute a blind shuffle, retaining top Ace. Hold
deck in left hand, pick up the top card of the fan, which 22
is the Ace of Hearts, and insert it in middle of deck. Pick
up next Ace, carelessly showing it, and place it on bottom. 24
Show third card as it is placed on top. Lay the deck on the
table and request spectator to cut; and as the three Aces, 26
i.e., the two black Aces and Ace of Diamonds, were on top
and bottom of deck, all will be found together. 28

The Card and Hat. — In Effect: A borrowed hat is placed
upon the table. A card is now freely selected and given to 2
a second spectator to hold. Attention is now drawn to the
hat, which is shown to be empty, and it is again placed on 4
the table, but crown up. The selected card is then restored
to the deck by the spectator, who is permitted to take the 6
deck in his own hands. The performer now exercises very
remarkable powers by first determining the name of the 8
selected card, and then causing it to wing an invisible flight
from the deck to a position beneath the hat on the table, 10
where it is found by a spectator.

Sleights: Top Change and Palm. 12

Execution: Borrow the hat first and place it rim up on
the table. Have a card selected by spectator on the left. 14
Take it from him with the right hand, and when turning
to spectator on the right, make "Top Change," and request 16
second spectator to hold the card between his two palms;
which will prevent him from looking at it. Now palm top 18
card in right hand and give deck to first spectator to hold.
Step towards table, getting glimpse of palmed card, and 20
pick up the hat with right hand, fingers well inside, thumb
across rim, calling attention to the fact that it is empty, and 22
showing the inside. Now turn the rim down and place the
hat again upon the table, working the palmed card up along 24

LEGERDEMAIN.

the inside with the fingers, and releasing it as the hat is laid
26 down. Care must be taken to leave no crimp in the card.

Now take deck from first spectator, request second
28 spectator to hold it in the hand that happens to be uppermost.
Then take the card from his other hand and insert it in the
30 deck, and have spectator shuffle thoroughly.

As the action is now complete, make by-play
32 of determining the name of the drawn card, by tracing the
very faint impression that it left on the palm of spectator
34 who held it; and cause it to speed from the deck, under the
hat, visibly if desired, expressing surprise that no one sees
36 it going, and have spectator raise the hat to prove there is
no hocus-pocus.