

# AROUND THE WORLD

WITH A

## MAGICIAN AND A JUGGLER.

UNIQUE EXPERIENCES IN MANY LANDS.

From the Papers of the late Baron Hartwig Seeman,  
"The Emperor of Magicians," and William  
D'Alvini, Juggler, "Jap of Japs."

BY

H. J. BURLINGAME



CHICAGO:  
CLYDE PUBLISHING CO.  
BOX 851.

5314 W 1

1896

A

51545  
S4B9

---

COPYRIGHTED 1891,  
By H. J. BURLINGAME.

---

Ex

Englewood Ill



SEEMAN.

M. W. Jones 2-185

# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS . . . . .	5
--------------------------------	---

## CHAPTER II.

LIFE OF PROFESSOR SEEMAN . . . . .	11
------------------------------------	----

## CHAPTER III.

THRILLING EXPERIENCES WITH OLE BULL . . . . .	16
---	----

## CHAPTER IV.

A VISIT TO THE PYRAMIDS—THE SHOOTING ADVENTURE WITH THE MUSSULMEN . . . . .	22
---	----

## CHAPTER V.

THE CZAR BEFRIENDS THE MAGICIAN—TRICKS OF PROF. ALEXANDER WITH OLE BULL . . . . .	33
---	----

## CHAPTER VI.

TO ENGLAND, AFRICA AND INDIA—TEACHING MAGIC TO THE ZULUS . . . . .	45
--	----

## CHAPTER VII.

EXPERIENCES WITH A GREAT FAKIR . . . . .	52
--	----

## CHAPTER VIII.

A PROBLEM SOLVED . . . . .	58
----------------------------	----

## CHAPTER IX.

MARTIN LUTHER'S WEDDING RING—SEEMAN UNMASKS A CLAIRVOYANT--A WHOLESALE TREAT . . . . .	65
--	----



## CHAPTER X.

WILLIAM D'ALVINI, "JAP OF JAPS"—EARLY LIFE--	
ENGLISH AND CONTINENTAL CONTRACTS IN DE-	
TAIL . . . . .	73

## CHAPTER XI.

THE FIRST JAPANESE TROUPE—INDIAN JUGGLERS AND	
THEIR FEATS . . . . .	89

## CHAPTER XII.

TO SOUTH AMERICA WITH PATRIZIO—THE PATRIZIO	
CONTRACT . . . . .	98

## CHAPTER XIII.

D'ALVINI'S EXPERIENCES IN THE WEST INDIES—PER-	
FORMANCES FOR A "STRUGGLING CEMETERY"—	
FISTIC POWERS—SPIRITUALISTIC EXCITEMENT .	104

## CHAPTER XIV.

D'ALVINI IN THE UNITED STATES . . . . .	171
---	-----

## CHAPTER XV.

REMINISCENCES OF D'ALVINI . . . . .	121
-------------------------------------	-----

## CHAPTER XVI.

D'ALVINI'S PROGRAMMES--BEFORE THE FOOTLIGHTS	
--BEHIND THE SCENES—"JAP OF JAPS" JUG-	
GLING AND CONJURING PROGRAMMES AS WRIT-	
TEN OUT BY HIMSELF . . . . .	127

## CHAPTER XVII.

PSYCHOLOGY OF THE ART OF CONJURING . . . . .	137
--	-----

## CHAPTER XVIII.

BELLACHINI . . . . .	166
----------------------	-----

AROUND THE WORLD

WITH A

MAGICIAN AND A JUGGLER.

---

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

The love of mystery is instructive. Its power is therefore great. Religions have been founded upon it and the doubts it has caused have lost many battles of many kinds.

Children will plead for stories that involve the supernatural even though they tremble over the recital and shudder while they glance over their shoulders, expecting to see ghosts and "spooks" and hide their little heads under the covers when afterward sent to bed. But they will ask for more ghost stories on the following night just the same.

The boy who can perform the simplest trick at sleight of hand is the envy of his play-fellows and

this continues more or less through life. Among grown men and women at a club or in a drawing room if they be shown the baldest trick with a pack of cards, those who have not seen it before say "do that again" and if they do not discover its method will not be content until the so much accomplished associate has exposed the manner of its doing.

This increases among people until they have seen the wonderful performances of a professional magician and then they give up in despair. The dexterity of the great conjurer seems so far beyond their even attaining it that they are content to look on in wonder and admiration and would no more attempt it than they would, without musical knowledge or practice, the performance of some grand and difficult composition in music, on the piano or other musical instrument.

Even the personality of a great professor of "the black art" is mysterious to the masses, and if by a lucky chance one of the mystery-working persons should knowingly be seen, on the street, by the average citizen, he will gaze at the artist and instantly and eagerly call the attention of his companions to the worker of wonders. A great judge at law, the governor of a state, a mighty capitalist, even a dignified and learned college professor or a scholarly clergyman, will turn to look with interest at one of the "Wizards," if brought in proximity to him and informed of it.

Should a Blitz or a Herrmann stop to play some sleight of hand tricks or pranks upon the street,

every one in eye-shot would become, at once, deeply interested, and should he continue the performance any considerable length of time, such a crowd would quickly gather that public assistance would become necessary to clear the sidewalks.

The greatest and wisest and most entertaining of orators, and lecturers would be unable to attract to a hall for a succession of evenings, such immense audiences as any successful magician can, though an exceedingly great man, announced for a lecture, might, for one evening, attract so large, or even a larger audience, but the bulk of that would attend mainly from curiosity to see the great man, which is saying, to invade the mystery of the distinguished person.

How often one hears it said, of some one who has sprung into fame and who is going to deliver a lecture, notwithstanding the fact that the famous one is utterly incapable of entertaining his audience as a speaker: "Oh well, I will pay the price just to see the man and what he looks like."

That mystery is one of noon-day clearness, however, when once the eyes have fallen upon the great man and he who is not entertained, in some far different way, will not "pay the price" again, and frequently not then.

The magician's attractiveness is of a more lasting character for his performances increase the mystery and the same people will go and see him next evening and the next, if they can afford it, unless

drawn away by some social or business call that must not be avoided.

In legerdemain the love of mystery, and for creating mystery, are prehistoric, and in all ages have held sway. He is a rare man who when a boy did not exert some very anxious, earnest and strenuous efforts to obtain a book on legerdemain, or other means by which he might learn something of the fascinating art, an art that has had its votaries among the highest classes as well as the humblest.

Data at hand tells of a royal duke, a noble earl, an Indian prince, a Roman Catholic Ecclesiastic of high degree, numerous baronets, several great lawyers, many doctors of medicine and of divinity, one very famous composer and pianist, prominent merchants, senators, civil engineers and a legion of otherwise eminent persons who have delighted in legerdemain and who have won distinction as amateurs in prestidigitation, which latter word a famous humorist has declared—by far-fetched Latin deduction—to come from the words “presto”—to pass, “digitis”—with your fingers, “taters”—out of a hat.

The late Professor Palmer, one of the greatest of linguists and most accomplished of Oriental Scholars was an adept at legerdemain, and in many an Arab tent, even to this day, is the story told of the miracles worked in the Eastern twilight by the wonderful “Sheikh Ab-dullah,” as the distinguished scholar was called by his Bedouin friends.

There are of course exceptional cases. But the love of Conjuring, Sleight of Hand, Magic, Juggling,

and the kindred arts, with their attendant mysteries, are strong in the human heart, from that of the Voodoo of the negroes, and Medicine man of the American Indians, to the most exalted of the world, for many great magicians, even of our day are often called to appear before the most powerful monarchs of the world who have been as much delighted by the performances that followed as were the children of the royal household admitted to the exhibitions. And among those who have been thus honored by royalty and the great ones of republics, none have been more favored than the two great magicians of whom this little book will especially tell, one of whom, like the exalted persons mentioned as having been enamored of magic, was born to the nobility of a great Kingdom, and who by force of circumstances was led to adopt the art as a profession in which he became one of the greatest masters, and which frequently led him into adventures and experiences, strange, amusing, romantic, unique and sometimes thrilling.

The origin of the magic art, or legerdemain, as before remarked, is prehistoric, and even the attempts that have been made to give a full history of it are altogether unsatisfactory and only involve the matter in deeper doubt. It has been claimed upon the authority of some obscure passages in the works of ancient authors that it originated among this or that of the early tribes of men, but these assertions have been evidently constructed largely upon surmise and all have signally failed to be assuring, though it

seems to be quite certain that the ancient Egyptian priests employed magic to heighten and intensify the mysteries of their religion, a practice that has not been altogether disclaimed or even neglected in some later religions. As late as 1871, in some parts of Africa, semi-civilized, Baron Seeman exposed the work of some such priests as those alluded to, by explanatory and practical revelations of their fraudulent practices. And this he did among their deluded followers in their own country.

The first authentic accounts of the Magic Art go back about 2,000 years and it was then of most primitive character compared with its perfection in these days, though even then, it seemed astonishingly marvelous to the simple and illiterate audiences of those times and the then wonderful illusions have given the name of "Magic," a title that has largely adhered to it ever since.

There is a great difference between sleight of hand, and "magic." The one can not be seen by great audiences and is simply a matter of dexterity for the most part, in which movement is said to be so quick as to deceive the eye, while the other frequently involves much of scientific research and may be witnessed by thousands of spectators at one time, and under close watchfulness and proximity by such members as may conveniently be near to the performer and his apparatus.



## CHAPTER II.

### LIFE OF PROFESSOR SEEMAN.

Among all the magicians and conjurers of any time there is not one whose life has been more prolific of humorous and pathetic interest than that of Baron Hartwig Seeman.

Besides there has never lived one who made a profession of the magic art, who was more versatile in accomplishments. Not only was he one of the greatest in his professional work but in numerous other ways he was highly accomplished. Of gentle blood he was also a scholar and a scientist and a courtly gentleman withal, whose friendship, esteem and association were sought by men of letters and legions of persons of the highest social and political rank.

Baron Hartwig Seeman was a native of Sweden and was born June 3rd, 1833. His father was an officer of high rank in the Swedish army and others of his ancestors had been near to the great and benignant King Gustavus Adolphus the renowned conquerer, under whom they had fought in many lands, notably in Russia, Germany, Turkey and France.

His mother was a gentle and brilliant woman, but both father and mother died in 1844 when Hartwig was only 10 years old.

From his earliest boyhood young Seeman had exhibited a marked predilection for ingenious mechanism, and a disposition for researches into the occult, mysterious and strange, and this led him to the attainment in youth of many skillful tricks in legerdemain and prestidigitation for the surprise and amusement of his associates as well as for his own satisfaction and entertainment.

But for the death of his parents and the complications that followed, doubtless young Seeman's lines would have been cast in other places and he would have been Author, Poet, Artist, or a bright star in one of the learned professions, for he would have succeeded in any of these callings, a fact that was amply demonstrated by his after life, for his work in the calling that was finally forced upon him brought into play much and showed how all-pervading was his genius. Left an orphan on the wide world that he afterward traveled over, without human advice he conquered in it honor, success and fame.

In 1857, in his twenty-third year, we find him in Berlin, Germany, the scenic artist of a great theatre, the Victoria, named doubtless in honor of the bride of Crown Prince Frederick, mother of the present emperor of Germany.

The proprietor of the theatre failed, however, in 1859, and as he was largely in debt to young Seeman, the scenic artist was not only bereft of his situation

but was almost penniless. Meantime he had been happily married to a charming young lady and thus the embarrassment, perplexity and precariousness of his position was more keenly felt. He was moreover well known and honored in society, a position that required good means to maintain. So with high pride and independence he braved the disheartening dilemma and resorted to his knowledge of necromancy, legerdemain and magic art, and determined to become the great magician that he was in after years.

It was a wide change in the life of the young artist but he accepted it cheerfully and went to work at that which seemed to most palpably present itself.

Among his effects were a dozen or so of small trick boxes that he had constructed during business hours, for the amusement of himself and friends.

With these and the very small sum of thirty dollars he started in 1860 on a tour in which he was to ply the art of the conjurer. But the tour was of short duration. The treasury was not strong enough and he had not yet learned anything of another art that in modern times has been very essential to success—the art of advertising.

Shortly, however, he secured engagements in Hamburg, Copenhagen and Christiana and from these received a new financial start. Within a year he had saved enough from his salary to largely improve his stock of conjuring apparatus, but had lived well and saved money besides. Then he revisited

Norway and made such successful tours on his own account that within two years he had saved the very pleasant sum of \$6,000.00.

While in Sweden and Norway, on his tour he perfected and exhibited the then wonderful illusion known as "The Sphinx"—the living and speaking head without a body, which created a great sensation and won for Professor Seeman unstinted applause everywhere and large quantities of money.

Having concluded a long engagement in Christiana in Norway, in 1868, Baron Seeman in company with Ole Bull the famous violinist journeyed toward the home of the latter at Bergen, Norway. Ole Bull had but recently returned from a tour in the United States and had decided to rest and recuperate at his villa near Bergen, where he invited Baron Seeman to come as his guest for the summer. Seeman accepted the invitation but desired to give some performances en route, at Christiana and Bergen. With that in view he remained six days in Christiana.

Writing to a friend in Chicago years afterward concerning these incidents Baron Seeman said:—"While at Christiana I met a friend from Copenhagen (Denmark) who had established a clothing business. As a beginner he wanted to startle the public and attract attention by decorations in his show windows and for that purpose had, for a large sum, purchased a lifesize doll with clock-work movement and had it put up during the night.

He fully anticipated it being a great success.—Surmise what happened.

The first customer to enter his store the following morning was a peasant woman. My friend was in his office, which was connected with the store by a glass door through which he could see the woman who marched straight up to the wax figure and commenced asking the prices of several articles. The figure did not answer, but continued to revolve.

The merchant was highly amused and did not leave his office.

The good woman evidently considered it very impolite on the part of the revolving figure to remain silent, and finally took hold of his arm and hand, at the same time repeating her questions. But, how dreadful—the arm was stiff, the hand cold, the face motionless, the gaze lifeless and icy!—she stepped back horrified and rushed with insane gestures and screams out into the street to tell the passers-by what she had seen.

Everybody stood still, the street rapidly filled up with people, who viewed with horror the revolving figure.

At last a man who had seen such things before in large cities, explained matters somewhat, but the crowd declared the imitation of a human figure was a mockery of God. The authorities interfered and the merchant was obliged to remove his expensive figure, which was, when I last saw it, standing in a corner of his office covered up."

## CHAPTER III.

### THRILLING EXPERIENCES WITH OLE BULL.

I left Stavanger by the steamer Motala. We were to arrive at Flekkefjord, and had been sailing between cliffs and rocks, and were just entering the wide sea.

At the time of which I speak, we were at the most dangerous place, the south point of Cape Lindesnaas. We knew a heavy storm was approaching, but it came with such suddenness, that it was upon us before we had entered the sea. The storm was a perfect hurricane. All passengers, except a foreign sea captain and myself, had fled to their cabins, where they were suffering more or less from seasickness. I stood on deck well wrapped up and holding to an iron railing; snowflakes, hail and rain, sea water and the hurricane lashed my face, but my eyes wanted to see; I was anxious to study the force of the elements in all their fury, and was not frightened when repeatedly a wave dashed over my eyes and blinded me for a few seconds. What was such a little discomfort compared to all that I witnessed.

The ship moaning and creaking, was lashed by the foaming water and rocked like a light feather, so that

I soon found myself lying on one side, still I noticed everything; I saw the water rise to the sky and then as suddenly again dash over our ship, as if determined to bury us at once, but instead it lifted the ship lightly on its back and almost showing us fore and aft the bottom of the sea.

Far and near were sky-scraping rocks under which rolled the angry sea; then cliffs, which during serene weather were invisible to our naked eyes, under the mirror of the water. The frightened sea-birds shrieked in the air while they were being driven along powerless before the storm; the whistling of the hurricane through the ship's ropes, the cracking of the machine, the shouting of the commanding officers, the sailors staggering to and fro in vain attempts to obey the given orders, all was in wild chaos.

"Are you not frightened. Mr. Seeman?" I heard a voice remark close by me. I looked around and saw the foreign sea captain, who had worked himself up to me. I answered: "No, why should I be?" "Well, you and all of us have very good reason to be, for we are now in a most critical position; look there to the right, close to us, that is the dangerous Cape Lindesnaas; the force of the machine will not be sufficiently strong to carry us forward, and the hurricane drives us towards the rocks, if—the remainder of his words died under a flood that covered both of us.

I soon regained my senses and looked at the captain of our ship. The brave man stood firmly on the bridge. He meant to defy the hurricane, and would



have carried through his intention, but at this moment several of the male passengers came up and entreated and threatened him by their right, according to marine law, to return to the protecting rocks, if it were still possible. After discussing it pro and con the captain finally consented, and gave the command to turn around, a very dangerous undertaking, for if the hurricane with all its force had seized hold of the ship's side, the vessel would have been easily capsized.

At last, after a hard struggle, we succeeded in finding a protected place between the cliffs, against which the dust-like sea waves were dashed with fury. The anchors were dropped; one broke loose and was lost.

In this place it was comparatively quiet, and the passengers, who a short time previously had been seasick, began to leave their berths and show some signs of life, and even humor, after having partaken of a sumptuous repast. Soon the ship and cabin took a different aspect.

Ole Bull produced his violin and treated us royally to some of his wonderful selections. I announced a magical performance, which was given, a young lady played the piano, the foreign captain treated us to a tune on the flute, an Englishman recited Hamlet and Macbeth and danced a hornpipe, and others of the passengers did their best to entertain us in various ways. Champagne and bowls of punch flowed freely.

The following morning two men were found fondly

embracing each other in the smoking room, their feet projecting through the broken window.

After a delay of one day, and after the hurricane had abated, we proceeded to Bergen, and on our arrival there we learned of the loss of twenty ships.

Ole Bull went to his villa and I to my hotel. Unfortunately I was taken ill there. I had rented a hall for my performance but as I was unable personally to superintend the decorating of it, I engaged an upholsterer to do it. After explaining minutely to him how I wished everything arranged, the man inquired of me which Missionary Society did I belong to. I replied that I belonged to no society, that I traveled on my own responsibility, furthermore, that I was the well-known magician Seeman. Well—I have often seen people astonished and amazement written on their faces on discovering their mistake, but the face of the upholsterer will always remain before my eyes and impressed on my memory, also the answer which he made with wonderful pathos as follows: “I don’t work for a magician; for the Holy Bible says: thou shalt not lie, cheat, nor conjure, for it is to deride God.”

Be not surprised, dear friend, at this almost child-like simplicity; there are at this late day everywhere, even in free America, canting hypocrites, temperance advocates and the like who make similar assertions in their foolish conceit.

However, in spite of the man’s conservative ideas, I had my stage fitted up to suit me, and appeared in Bergen with great success.

I will here remark that the "Sphinx" was then quite a new attraction.

In the theatre a second rate dramatic troupe was playing, with poor pecuniary results. The manager thought he would make a hit, if he also could exhibit the Sphinx. A mimic in his troupe knew the secret, sent for the apparatus and the performance was announced.

Here are two points to be mentioned :

The Norwegian is an enemy to envy of trade, he is frank and honest, but if the one attacked dupes his adversary, the former is nicknamed Torskehoved (Codfish-head).

For the day of the production of the Sphinx at the theatre I had announced "Transformation," or "A dramatic manager in his true light."

At the close of the performance one of my friends who was disguised to exactly resemble the manager, appeared in front and requested in a loud voice to see the transformation.

Everybody recognized the person it was meant to represent; the resemblance was striking. I apologized to the gentleman and asked him to step up on the stage. I then invited him to stand on a low table, and covered him with a large cone, fired a pistol directly at him and after removing the cone I showed that the manager had been transformed into a gigantic codfish head, crowned with a wreath of laurel, as a reward for the greatest stupidity he could commit—Loud laughter—I was victor.

My performances were at an end and I fulfilled my promise given to Ole Bull.

I went to him at his villa which was about eight miles from Bergen. We spent two quiet peaceful months, studying, fishing and hunting. They were the months of June and July, when in that part of the world there is no night. The sun only sets from 11 to 1 o'clock, and therefore it is always daylight. How wisely nature arranges everything! Our sleep was never disturbed by troublesome flies or other insects. There are scarcely any in that region. Another phenomenon can be observed during this nocturnal daylight. There is no reflection of objects in the water during the time the sun has set.

## CHAPTER IV.

### A VISIT TO THE PYRAMIDS.

Ole Bull and I agreed to leave Bergen in August and together travel via Stockholm, Berlin, Breslau, Vienna, and Constantinople to Suez, to give performances in each of these cities, expecting to do a good business in Suez at the opening of the Suez-Canal, each on his own responsibility.

In Stockholm we took leave of an audience with King Charles XII, who encouraged us to visit Egypt, which we agreed to do and also promised to announce our arrival in that country to his Majesty.

With the best wishes of our friends and numerous introductions we continued our journey. I shall pass over our little adventures in the above named cities. The success was immense, but we were disappointed regarding our expectations in Suez for we earned literally nothing; I find through my experience that at all exhibitions, inaugurations and musical festivals, theatrical people and all artists run great risks; the public is at such times too much occupied otherwise. We easily overcame this disappointment, and prepared to visit the wonderful and mysterious Egypt.

The Swedish ambassador, Count Loewenhaupt received us as compatriots in a most obliging way. When we informed him of our promise to the King, he assured us of his protection, and to him we owe the fact of being able to keep our word.

Ole Bull and I were invited to a dinner at the ambassador's where we had the honor to be introduced to many aristocrats from all countries.

Ole Bull enthused the company with his heavenly violin playing, I amused the guests with my dexterity, for which I was applauded most by the Mohammedans. Ole Bull and I were most pressingly invited by some of these turbaned men to come and breakfast at a villa belonging to one of the gentlemen and situated not far from the city. We agreed, especially as they promised us a visit to the pyramids of Gizeh in company with several other gentlemen guests, about six days later, during which time the preparations were to be made.

The breakfast was very sumptuous, though without any wine or other spirituous drinks. We followed the customs of the Mussulmen, viz., to eat our breakfast crouching on soft cushions spread on the floor, and later on to smoke the Tschibuk.

Ole Bull had wisely forgotten his violin, but I, poor me,—I noticed all eyes fixed on me, and knew what they wanted.—I was to practice sorcery only once. I must own that I was prepared. I proposed that we should all go out in the open air, and supposing that I would produce something, all guests followed.

You will kindly call to mind having learned from my colleagues, how a man is shot at and catches the marked bullet,—this I intended to produce. I asked for pistols and ammunition, and requested someone to load and mark the bullet. I placed myself at a certain distance, asked the guest to aim at my head, and caught the bullet precisely between my teeth. All went well until I saw a tall, thin Mussulman come slowly toward me, who asked if he could use his own long gun and bullet for the same trick. (I must here remark that the conversation was held in French.) I was in no way prepared for such an offer, but without a moment's hesitation I replied: "Certainly, right away."

Happily for me, this gentleman was a neighbor of my host, and his property lay at a distance of about two hours.

"Very well," he said; "I invite all present to be my guests to-morrow."

We accepted. I told Ole Bull about my anxiety, that it was impossible for me to perform what I had promised, but I consoled the true friend, who advised a prompt and speedy departure.

"Good advice comes over night," thought I, and so I went cheerfully to my room to rest at the end of the day.

A servant followed me carrying two candles. The fellow evidently had something on his mind, he turned to go out, at the door he stopped and said: "I heard my master make an oath to-day that his bullet would



go through your head to-morrow; he never missed his aim, there is time yet,—flee.”

I thanked the good man but said that I had concluded to remain. You will, perhaps, wonder why I was so persistent. Simply because after considering the matter thoroughly I felt convinced that I should come out victor. I worked for fully two hours by candlelight, after which I retired quietly to sleep until morning.

At six o'clock I was awakened. The party was waiting for me, and in twenty minutes I sat on my horse following the cavalcade. I was very much amused when I saw my old friend, Ole Bull. He was, indeed, on his small horse with his long curved figure, most ludicrous to behold. We spoke very little. They knew the skill of our host and, during my absence, much had been said as to what was going to happen.

We stopped outside of the wall which enclosed the palace of our host. As by appointment, every one stopped, only the host entered his property, but immediately returned with a long costly gun, with powder and shot. Without asking me whether I was still willing to be shot at or not, he deliberately began to load. “I have forgotten,” I said, “to see the caliber of the bullet, I should like to look at it.” Nobody objected and I took a bullet, which I handed to Abdul Hadschi, who put it in the gun. I asked him to shoot first at my hand instead of my head.

I placed myself close to the wall with outstretched hand.

The guests formed a semi-circle around the marksman. The report was heard;—my hand was perforated by the bullet,—blood flowed from the wound. They all stared at me. Abdul Hadschi looked on with satisfied pride. I slowly wiped the blood from the inside of my hand, took the bullet from the back of it and handed it quietly to the marksman. You can imagine what a sensation this produced. Every one looked with amazement at me, Ole Bull embraced me, but Abdul Hadschi stood like a statue without taking his eyes off me. At last he approached me, took a drop of blood with the point of his finger, from the hand with which I had wiped off the blood, licked it, then threw his gun at his servant and requested us all to follow him to breakfast.

The conversation lagged, nobody seemed able to keep it up, some words Ole Bull whispered to me I did not understand, and as it was seemly and the time for our rendez-vous to go to the pyramids arrived, we took our leave.

Some servants accompanied Ole Bull and myself back to Cairo. “How under the sun did you manage to escape this sly and revengeful Mussulman?” my friend Ole Bull asked. I explained to him. During the night I had made several bullets of wax, which I filled with my own blood. After they were cold I colored them with dust and rubbed them over until they resembled lead. When I examined the real bullet, to ascertain the caliber, as I had requested to do, I, unnoticed, slipped the real bullet in my hand and put the wax bullet in the mouth of the gun, and let it

slide down before the eyes of Abdul Hadschi. When the shot was fired the bullet broke against my hand, the blood dyed it but did not harm it in the least.

I wiped the blood with the left hand which held the real bullet which to all appearances I took from behind the right hand.

"Yes, yes," said Ole Bull, "nobody can trust you wizards, but say, that is quite simple." "Well, Ole, have you never heard about Columbus and the egg?" Ole shook his finger at me and rode thoughtfully on, at last he broke the silence by saying: "You are not worth all the anxiety that I go through for your sake!"

We arrived tired and weary at our quarters; the adventure had made us forget that we had eaten nothing the remainder of the day.

At last the morning of our pilgrimage to the pyramids dawned. It was a splendid cavalcade, beautiful horses, stately men, and a crowd of servants mounted on mules who carried refreshments. We rode on an average of 30 miles a day, not wishing to tire the horses too much, for besides the roads they had to travel, they were forced to perform feats of horsemanship by their masters. I was well pleased to be left alone by these gentlemen. My skill had, perhaps, filled them with respect and only at the request of Count Loewenhaupt and Ole Bull did some of our companions consent to show me some feats in marksmanship, and which almost caused my hair to stand on end. On the fourth day

we sighted the pyramids. We decided to pitch our tents and on the following day to go on to the Sphinx pyramid, from which point we only had to travel four miles to the largest pyramids of Gizeh. I must remark here that they had given Ole Bull a lady's saddle, in compliance with his expressed desire to that effect. His violin was fastened behind him; he would not trust his "sweetheart" to anybody, not even to me. Ole Bull and I spent a very restless night. The shrieks of jackals were very dismal to our ears, though we had nothing to fear from them. Early the next morning, after a substantial meal we started, five ladies and eighteen gentlemen. About 8 o'clock we arrived at the Sphinx which is well weather-beaten but nevertheless easy to recognize. We remained there about two hours, during which time I made vain attempts to reach the edge of the pyramid, but without success. At the end of that time we continued our journey and arrived, feeling quite refreshed, at the foot of the pyramid before Gizeh about noon. The heat was too excessive for us to think of ascending the pyramid. We held a siesta and decided to begin climbing the following morning before sunrise. We did so, and were asked to stand in terraces on the blocks of the pyramid, because Count Loewenhaupt wished our pictures taken by a photographer, who was present. This picture is still in my possession. The ascension was by no means as easy as we had anticipated. The pyramid consists of stones from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet square, which are partly

decayed and partly loose. An interior staircase leads up, but unfortunately at that time the pyramids were not open and we lost many a drop of perspiration and many sighs before reaching the point. Now I could probably accomplish it more easily, but at that time I was quite stout, and notwithstanding the servants (for there were two servants to each person) of which one pulled and the other pushed, I was heartily glad to reach the top after three hours and a half. The view was not exactly imposing, nothing but sand whichever way we turned. Located on top of the pyramid is a telegraph station used almost exclusively by visitors and travelers and consequently pays well. Ole Bull unfastened his violin and played his favorite "Bondebrollup" March (Peasant Wedding March) after that a "Satterholm" (Shepherdess) Solo with his celebrated pianissimo, which never failed to arouse the enthusiasm of his hearers. I went to the telegraph operator and telegraphed to King Charles XII. in Stockholm, Sweden, that we had kept our word and from the top of the pyramid we assured him of our devotion. After a shorter sojourn than we had planned, we left the pyramid under great difficulties. We rested a few days in Cairo, where we gave concerts and performances with much success. We had accomplished our object, and now returned to Europe where fate separated us.

Ole Bull has in the meantime joined his fathers.

How I should have liked to see the interior of the pyramids at that time!

On my return from India in 1873, I again passed the Suez-Canal. Then the pyramids were open. The mummies from there were then used as fuel for the engines on large steamers."

In this connection it may not be out of the way to relate an incident in the career of Ole Bull that is entertaining and doubtless new to the general reader. Besides, it also concerns another great magician, the first famous conjurer that visited the United States from any of the old countries, Professor Alexander, who came to this country in 1843 and remained until 1847. Professor Alexander won the esteem and friendship of Hon. James K. Polk, then President of the United States, and many other of the most distinguished Americans of that day, for aside from his accomplishments as a magician, he was a courtly and pleasant gentleman. While at Washington his admirers of national favor and influence caused to be struck off for him at the United States mint a beautiful medal of pure gold, which was presented to the magician as a token of their admiration. When Alexander left the country in 1847, he was made a guest on board a U. S. Man of War that landed him in Havanna, Cuba, where he started on an extensive tour of the West Indies, Mexico and Central and South America.

In ten years' practice of the magic art before his audiences, Professor Alexander acquired a handsome fortune, and ever since has lived the pleasant and contented life of a gentleman of means and good con-

science, in a small town of Germany beneath his own vine and fig tree.

Professor Alexander was well acquainted with Ole Bull, the violin virtuoso, and the two met at New Orleans during the musician's first tour of the United States.

Ole Bull was giving a banquet to some friends at the St. Charles Hotel when Professor Alexander arrived, and as soon as the magician's presence in the house was known, Bull sent for him and a place was made for him at the festal board, where he was enthusiastically welcomed by all.

An opportunity presenting itself during the banquet, Professor Alexander suggested that he would entertain the party with some feats of legerdemain, if Ole Bull would reciprocate by performing on the violin. The proposition came about in a very natural way, having been first mentioned by some other distinguished person present. Of course the proposition met with general and hearty approval, and Ole Bull accepted it quite cheerfully.

Alexander proceeded immediately to produce some of the choicest of his tricks in prestidigitation, and deeply delighted the banqueters with his marvelous skill. Suddenly during this performance Alexander turned to Ole Bull and asked to see the medal that had been presented the musician at Philadelphia, a trinket that Bull prized very highly. Imagine the blank astonishment and mortification of Ole Bull when, upon opening the handsome case in which the medal was kept, he found nothing except a piece of flattened



lead. Recovering from his shock, being satisfied that he would yet be able to get back his medal, Ole Bull proceeded to carry out his part of the agreement, and opened the violin case to take out the instrument. The musician became pale with fear and trembled violently when, upon opening the case, he saw the instrument, his precious violin, his "sweetheart," as he was wont to call it, in a dreadful state of demoralization, the strings torn loose and the instrument crushed beyond redemption. Not long, however, did Alexander allow his friend to suffer so much sorrow over his great losses, for he at once produced the real violin in a perfect state of good order, as was quickly evidenced by the charming strains that its master brought from it, and when Professor Bull opened the medal case again, there lay the beautiful jewel in all its bright and glittering beauty. How Alexander managed to play this painful yet marvelous trick upon his friend was never discovered. Suffice it, however, that the joy brought to the musician by the restoration of the violin and medal, far exceeded the unpleasantness of the supposed loss of them.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE CZAR BEFRIENDS THE MAGICIAN.

Returning to Europe after his visit to Egypt with Ole Bull, Baron Seeman continued with unabated success his performances in German, Russian, Swedish and Norwegian cities, and it was during this time that the two incidents occurred that shall follow and which clearly illustrate Seeman's quick wit and ingenuity.

These incidents are best told in Seeman's own words. He says: "It was during one of my tours in Sweden that I put up at the Gotha Kallare, the best hotel in Gothenburg. In the parlors of this hotel I found a gentleman waiting for me, who said: 'Now, my dear Seeman, this time you must give your best private exhibition at my house and not at Liedman's, as I can pay as much as he can.' This was the richest wholesale merchant of the Hebrew persuasion. Of course I expressed my willingness to do so, and he then said: 'You must come right away now and look at my house. We can then perfect the arrangements.' Taking me in his carriage we drove out to his villa. As we alighted we saw an elegantly dressed

lady enter the house. 'My wife; so much the better,' said the gentleman. I was introduced and invited to join them in a glass of wine and a piece of cake. This being the custom, I of course did so, and we then made all necessary arrangements concerning the private performance I was to give, excepting the most important point—the price I was to receive. I lingered intentionally with them some time for this reason. At last the moment arrived when I could not with propriety remain any longer. Taking leave of my hostess, her husband accompanied me to the door, but just before we reached it he was called back by his wife, who said to him in my presence in English, 'Do not speak to him about the salary until after the performance. It will be cheaper that way.' Poor woman, in her innocence she did not know,—but—her husband then accompanied me out into the hall where I remarked: 'You know, my dear sir, that when you close a bargain with anybody you always settle on a price. I am something of a business man myself, and will be pleased to have you fix the price I am to receive.' He replied: 'Please, Mr. Seeman, say how much it shall be.' 'Three hundred,' I replied. 'Very well,' said the gentleman, 'good-bye;' and with a good-bye from me, I took my leave. The performance was given at the time appointed. I was afterwards invited to appear, and later we had music, after which we talked on all possible topics and finally the guests began to leave. Then the gentleman said, 'Mr. Seeman, will you not look at all of our rooms? There are many of them which you

have not yet seen. You have amused our guests very well, and now you must see our house, especially my bed-room, as it is furnished in the very latest fashion. Just at this moment somebody in a silk dress passed by us. It was the hostess, who joined us in her husband's bed-room, where he said he wished to pay me at once for my performance, preferring to do it in his wife's presence. As he said this he laid before me on the table three hundred single Swedish dollars (now crowns). I did not touch them, but said to him that this was one hundred and fifty dollars less than we had agreed upon. He then said: 'But, Mr. Seeman, you said three hundred.' 'Quite right,' I replied; 'but I meant three hundred Banko.' (One Banko is one and a half dollars.) They both looked at each other, and then the lady said she thought it was dear. Here was my chance, and I said in English: 'Madam, If you had first spoken about the pay it would perhaps have been three hundred dollars, but now after the performance has been given, I need three hundred Banko, so I can give a hundred and fifty dollars to a poor family of this city in your name.' The gentleman paid the amount without a murmur, and the next day they read in the papers that a poor family had received a present of a hundred and fifty dollars from a well known lady who did not wish her name to be mentioned. I think that if her name had appeared, perhaps she would not have been quite so angry."

"The following episode from my career as an artist through Russia, comes to my mind at this time

when everybody's eyes are attracted toward the political horizon in that country. I am fain to say that I tell it, as I do all of my little stories, with unvarnished truth. It was in November, 1876, that I had advertised my 'Grand Soiree mysterieuse,' in the hall at Helsingborg. The next day I was to have embarked on board of a steamer, which I had chartered for six hundred Finnish marks to take me through the Gulf of Finland to Reval, where I expected to appear, but it happened otherwise. The captain of the steamer came and told me that so much ice had formed since four o'clock in the afternoon, that a voyage across the Gulf could not be thought of. However, a large English steamer had been signaled, and it would arrive at six o'clock to take on freight for Hull, England. After talking with the captain of this steamer, he agreed to take me to Reval for one thousand marks. It was midnight when I got my baggage on board. To my surprise, I was then told that they could not think of starting on the voyage on account of the severe cold. Of course I could do nothing else but go by rail. I had to go first to St. Petersburg, and from there to Reval, and in this manner I would be compelled to go along the coast around the entire Gulf of Finland at an enormous expense. Taking my family with me, and wrapping ourselves up well with furs, we left Helsingborg the next day on the train. On arriving at Abo, the first city in Finland, I had the good fortune not to be bothered with any formalities by the custom house officials. This was also our good luck

in St. Petersburg. They were very polite. The examination was short, and I was happy. It was extremely cold and we were all trembling from the effects of it. We were glad to see a sleigh approaching, drawn by two horses. I had with me a card of the hotel where I intended stopping, and requested a passing officer to tell the officials in Russian, which I did not understand, where to drive us, and he did so. My son was in the first sleigh, my wife and myself were in the second. During the winter there, when there is no work in the country, it is the custom of the farmers to go to the cities with their sleighs and horses and, securing a license from the police department, make their living as teamsters or drivers. They are no more acquainted with the streets in the cities than foreigners are, and the only way to arrive at your destination is to know where you want to go and then tell the driver in this peculiar manner: You tap him with a cane or umbrella on the right or left shoulder, or point straight ahead, according to the direction you want him to go. Unfortunately at that time I knew nothing about this. The sleigh occupied by my son flew rapidly out of sight, our sleigh followed slowly. We must have ridden nearly an hour, still the Hotel de l' Europe was not reached. It certainly could not be so far. I could not talk to the driver, but I knew a way to express my wishes; so grabbing him by the collar, I shook him violently. I showed him a ruble, and gave vent to the only Russian word I knew, and exclaimed with vehemence, 'Paschol.' We drove on for half an

hour longer. We were suffering intensely from the extreme cold, and, notwithstanding our furs, we soon began to freeze. Again I shook the driver up, this time more severely, when he stopped, and for the first time I noticed that we were outside the city, and had halted in front of the only house, a most wretched saloon.

The driver got out and entered the house. We of course thought he was inquiring for the right way and would return quickly, because it had begun to grow dark. I waited a long time, and finally losing all patience, got out and entered the house. Imagine my surprise when I saw the man sitting at a table behind a samovar full of tea, and a glass of vodki. The room was filled with the most terrible odors that ever offended my nostrils. Ascertaining that the landlady spoke German, I had her tell the driver what I wanted. I again got into the sleigh, accompanied by the driver, and we returned to the city. I suspected nothing good from his actions, and accordingly was on my guard. My precautions, however, were unnecessary, for in about an hour we arrived at the hotel after making many inquiries. I related my experience to the head porter and asked him to pay the driver. He replied that he knew what to do in such a case, and instead of paying him in rubles he gave him a sound thrashing, which the driver received very meekly and departed in a very humble manner. I found awaiting me a telegram from Reval, relating to my engagement. What surprised me the most in the telegram was the date of it. It was dated fourteen



days before the one I had seen the day before in Helsingborg. My curiosity had to be satisfied, and I found that I had forgotten the difference in time they have in Russia, which is not like that of the rest of the Christian world. What should I do? I concluded it would be best to spend a fortnight in St. Petersburg, and look out for some engagements later on. I had with me a number of excellent recommendations, and in four days I managed to have an audience with the emperor of all the Russians. He ordered a private performance in the Winter Palace. I should remark that during this performance I was very much disturbed by two splendid greyhounds, one of which jumped and pranced around me continuously on my improvised platform. I accidentally stepped on his foot and he howled most pitifully. I immediately apologized for my awkwardness the more I said, because I am very fond of dogs. 'You shall have one for a present soon if you stay here,' said the Emperor, smiling, 'and now take the dogs out.' I proceeded with the performance and gave my best tricks, or, as my wife said, 'played like an angel.' (May God pardon her.) This performance at the Emperor's caused considerable excitement and I received several other invitations. The Emperor kept his word, and at the end of eight weeks the promised greyhound was sent to me at Reval. He was a splendid animal, and I have him with me still. He is very intelligent, and is a dear souvenir of that unhappy monarch. I traveled through the Baltic provinces, and was undecided whether to go further, when I received flat-

tering invitations to go to Berlin, which I decided to accept. There was one more city I had to visit; it was Goldingen. In this city there are many families of the nobility who are very poor. In every city in Russia there is a casino for the noblemen, one for the students and one for the citizens. The one for students only where there is a university. Of course there is also a casino for the noblemen in Goldingen, and it happened to be in the very hotel where I wished to stop. On my arrival I went into the parlor, showed my passports, registered and talked to the landlord as usual. I was very much surprised when he requested me to go to my rooms, adding: 'You have not been introduced to the members of the noblemen's casino, and as these are the club rooms, strangers can not stay in them after six o'clock.

'It will be better for you to request one of the noblemen to introduce you.' Nowhere in the world had I met with such inhospitality, and I made up my mind not to humble myself or lower my pride. I was as proud as an Arab, or, if you prefer, as a Spaniard, and hence only went to see the members of the press. These gentlemen confirmed what the landlord had told me, and added that but few rich merchants in the city had the honor to be members of the casino, and that the noble members were very poor, and most of them deeply in debt. The next morning, as I was looking out of the window of my room, I saw three gentlemen crossing the street. They did not go to the door, but came to the open window, and I heard them ask the question very plainly: 'Is anybody

there?' Just as plainly I heard the answer of the landlord, who said, 'No.' Then the three gentlemen went away. The landlord had lied, because I knew positively there were four men in the lower room. I wanted to know the reason of this barefaced lie, and went down stairs, for at this hour I need not ask anybody's permission. There by the window sat four men. I could not refrain from asking the landlord why he had answered 'No.' He smiled and said: 'My dear sir, do you not see the gentlemen in there are business men, those outside were noblemen, and by "anybody" they mean naturally their equals. We are used to it.' The next evening I gave my performance. The theatre was crowded, and just as I was about to give the signal to raise the curtain, several firemen appeared on the extremely small stage and took their positions. Nobody had given me notice, as ought to have been done according to law, and I refused to have them on the stage. Eight minutes passed. Out in the parquet were many students and boys who began to stamp their feet. I took the bell to give the signal when the chief of the fire department appeared. Three minutes more elapsed, he went away. More noise out in the parquet. I was again on the point of beginning when the director of the police appeared on the stage. He was a very pleasant gentleman, and told me he had given orders for the firemen to take their positions in the orchestra. I thanked him. A regular storm now broke out in the parquet. I rang the bell and the curtain rose. Some of the boys continued the noise with their feet.

I felt annoyed, and in a few words explained that the delay had been caused through no fault of mine, and, therefore, for the sake of good manners, the stamping could have been omitted. They became quiet. The performance passed off to the satisfaction of all. I gave two more performances, but did not take a step toward being introduced to the casino. Some one belonging to the press told me that some of the members felt offended, but I kept my own counsel. On the morning of the day I wanted to go away, somebody knocked at my door. I called out, 'come in!' a strange gentleman entered and stood before me. Without any introduction, he addressed me as follows: 'The first evening of your performance you insulted in your speech the audience, with whom I and several members of the noblemen's casino were sitting. If you do not apologize immediately before several witnesses down stairs, you will bitterly regret the consequences.' 'To whom have I the honor to speak, and what right,' I began, when he interrupted me by saying: 'I am the Circuit Judge, and if you do not immediately give the required satisfaction I shall have your passport and luggage seized, and hand in a report against you.' Had I not owed my family some consideration, I could easily have discomfited the poor wretch, but now I was in doubt what to do. My wife's opinion was to send a report to the emperor, but there would be much delay and annoyance. Again there was a knock at the door, and the good-natured face of the director of police looked in. 'This is an ugly affair, Mr. Seeman.

What are you going to do? They have sent me to ask you for a decision. I advise you to apologize. You have really done no wrong, but the noblemen have decided to annoy you, and by bringing suit they can keep you here from two to three weeks. The judge will, of course, acquit you, but think of the inconvenience. I speak as your friend, and am entirely on your side.' I could not possibly humble myself to do as those poor stuck-up noblemen wished, and refused point blank. 'But think of it,' said the good-natured man, 'they only ask you to come down stairs and simply say, "Excuse me, gentlemen."' 'Don't they want anything more?' I asked, as an idea flashed through my brain. 'No,' answered the polite director. 'Well, my dear friend if you wish to do me a favor, ask the gentlemen to give it to you in writing, then I will not have to go down stairs and make many words about it; I know you will do it, won't you?' 'Certainly, with the greatest of pleasure,' he replied. In about twenty minutes I heard steps on the stairs, and the police director entered the room with a paper, on which was written that the undersigned gentlemen would feel satisfied if I would only say, 'Excuse me, gentlemen.' I put the paper in my pocket and went down to the parlor. Six noblemen were sitting there. I went up to them, and while looking at one asked another: 'Is any of these gentlemen called Lehman?' All answered 'No.' I then said, 'I beg your pardon, gentlemen,' turned on my heel and walked out. Tableau. Nobody held me. I immediately ordered the horses, and, smiling,

entered the carriage, which drove off with us immediately."

The same greyhound that Baron Seeman speaks of in above experience, was a most remarkable and intelligent animal. It remained in his family till the summer after the professor's death. Shortly after their return to Chicago it was so severely injured that they were obliged to have it killed. Baron Seeman was very fond of telling how, when they arrived at a town for the first time, he would send his wife and daughter to the hotel, while his son and himself, accompanied by the dog, would go to the theatre, make their preparations, and when necessary, would send the dog with a message tied around its neck, to the hotel for his wife and daughter, or for them to bring anything he needed, as the case might be. No matter how large the town, or how large the hotel, the dog was never lost, and nothing could stop him, as he was often seen to spring over large obstructions in his way.

## CHAPTER VI.

### TO ENGLAND, AFRICA AND INDIA.

Emboldened by his great success in Continental Europe and Egypt, and having accumulated quite a fortune, and large additions to his "stock in trade," Baron Seeman crossed over from Norway to London and stranger events than he had ever yet experienced befell him, as the sequel will show.

In London he leased Egyptian Hall, in Picadilly, where, continuously, for more than eighteen months, he gave his entertainments to audiences measured nightly, only by the capacity of the auditorium. He then made a successful tour of the English provincial cities, and the leading cities and towns of Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Returning to London his triumphs were continued at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, and there, for the consecutive nights of six months, he was a monarch of Magicians.

On the night of June 26th, 1871, he took a farewell benefit at the Crystal Palace and received an audience of over 40,000, among whom were no less than 36 members of royal families, including Nicholas, Czar of Russia, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, Duke of Cambridge, the Shah of Persia, and so on.



During his stay in England Baron Seeman made the acquaintance at Southampton of an amiable physician, who promised the magician an introduction to Captain Couthbert, as soon as the latter should return from the Cape of Good Hope; he had often remarked that a magician would do well in that place. Seeman had no time to wait for Couthbert's arrival and was obliged to leave before he returned.

A few days later a gentleman was announced at the baron's hotel, whose name he did not know, but who wished to see him on important business. He was a tall and slim figure, and his clerical garb betrayed his profession,—that of a clergyman. His first inquiry was if the magician wished to go to the Cape of Good Hope. Seeman thought that perhaps the visitor had been sent by Capt. Couthbert, but learned afterward that he was a member of a committee of the Missionary Society, that expected certain results through the magician and his performances. Seeman agreed to the proposal and after settling all business matters satisfactorily, he took ship, “bag and baggage,” at Southampton, and by the merest accident it was on board the steamer commanded by Capt. Couthbert.

Baron Seeman was exceedingly happy to find that two of his intimate friends, Dr. M. Cotes and the diamond merchant W. Webbling had joined the expedition; the latter was at the same time traveling on business.

Baron Seeman writing upon this subject has said:—  
“Descriptions of travel having been written by

abler pens than mine, it is, therefore, not my intention to give any such, but only to describe an incident in my life which abounds with many even more interesting to the casual reader.

After a thirty days' voyage we arrived safe and sound at Cape Town. I procured room and board at the governor's, who was a very pleasant gentleman. It was expected of me, and I was willing to fulfill their expectations to the best of my ability, that I should give my performances as usual—three in number. After each, however, I should endeavor by a sort of indirect mission to induce the natives to join the Christian church. To serve my purpose a gigantic tent, with seating capacity for two thousand people, with a stage for myself, was soon erected, to the amazement of the natives who are mostly employed as laborers in the diamond fields. At the end of three days everything was ready and I commenced my preparations, the regimental band engaged for me had held its rehearsals and the day of my performance arrived. I must confess that I have never experienced the so-called stage fever, neither before nor after performances, not even in the presence of crowned heads. But on this occasion, as I glanced at my audience through a hole in the curtain, I felt that peculiar sensation known as "goose flesh" creeping over me—and I would like to see the man who in my position would not have experienced a similar sensation. Directly in front of the stage was the orchestra, then came the pit for about one thousand persons, then the dress circle for the pub-

lic. Every seat was taken. The dress circle was occupied by military people, business men and the better class, while in the pit about two hundred white and eight hundred native African laborers were crowded together. The latter consisted chiefly of Kaffirs, all Brahmins, Buddhists Fetich and fire worshipers; all laborers were admitted free of charge. The bell rang, the orchestra played, the curtain rose and I went on the stage. A deathly silence prevailed. I gave a programme which I had arranged as I generally do for children's performances; but was surprised to receive no applause, at least not such as I was accustomed to—I mean applause by clapping of hands, etc. Instead of that, those in the pit made such heathenish noises, by exclamations, gesticulations, and loud talking, that I could scarcely hear my own voice. At last my final experiment came and the moment of my real object; I had shown how water could be turned into wine, how a person is shot at and catches the bullet; I had made several objects disappear which were afterwards found in the pockets of some one in the audience. Now to conclude with, a soldier appeared on the stage whose head was cut off, and when the body was examined it was found cold and dead. There was no pulse, and still in a short time the man was restored to life and took his seat among the spectators. They put their heads together, and tried to hide behind each other, and most of the natives would have run away, had the doors not been locked beforehand. I must add, that I spoke

English and that my two friends and twenty armed soldiers were hidden on the stage for my protection, in case of necessity. Turning to the pit, I said: "Now boys, have you understood everything and can you make out how those things are accomplished? Answer me."

"No, master."

"Well, I will explain it to you, for I am here not only to show you something never before witnessed, but also to explain how it is done, so you can realize that there are no real wonders in the world. What we consider as such can easily be traced to some natural cause, or we can not comprehend it with our simple minds."

With great pains I succeeded in pushing and partly pulling twenty of the wild fellows up on the stage and compelled them to form a semi-circle around me. I then explained minutely and simply one of the tricks and finally had the twenty men repeat it after me, and really I wish some of my readers could have seen the happy and surprised faces of these wild people. One explanation followed another and everything was performed quickly, though crudely, by my anxious pupils. Now came the cutting off of the head, but nobody was willing to try the experiment, for, they argued, a bullet does not always kill, but head off, all over. My soldier was obliged to step forward again. The explanations were given easily and to the greatest satisfaction and full comprehension of the audience. "Now," I remarked, "you all understand and realize that I have solved all won-

ders in a perfectly natural way; yes, I have even produced so-called miracles, as shown you by your priests, they, however, give you no explanation but leave you in ignorance to be increased by yourself. But if my God and the God of all white people allows an ordinary man who is not even a priest, to produce more miracles than your priests, how much greater and better must our God be in whom we believe. We white people are surely more clever than you, who toil on without ever getting wealthy, but if you were clever enough to accept our religion you would soon reach the same level; if you earnestly desire that, you need only listen attentively to the man we call missionary and do exactly as he tells you. I continued for some little time in the same strain. The doors had long since been thrown open, still nobody thought of or attempted going away. Even after the curtain had been dropped and the educated public had left the tent, I noticed the brown fellows talking together and gesticulating violently, and when they did leave they did it quietly and in order.

The next day was a day of rest. With my friends, and accompanied by twenty armed soldiers who carried baskets with little presents, I took a stroll through the city. Many of the natives, women and children followed us and I made them presents, which were received with evident pleasure and commented upon. My two next performances came off in a very similar manner only that my audiences were considerably bolder; shook hands with me and came up on the stage to show what they had learned.

During the day they had visited the cottages of their equals and had exhibited to them the tricks I had taught them. They had been admired as priests, but when they explained the "How," their friends commenced ridiculing the priests. I will conclude with the remark, that my mission was successful beyond my expectations. The missionaries referred to me, and consequently their efforts were richly rewarded by many of the savages being converted to their Christian faith.

## CHAPTER VII.

### EXPERIENCES WITH A GREAT FAKIR.

On June 2nd, 1872, Baron Seeman started with his two companions for India.

He had reaped honors and fame by his exhibitions in Cape Town, and in company with his friends from London, Dr. Côté and the diamond merchant Webbling, he arrived in Calcutta June 24th. Their destination was Benares, the Holy City, the object of the journey being to become acquainted with the fakirs. The baron's companions had preceded him thither, and had telegraphed their arrival. Therefore Seeman was compelled to hasten his departure. It frequently occurs that Indian celebrities retire to Benares to end the days of their natural lives, and there, with letters of introduction from the governor of Cape Town, Seeman had the good fortune not only to be introduced into the family of an Indian nabob, but also to make the acquaintance of the most celebrated of all fakirs. His name was Convinamy, a southerner by birth, and he was returning from a journey to Cape Comorin.

Writing upon this adventure Baron Seeman says :



“Our conversation was first conducted by and through an interpreter, but as he disturbed us in our secrets, he was discharged, and we managed to understand each other by gesticulations. The good old man was about the only person in this country who recognized my character, and he returned confidence for confidence. That same day, accompanied by Convinsamy, I visited the monuments and ruins of the holy places, frequented by pilgrims, and which are situated outside of the city. On our arrival there the fakir entreated me to leave him alone, so he could say his prayers. I left him and investigated with interest the decayed walls of a Siva temple. On my return I found Convinsamy hanging by the elbow to a bamboo with his feet two feet from the ground. He was surprised to the utmost when I informed him of the secret of this production, and that I had performed it with my wife in England. His surprise at my communication was great, and all his gestures and signs were incomprehensible to me, until we were back in the city. The interpreter told me that Convinsamy asked me to grant him an interview the following day. Having in this way gained proofs of the fakir’s good will, I invited him to call and pay me a visit the next day at noon. He came, and when I stepped out on the terrace where a fountain dispensed an agreeable coolness, I found him sitting on the floor with his legs crossed. After the usual greeting I asked him if he was ready to speak to me before witnesses or alone. Instead of replying, he put the following questions: “I feel in me to-day a power to

produce phenomena, have you also felt such a sensation in brain or body?" I answered truthfully: "No."

"I do not mean a natural power, which works, pursued Convinsamy, but a supernatural. Then I invoke the souls of my ancestors and they are the ones to show their power; I am only their tool." At this remark, I noticed a certain wink in his eyes which seemed to ask for an explanation before the interpreter. I remarked that he was quite right, and added that this power was given the fakirs of my country as well as to those of the East. Convinsamy had in the meantime arisen, and stretched out his hands towards the fountain, the sprays of which were diminishing. Gradually the fakir stepped nearer and the water ceased to fall, but in the basin a metallic sound could be heard, similar to the echo after striking a bar of metal. These sounds gradually increased and became so numerous and rapid, that they resembled more a shower of hail falling on a zinc roof. Now it was my turn to produce something. I produced from my pocket a small music box, which played the pieces, waltz from the "Freischutz," and march from the "Prophet," placed it on the edge of the basin, and at my command the metallic sounds from the basin of the fountain formed the accompaniment, from which he could infer that this production was not unknown to me. The interpreter was dismissed and the fakir commenced showing me by gestures and a few English words, that he was preparing something extraordinary. To my surprise he

stepped up and fastened a black curtain or drapery between two pillars of the veranda and then called to some one, who evidently was waiting for him in the garden. After a lapse of a few minutes, a very pretty girl, in light costume, appeared and stepped up on the veranda. The girl was placed on a flower stand about six feet from the black curtain, with her back towards it. The fakir sat down by me and stretching his hands horizontally towards the girl without moving a muscle, his nude body, tanned brown by the scorching sun of India resembled closely a statue of bronze. Staring with wide open eyes at the girl, she gradually closed her eyes, her head slowly dropped to one side;—she was asleep. Convinsamy rose softly and removed the flower stand from underneath her feet, while she remained hanging in the air, seemingly without any support; Convinsamy then returned to me and sat down on the floor. I remained silent, and watched the proceedings, but my encouraging looks proved to the fakir my evident satisfaction and the wish if possible to see the sequel. It is customary in nearly all Indian houses to have incense burners of copper, filled with glowing coals for the purpose of burning some grains of scented powder of sandalwood, orris-root or myrrh. The fakir brought such a burner from an adjoining room and placed it in the middle of the terrace. He then removed from his hair a large piece of rosin which he threw on the burning coals, at the same time murmuring some incomprehensible words. This savors of an Indian fairy tale; nevertheless it is strictly the

truth. As soon as the clouds of steam commenced to ascend in the air, the suspended and sleeping beauty began to stir and gradually moved her arms and feet to the right and then to the left, ascending slightly in the air she slowly turned her face and then her body towards us. Convinsamy now replaced the flower-stand beneath her feet, tapping her softly on the shoulder, after which the young girl slowly opened her eyes, bestowed upon us a surprised look, smiled roguishly and silently walked away. The features of the fakir expressed pride and satisfaction, but under the mask of repose I detected the greatest excitement. He glanced at me sharply, I was deeply thinking, and when I finally looked up he had disappeared.

About 10 o'clock the following morning I commenced paying my farewell visits and making preparations for my departure with my two companions. Seating myself on the veranda and slowly sipping my mocha, I dreamed of yesterday; dreamed that the little brown beauty was floating lightly to the right and left before me; now she came towards me, through the air, and taking hold of my hair a soft voice whispered in my ear:—

“Master Seeman, you come to Convinsamy?”

“I started up and looked into the eyes of the object of my dream. “Placing her finger on her lips, she drew me with her. I passively followed her out in the open air. After walking about half an hour we arrived at the ruins of the temple Adicete Veikuntam Haris. Convinsamy was awaiting us, and near him was a burning basin. The recollections of yester-

day's productions flashed through my mind; furthermore, the young native's presence strengthened me in this belief, and now with the assistance of the girl who had mastered the English language better than Convinsamy had done, and had been an associate of his since her childhood, we commenced a conversation, which, however, I am compelled to keep secret. Imagine my astonishment and horror, after having for some time noticed a peculiar and unpleasant odor, when Covinsamy held up to my view his left hand, all burnt, and I learned that he had inflicted this punishment on himself for disobedience to his order. "Powers of the Devadattā (Magic) brethren of the Vasundara (Earth) should confide in each other and faithfully hold together," he said. These words explained to me the strange and weird scene. Convinsamy had offered me a sacrifice! We parted after embracing cordially. I with tears in my eyes. Before my departure I received a package from Convinsamy, containing a message and a peculiar specimen of stone. The note ran as follows:

"If I found many of the same kind I would be entitled to use their power." I still have the stone in my possession and have found some of the same kind in Sweden. However, I produce with my daughter a floating living person, without any support whatever, and to a higher degree of perfection than Convinsamy was able to do; although I must confess that it took me six years of study before I attained the desired result, which is well worthy of being exhibited to the public.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A PROBLEM SOLVED.

After leaving India Baron Seeman travelled direct to Vienna, where he gave his performances at the great Exposition of 1873, remaining there through the months of July and August, returning to his native Sweden in September of that year.

All this time and for months and years afterwards he was continually endeavoring to solve the mystery of the invisible suspension that had been exhibited to him by the Indian fakir.

In Sweden he continued giving exhibitions regularly, devoting all his leisure, however, to the problem mentioned and during this time he expended over \$4,000.00 in experiments to that end. At last success crowned his efforts and the problem was no longer a mystery. He had solved it at last. Determined to at once turn to his advantage his achievements in the solution of the great mystery he secured an engagement at Berlin and went there with the intention of exhibiting, but the arduous labor of giving his entertainments, and in off hours working at the mystery had told on his health, temporarily, and



so prostrated him that he was forced to forego the Berlin engagement and was almost wholly confined to his rooms for two months after arriving at the German capital. During the illness, however, he received numerous flattering offers from the United States, one of which he accepted, and on the 20th of June, 1880, gave a private exhibition of his marvelous discovery and invention at the Academy of Music, New York, to the members of the press and a select party of their invited guests. The result of this exhibition was success of the most satisfactory order. The press of New York rang in his praise and unitedly declared that the suspension "without visible means of support" of M<sup>lle</sup> Seeman was the most marvelous achievement of the necromancers art, and how the suspension was effected has since bothered the brains of hundreds of magicians that have attempted it.

It may not be out of the way to mention at this junction, that European and American Magicians have far excelled the Magi, or fakirs of India and other oriental countries in producing mysteries of the magic art. This suspension achieved by Baron Seeman is about the only great thing in the magic line that has come from India, that has not been surpassed by the magicians of civilized countries. Besides it should be remembered that the Indian Magician Convinsamy did not impart the secret of the mid-air suspension to Professor Seeman, but merely gave him an exhibition of the illusion and he worked out the mystery alone, as shown herein, and



in the performance of it far excelled the Indian fakir.

After Baron Seeman's return from India he made the apparatus of his magic work, the most beautiful and gorgeous that money could buy. All of the metal paraphernalia was of solid silver and his magicians dress and ornaments possessed a money value of over \$10,000.00. The magic wand that he used was a present from an East Indian nabob and in one end of it was set a jewel of great value.

In his tours of America Baron Seemen's entertainments were of a length and variety sufficient to satisfy the most exacting, his programmes generally being after this manner:

## PART I.

### MAGIC.

Invisible Changes.	The Rifled Cannon.
Nole Me Tangere.	Seeman's Secret.
One of Seeman's Assistants.	Grand Transformation.

---

INTERMISSION FIVE MINUTES.

---

## PART II.

### ORIGINAL DISSOLVING VIEWS.

Illustrating Different Parts of the World with Magnificent Effect.

---

INTERMISSION, FIVE MINUTES.

## PART III.

KALOSPINTHECROMOCRENE, OR, THE ENCHANTED  
FOUNTAIN.

---

INTERMISSION, FIVE MINUTES.

---

## PART IV.

## ELECTRA; OR, DREAMING AND WAKING.

Suspension in Mid-air, in a novel and mysterious manner, by Mlle. Seeman, without any visible means of support whatever, floating in the air up and down, right and left, and return. During the suspension the following tableau poses are assumed: 1. Prayer. 2. Joan of Arc, Maid of Orleans. 3. Rob Roy. 4. Germany. 5. Victory. 6. America. 7. Mercury. 8. Angel. Excelling anything of the kind ever before attempted in the world.

---

PART V.MISCELLANEOUS MAGIC.

---

The dissolving views given by Baron Seeman were his own invention and all of the beautiful pictures used were drawn and painted by himself. Indeed, all of his apparatus was either his own handiwork, or was constructed under his own personal direction and supervision.

Among the dissolving views one of the most beautiful and effective was "The Rock of Ages," according

to his own version of the well known hymn, which version was as follows :

### ROCK OF AGES.

---

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee !  
Barrier 'gainst the storms of sin,  
Open wide and let me in.  
Towering 'midst the stormy sea,  
Be Thy Cross a Rock for me !

Waste of waters ! Angry sky !  
Help me, Lord—I sink ! I die !  
At my feet the billows roll—  
Come Thou harbor for the soul ;  
Round me Thy safe shelter fling,  
Simply to Thy Cross, I cling.

Cross of Triumphs ! Crown of Grace,  
Win for me in Heaven a place.  
Clouds of sorrow, roll away,  
Fly before the coming day !  
Gates of Heaven open wide,  
When I rise to Jesus' side !

---

Besides these Professor Seeman always gave an exceedingly humorous lecture with his crayon sketches, and these sketches were perfectly delightful in their humor, causing his audiences, everywhere, to roar with laughter upon every production of them.

On the opposite page is seen a photographic repro-

ADOLPH SEEMAN ASSISTED BY MARI

IN THE GREAT ASSOCIATION OF  
**ELECTRA**  
86

DREAMING AND WAKING  
IN KIDNAP





duction of the poster used by Mr. Adolph Seeman, son of Baron Seeman.

His invention the aerial suspension was protected by patent-right in this country, and was the first patent of the kind ever taken out. Since, however, numerous magicians have attempted, with some success, but not equal to that of Seeman, the aerial suspension, and their contrivances have also been patented, the same principles, however, are necessarily involved in these as in the Seeman plan. Two of these patents were by Mr. Will B. Wood and their numbers in the patent office are 415,084 and 415,085, and as all drawings of patents are common property of the people at large, any person who feels a sufficient interest in the mechanism to seek to know of it, can, by sending 25 cents to the Commissioner of Patents, with the numbers quoted here, obtain the drawings from which the secret may be obtained.

During his last tour of the South-Western part of this country which was in the early months of 1886, Baron Seeman with his family found it necessary to remain, over night, in a railway car, at Bremont, Texas. During the night Baron Seeman contracted a severe cold that superinduced inflammation of the lungs from which he died, the following day, March 25th, at Kosse in the state mentioned.

The death of this great magician was an irreparable loss to the magic art, for he was a man of such remarkable resource and of such indefatigable energy in research; so much accomplished in other and necessarily accessory arts, and so ambitious to pre-

sent new and more startling wonders that the masses who take so much interest in the magic art were great losers in the premature taking off of this wonderful man. Besides, as has been said before herein, he was a kind and courtly gentleman who had won thousands of friends throughout the world, all of whom deeply mourned him when he went beyond.

In the pages immediately following will be found some interesting incidents connected with the life of Baron Seeman.



## CHAPTER IX.

### MARTIN LUTHER'S WEDDING RING.

Among the effects left by Baron Seeman is a well worn gold ring, its carving nearly effaced by time, that was the wedding ring of Martin Luther, the renowned reformer. The trinket is over 300 years old, and is now in the possession of the widow of Baron Seeman, who resides in New York.

The ring came into the Seeman family in a peculiar manner. A wealthy jeweler and diamond merchant of Stockholm, Sweden, attended the sale of the effects of a Polish lady of rank, who had died without heirs, and her property went to the state. Among the jewels which he bought was this ring. He showed it to Baron Seeman, who was high in the masonic circles, and who thought it had masonic significance, from the peculiar carvings. He bought it for old gold. This was in 1867. In 1876 the baron was in the mountains of Russia with his wife and son. While there the mother borrowed a six-year-old copy of the *Gartenlaube* and saw in it a description of the ring which they had bought in Stockholm, and read the speculations as to its whereabouts. The article

explained how the Kurfuerst of Brandenburg had had two wedding rings made symbolical of the life and crucifixion of Christ, and had presented one to Martin Luther and one to his wife on their wedding day.

While the widow of Luther was on a journey some time after her husband's death her team was crossing a swollen stream, when her equipage was upset and she barely escaped with her life. The little iron chest, with her jewels was lost, and there was never any record of its recovery, although it must have been found when the stream ran dry in summer. The wedding ring of Luther was in this iron chest. At any rate, in 1877, when the Seemans were in Eisleben, they found that the other wedding ring was in the possession of a local countess. This ring was the counterpart of theirs, and the Lutheran authorities offered 4,000 marks, or about \$1,000, for its possession. Baron Seeman always wore the ring until he died in Texas a few years ago, first telling his wife never to part with it. The ring must be something over 300 years old. Its carving is worn down smooth, but enough remains to show the design. In the centre is a ruby to represent the blood of Christ. On one side of this, as a centre, is the crucifixion of Christ, with a Roman spear to form the edge of the ring on one side, while a spear with three sponges, upon which the vinegar was given the dying Savior, forms the opposite edge. Between this and the "tree" is the head of a Roman soldier, worn, but still plain enough to distinguish the helmet. Between the other spear and the cross is the scourge. Below the

cross are the three dice which were cast for the raiment of the dying Savior, while the three nails finish the design. On the opposite side of the ruby is a pillar of the temple, the veil of which was rent in twain, a flaming sword, the ladder which was leaned against the cross, the rope and hammers, and the legend, "I. N. R. I." over the crown of thorns at the head of the column.

#### SEEMAN UNMASKS A CLAIRVOYANT:

During his career as a conjurer Baron Seeman was much annoyed by alleged spiritualists who insisted that much of his work was done by supernatural aid. But he would not give countenance to any of it.

The following incident relates a phase of this and is a translation from Seeman's own account of it in German and is therefore given in his own translated words:—

"I don't believe in spirits, my dear friend, it is unnecessary for you to waste your time on me. I have been traveling for 26 years or more, through almost the entire known world, for, as my aunts and great-aunts used to remark about me in my youth, 'the two upper eye teeth are far apart and he will see a good deal of the world.' My disputant was a jovial, old gentleman, at heart and soul a staunch spiritualist. We had disputed on the subject of spiritualism with considerable interest, he defending it, I against it, because mentioned, I had during my life seen and experienced more than perhaps ten

other persons put together. My disputant not daunted, then and there invited me to visit and consult a medium in the company of several ladies and gentlemen; although it was late, being 9 o'clock in the evening we went. I was introduced, but the spirits seemed to have considerable respect for me. Or was it contempt? Whichever it was I never ascertained, but they did not appear. I was therefore invited to come and attend some other evening. With sorrowing hearts we all departed, each one by himself, but no; my disputant joined me and my wife and proposed that we should go to see a clairvoyant, whom he knew. We started off and after traversing a few blocks and climbing up some very steep stairs in a not very spirituelle looking house, we arrived at the lady's parlor. A rather stout figure who apparently had renounced the pleasures of this world was introduced to us. I must admit that I did not consider this lady capable of being a pupil of Cagliostro, but our mentor asked her to be clairvoyant. I have nothing in common with Vidocq. However, I seated myself, keeping my face in the shade. The lady noticed my intention and it seemed to annoy her, claiming that she could not remain on the chair which she occupied directly in front of me and with the full light shining on her face. She brought another chair from an adjoining room and seated herself by my side, I offered no objection to that, but remained in my seat. Perfect silence followed. In a few minutes she trembled and shook herself, smiled aloud, as if she pictured to herself in her

mind's eye, my whole life, past, present and future and then said: "This gentleman is a great sceptic."

"Really? I see through you."

Then, remarking that she would speak with the tongue of an Indian spirit, she spoke as I have often heard Christy's Minstrels, or "Topsy" in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." "But, madam," I interrupted, "why not prefer speaking in the English language, which we all understand, or Hindoo, I also understand and speak that?"

The worthy lady looked somewhat confused.

"A tall gentleman with silver hair and beard, black coat and a cane with silver top stands by you."

"Stop, madam, that is the same figure you described yesterday to my advance agent, he was taken in enough to admit, that he recognized his father."

I must say here, that my advance agent had really been there. He is a typical Frenchman and for \$1.00 he hastens to all kinds of nonsense.

"You are a great medium." "No indeed, madam, I beg to differ with you and to say that I am not. Furthermore, a few moments ago you remarked that I was a great sceptic." No answer. To my wife, "I see by your side a little child, who has passed into spirit land, with blue eyes and light hair. "My daughter?" my wife inquired. "Yes." "But my daughter had dark brown hair like her father." "Quite right, dark brown hair." Then to me. "You are a great medium, sir, most of what you show in your art is performed by spirits without your knowl-

edge, and—"Enough, madam"; I took the liberty to interrupt the clairvoyant, I have had enough. I presume I ought to believe you and endeavor to make the public believe that I am a real magician and that all I produce is real witchcraft, but I shall take good care not to do so. What you have said proves that you know less than some of your colleagues. Allow me to wish you good-bye."

A WHOLESALE TREAT.

Baron Seeman was a carefully temperate man, though, like nearly all Europeans, he drank wine when it seemed fit that he should, or something stronger when he felt that he needed it, and he had no patience with the kind of prohibition that does not prohibit; the prohibition that has obtained in a few of the states of this republic; a prohibition that sets man to scheming for the obtainment of drink that otherwise they would not frequently think of.

Tell a man that he shall not have a certain thing and that is the very thing he is going to get, whether he wants it or not. In the matter of drink, attempted prohibition frequently makes men sneaks and liars. They will sneak around backways to get into places where drink is sold "on the sly," and they will lie to druggists and physicians to get the stuff. Moreover, in many places where hospitality or personal inclination seems to demand that there should be liquor at hand, it is kept in private houses in sufficient quantities for the use of the master of the house and his guests.

Concerning his experience in a prohibition city



Baron Seeman relates the following amusing incident: "On my way from California I visited, among other cities, a place called Leavenworth. It was a cold and damp evening when I arrived there and I was glad to step into the hospitable hotel. At last I had registered in the hotel book, had been relieved of my hand-luggage and overcoat, then turning to the clerk I asked "Where can I get some whisky?" "I have no whisky," was the laconic reply. "Then a brandy or a glass of beer at least." "Don't you know, Mr. Seeman that in this state we are not allowed to keep or sell any such drinks?" I shuddered and in my own mind I swore revenge. I had arrived on a Thursday evening, and was not billed to give my first performance until the following Monday. I telegraphed to a friend in Kansas City, but will defer betraying the contents of my message until later on. Monday evening arrived, the time for my first performance. The house was crowded, the audience applauded to their heart's content, but I had not yet played my trump. At last, Illusion No. 5; In a silver cup, 14 inches high and 6 inches in diameter I put some cotton wool, lighting it and covering it up I asked the spectators what drink they most desired? Laughter, stamping, screaming, talking, all was a confusion out of which I could only distinguish the word "whisky." I removed the cover from the cup and poured the contents, which had in the meantime been transformed into whisky, in sixty glasses, which I offered to the public. They were emptied quickly. 'More whisky;' they all cried. That night I poured out two gallons



of whisky and gave it to the public. The next day I received an admonition from the police, but they could do nothing to me, as I had only practiced my art and given the public the proof of my spiritual talent."





D'ALVINI IN JAPANESE COSTUME.

## CHAPTER X.

WILLIAM D'ALVINI, "JAP OF JAPS,"—EARLY LIFE.



D'ALVINI, "JAP OF JAPS."

In some ways there is more known of D'Alvini, the wonderful juggler, magician and prestidigitateur than almost any other distinguished person of his profession, and in other ways he is less known.

If he kept a diary it has been lost, and as not even a short biography of him has ever been written the matter of compiling this one has caused an infinite amount of painstaking research, through a great pile of contracts made with him by amusement managers and of newspaper excerpts from the press of the world.

He made his great success and fame under the name of D'Alvini, but in private life he was known

in this country by the name of William Armstrong; his real name was William Peppercorn. He was a cousin to the famous clown Governelli. It has been published that D'Alvini's father was a member of a prosperous firm of silk dyers in Wood street, Cheapside, but the truth is, his parents were makers of artificial flowers, and the great juggler was born in London, near the Canal Road, Hoxton, in 1847, October 4th. He had a strongly marked Japanese face, and was a cockney of the cockneys, though in the most successful part of his life he was called "The Jap of Japs."

D'Alvini's first appearance as a performer before audiences was at the Grecian Theatre, City Road, London, and in this he rode a bicycle on a rope, from four to eight feet above ground. This was when he was a mere child. He had such a proclivity for show life that his father apprenticed him to Powell & Clark's circus, and with that, and afterwards Sanger's circus, he remained until he was 18 years old as rider and gymnast, traveling over a large part of the world.

While with Sanger's circus in Japan he conceived the idea of taking a Japanese troupe to England, something that had not yet been done. With this troupe D'Alvini took up juggling and legerdemain, in which latter art he was greatly assisted by his former schoolmate, Mr. Frank Hiam, of London, who is well known as a manufacturer of conjuring apparatus. From Mr. Hiam, D'Alvini secured his first outfit of conjuring apparatus and tricks, especially all those

pertaining to his magical portfolio, afterwards introduced by the young magician under the title of D'Alvini's Album.

A company of fourteen Japs, men, women and children was organized, and D'Alvini made a tour of Europe, it being the first troupe to receive the Mikado's consent to leave the empire. He kept the company on the road for five years and then sent it back, forming a new company of European Japs, known as "the Japs of all Japs."

Pending the time between the dismissal of his original Japanese troupe and that one afterward formed in Europe, D'Alvini made a tour alone through continental Europe, and during this time he was in many of the cities of Russia, Germany, Sweden, Norway, Holland, Austria, France, Spain, Portugal, and was also in Egypt.

In the possession of this writer is a large collection of the contracts made with European managers by D'Alvini, and they are in all the languages spoken on the continent, which made no difference to the conjurer in the matter of understanding them, for he spoke French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, English and Russian with equal fluency, and was sufficiently familiar with Japanese to understand and make himself understood in that tongue.

#### CONTINENTAL CONTRACTS.

The contract that took D'Alvini to Egypt was made with Drahet Bey, through Parravicini & Corbyn of London. The junior member of this firm being the same Sheridan Corbyn who first brought



the Vokes family to this country, and who was afterward manager in the United States of several dramatic companies, notably that of Mr. Frank Mayo during the time when that eminent actor was playing Shakespearian and other classic roles. The contract with Drahmet Bey, referred to, is unique and is therefore given herewith *verbatim et literatim*.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT.

From the Office of Messrs. Parravicini & Corbyn,  
Operatic, Dramatic, and General Agents, 49  
Duke Street, St. James's, London, S. W.

DECEMBER 23, 1872.

*To Messrs. D'Alvini & Clarke, Equilibrists, Jugglers,  
Etc.*

We are authorized by and on behalf of Drahmet Bey, of Egypt, to engage you to go to Egypt to perform, leaving London on Wednesday, December 25th, and Southampton Thursday, December 26th and we do hereby, as Agents only, engage you accordingly, to perform to the best of your Ability all the best Acts of your List or Repertoire, at a salary of Twenty Pounds Week and your passage to Egypt and back to London, to commence two days after your arrival and continue during seven consecutive weeks from that time, subject to the Rules of that Establishment.

This Engagement is made through our Agency, and accepted by you, with a promise to pay to us a Commission as arranged between you and us, payable to us on the signing of this Agreement and receipt whereof we acknowledge and subject to the



Rules and Conditions of our Agency as stated below, viz:

It is understood and agreed that on all extensions or renewals of this Engagement, we shall always receive our Commission as above stated and that all New Engagements offered to you by the above Drahmet Bey shall be intrusted to us to reply to and to negotiate; and all such New Engagements shall be considered as made by us, and shall be subject to the same Commission, payable to us as above stated.

We make all necessary inquiries in the interest of artistes and ourselves as to the respectability and responsibility of parties engaging, but do not, as Agents or otherwise, under any circumstances, assume or admit any responsibility as to payment of salary or fulfillment of terms stipulated.

It is agreed that both Terms and Commission shall be considered confidential.

(Signed)

Pro DRAHMET BEY,  
C. L. SEVINOSKI.

PARRAVICINI & CORBYN, Agents.

Another interesting contract is that between D'Alvini and B. de Monfort of Paris, agent for Phillip Ducazcal proprietor of several theatres in Spain. The contract is written in both English and Spanish in parallel columns and is also given herewith as an interesting relic.

This was in 1877. But D'Alvini was in Spain again in 1883 and a letter from W. Parish, Director

of the Circo de Price, involving the 1883 contract, is also printed herewith following the first:

B. de Monfort, Representant des Theatres Espagnols  
Novedades et Buen Retiro de Madrid, 30 Rue  
Feydeau, Paris.

Entre el Sr D'Alvini y el Sr B. de Monfort agente autorizado del Sr D. Felipe Ducazcal director de varios teatros en Espana, se ha convenido loge-signe.

El Sr. Ducazcal contrata al Sr D'Alvini para dos meses para ejecutar sus ejereicios japoneses y de equilibrio, en los teatros de su direceion, con la familia de los D'Alvinis (dos personas mas.)

El Sr D'Alvini se obliga a empezar sus representaciones en los teatros del Sr Ducazcal, el dia 22 del present nis y a seguirlos todos los dias a las horas qe-el Sr Ducazcal determine, segun la composicion de sus espectaculos.

Esta contrata empezara el dia 22 del presente mes de Diciembre y acabara el dia 21 del pionimo Febrero. El Sr Ducazcal tendia el derecho de prolongar esta misma contrata, manifestandolo al Sr D'Alvini ocho dias antes de su terminacion.

El Sr Ducazcal pagara al Sr D'Alvini la cantidad de Dos mil nueve cientos y cincuenta francos mensuales por quincenas anticipadas, y pagara tambien los gastos de viage de Paris a Madrid en Coches de segunda clase, y tambien el escero de peso de equipages.

El Sr D'Alvini no podra contratarse in representar en ningun otro teatro qe-en los del Sr Ducazcal

mientras el Sr Ducazcal quiera continuar la presente contrata.—

Hecho en Paris a 13 de Diciembre de 1877.

(Signed)

B. DE MONFORT,  
D'ALVINI.

"Agreement between Mr. D'Alvini, and Mr. B. de Monfort authorized agent of Mr. Phillip Ducazcal, proprietor of several theatres in Spain:

Mr. Ducazcal engages Mr. D'Alvini for two months to perform his equilibrist and congring excercises in the theatres of his direction with the D'Alvini's troupe (two persons more):

Mr. D'Alvini obliges himself to commence his performances in Mr. Ducazcal's theatres on the 22nd of the present month, and to follow them in the hours and time that Mr. Ducazcal shall determine according to his program.

This engagement will begin on the 22nd of the present month of December and shall end on the 21st of next February. Mr. Ducazcal will have the privilege to prolong it by letting Mr. D'Alvini know eight days before its ending, if Mr. D'Alvini agrees to it.

Mr. Ducazcal will pay to Mr. D'Alvini the sum of Two thousand, nine hundred aud fifty francs per month by anticipated fourtnights, and he will pay also the expenses of the voyage from Paris to Madrid in second class cars for three persons and the expenses of luggage.

Mr. D'Alvini will not be allowed to perform in any

other theatre than Mr. Ducazcal's as long Mr. Ducazcal will continue the present engagement.

Made in Paris on the 13th of December, 1877.

(Signed)

B. DE MONFORT.

D'ALVINI.

CONTRACT WITH PRICE'S CIRCUS.

CIRCO DE PRICE—W. PARISH, Director Administration.

*Contract.*

MADRID, Feb 10, 1883.

*Monsieur D'Alvini:*

DEAR SIR:—Your conditions accepted namely 2,500 francs payable in Spanish money every 15 days and 200 francs allowed you for all voyage expenses the engagement to Commence on the 14th of April, 1883, for a term of one month.

Mr. D'Alvini agrees to perform to the best of his abilities (var) letters received. Mr. D'Alvini can not appear in any other establishment in Madrid until this contract is completed. Mr. D'Alvini conforms to the rules of the establishment and to be in Madrid two days before the open day. Mr. W. Parish hold the right to prolong this contract for another month on the same conditions.

(Signed)

W. PARISH.

Please to return contract by return or drop a telegram to say conform.

W. P.

---

From programmes of numerous places of amusement in London, in possession of this writer, notably

the Royal Aquarium, Alexandra Palace, Crystal Palace, Jetty Skating Rink and from the printed invitations to entertainments given for public institutions and private parties, it is evident that in the early months of 1877, previous to going to Spain D'Alvini was exceedingly busy with engagements for such places. Some of these took him before very exalted personages but he became accustomed to that, for during his somewhat checkered and eventful career D'Alvini performed before Queen Victoria twice, and also before the Princess of Wales and Edinburg, at various times, as well as the Sultan of Turkey. He was engaged expressly by the viceroy of Egypt to display his skill, alone, in the vice regal harem. Besides several ugly eunuchs, who stood guard, he was the only one in sight, the ladies of the harem viewing him through the lattice work of the boxes ranged above the stage. He appeared before the shah of Persia in Crystal Palace, London; before Marshall McMahon at his residence on the Rue de Rhone, Paris, and before the Emperor William at the Palace in Berlin. He performed before the late Czar Alexander of Russia, on February 19 of the year in which he was killed. Concerning this incident D'Alvini afterward said to a friend in Chicago:—

“When I was in Russia I had an experience that drove me from the land of the Czars and I promise you I shall not go back to it. It was in 1880 that I struck Russia and the Czar, Alexander, (who was afterwards assassinated by the Nihilists,) summoned me to give a private entertainment for him in the south

wing of his winter palace. I am glad he did not choose the west wing, for on that very night February 19th, 1880, while in the midst of my performance, the west wing was blown up by the revolutionists but nobody was hurt. It kept me in the palace under police surveillance for four days, nevertheless, and I soon got out of that country and I won't go back again unless I am chained."

D'Alvini also entertained Don Pedro of Brazil twice at the emperor's home, and also the late Alfonso of Spain in the royal palace at Madrid. "In fact," said D'Alvini, "I've been before nearly all the bloomin' crowned heads of Europe. And don't forget the Mikado of Japan. He is one of the finest fellows you ever saw, kind and agreeable, and treated me well. He was the making of me."

Another of the interesting contracts made by D'Alvini was that entered into between himself and the international theatrical agency of E. Perrier, 20 Boulevard St. Denis, Paris, for the appearance of the magician at the Casino, Marseilles. This contract is also written in French and English in parallel columns and as the English is peculiar, to say the least, it is given herewith, also that with the same agency for D'Alvini's appearance at the Orpheum in Vienna, Austria.

## AGENCE THEATRALE INTERNATIONALE.

20 BOULEVARD ST. DENIS. A PARIS. (AU REZ DE CHAUSSEE.)

*E. PERRIER.*

Agent Special A Londres

Correspondence a Bruxelles, Berlin, Vienne, New-York.

PARIS LE LONDON, THE 18TH, FEVRIER 1878.

Entre les soussignes, Madame Fabre, directrice du Casino a Marseille et Mr. D'Alvini, artiste anglais.

Il a ete arrete ce qui suit :

1. Madame Fabre engage Mr. D'Alvini a parler du 15 ou 20 Mars 1878 pour un mois, se reservant le droit de resilier l'engagement apres quinze jours. Madame Fabre engage Mr. D'Alvini aux conditions de deux mille cinq cents francs par mois.

2. Mr. D'Alvini recevra ses appointments au prorata tous les samedis.

3. Madame Fabre paiera a Mr. D'Alvini une indemnite de cent francs en plus de ses appointments, et Madame Fabre fera une avance de six cents francs a Mr. D'Alvini a valoir sur ses appointments.

4. Mr. D'Alvini's engage a suivre les usages et reglements de la direction du Casino de Marseille.

5. Mr. D'Alvini devra etre rendu au Casino de Marseille la veille de ses debuts, pour donner une repetition generale en costumes avec l'orchestre.

6. Le dit engagement a ete contracte par l'inter-



mediaire de Mr. E. Perrier, agent theatral a Paris et a Londres. Debut du quinze ou vingt Mars 1878.

Marseille le 21. Fevrier 1878.

(Signed.)

L. V. ELA FABRE.

Between the undersigned Madame Fabre, directrice of the Casino of Marseille, and Mr. D'Alvini artiste Anglais, it has been agreed what it is following:

1. Madame Fabre engage Mr. D'Alvini begin the 15th of March, 1878, for one month, with the option to Madame Fabre to cancel the engagement after fifteen days; Madame Fabre engage Mr. D'Alvini with the condition of two thousand and five hundred francs per month.

2. Mr. D'Alvini will receive his salary in proportion every Saturday.

3. Madame Fabre will pay to Mr. D'Alvini, an indemnity of hundred francs besides his salary and Madame Fabre will make an advance of six hundred francs to Mr. D'Alvini on account of his salary.

4. Mr. D'Alvini engage himself to follow the rules and customs of the direction of the Casino of Marseille.

5. Mr. D'Alvini will be arrived to the Casino of Marseille, the day before his first night, to give a general rehearsal in costumes, with the orchestra.

6. The said engagement has been contracted by the medium of Mr. E. Perrier, agent theatral in Paris and in London.

The Directrice says your engagement will begin from the 15th to the 20th of March.

(Signed.)

L. V. ELA FABRE.

AGENCE THEATRALE INTERNATIONALE.

20 BOULEVARD ST. DENIS, A PARIS, (AU REZ DE CHAUSSEE.)

E. PERRIER.

---

Agent Special A Londres.

Correspondants a Bruxelles, Berlin, Vienna, New York.

Paris, le London, the,

*Engagement.*

Entre les soussignes: Monsieur Edward Danzer Directeur de l'Orpheum a Vienne (Autriche) et Monsieur D'Alvini, presentement a Paris, il a ete convenu et arrete ce qui suit:

1. Monsieur E. Danzer engage Monsieur D'Alvini pour executer sur la scene de l'orpheum exclusivement tous ses exercices a parter du trois September 1878 pour un mois certain.

2. Les appointements de Monsieur D'Alvini sont fixes a la somme de deux mille francs par mois payables par quinzaine et deux chambres dans l'hotel de Monsieur E. Danzer.

3. Monsieur E. Danzer alloue a Monsieur D'Alvini une somme de cinq cents francs d'avance et deux cents francs pour frais de voyage, bagages et materiel.

4. Monsieur D'Alvini devra etre rendu a Vienne le 2d. septembre.

5. Monsieur D'Alvini devra se conformer au règlement de la Direction.

6. Monsieur E. Danzer n'est pas responsable des accidents pouvant survenir pendant le cours des représentations.

7. Monsieur E. Danzer se reserve le droit de prolonger le dit engagement aux memes clauses et conditions, pendant un mois en prevenant Monsieur D'Alvini quinze jours a l'avance.

Le dit engagement a ete contracte par Monsieur Perrier agent de Monsieur D'Alvini pour la France et le continent a moitie avec Monsieur Ferdinand Buechler agent a Vienne, en payment le dix pour cent qui sera retenu par la Direction, moitie pour le compte de Monsieur E. Perrier, agent. 20 Boulevard St. Denis a Paris.

Fait et signe double a Paris le 9 juillet, 1878.

(Signed)

EDWARD DANZER.

D'ALVINI.

### CONTRACT.

Between the undersigned: Master Edward Danzer Director of the Orpheum in Wien (Autriche) et Master D'Alvini presently in Paris, it has been agreed what it is following:

1. Master E. Danzer engage Master D'Alvini to perform on the stage of the Orpheum only his exercises performances to begin the tree September 1878 for one month certain.

2. The salary of Master D'Alvini will be two thousand francs per month payables every fifteen

days and two rooms in the hotel of the Master Danzer.

3. Master E. Danzer will be allowed the sum of 500 francs at Master D'Alvini on advance, and 200 francs for the fores expenses.

4. Master D'Alvini will be obliged to be arrived the 2d. September in Wien.

5. Master D'Alvini will have to follow the rule of the Direction.

6. Master E. Danzer will not be responsible of any accident which could occur during the representations.

7. Master E. Danzer will have the ringht to prolong the said engagement with the same clauses and conditions for one month in giving notice to Master D'Alvini fifteen days in advance.

The said engagement has been contracted by Mr. Perrier agent of Master D'Alvini for the France and continent: this contract as made on company wit Mr. Ferdinand Buechler agent in Wien.

Mr. D'Alvini he will pay the ten per cent of the commission and autorise the Director to retain half for Mr. E. Perrier.

Signed doubled in Paris the 9 July, 1878.

(Signed)

EDWARD DANZER.

D'ALVINI.

I engage to day Mr. D'Alvini to the 21st of October, 1878, inclosed.

(Signed)

EDWARD DANZER.

D'ALVINI.

Another contract that is peculiar for its brevity is one written in German for his appearance at a theatre in Leuwarden, Holland. Following is the original and the translation:—

*Carl Pflaeging, Rotterdam.*

Herr D'Alvini ist bei der Gesellschaft Pflaeging engagirt von 17–27 August gegen ein Honorar von fl. 50 pro Abend und 1 Matinee.

Leeuwarden, 24 Juli 1881.

(Signed)

CARL PFLAEGING.

TRANSLATION.

Mr. D'Alvini is engaged with the Pflaeging Company from 17 to 27 August at a salary of 50 florins, (\$20.00) for each evening and one matinee.

Leuwarden, July 24th, 1881.

(Signed)

CARL PFLAEGING.

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE FIRST JAPANESE TROUPE. INDIAN JUGGLERS AND THEIR FEATS.

Concerning D'Alvini's first Japanese troupe the story is best told in an interview with him printed in the Chicago Daily News of July 7th, 1886, and in this interview D'Alvini gave many interesting facts aside from those immediately connected with his troupe. The interview was as follows: "Yes, I brought over the first company of Japanese jugglers that ever exhibited in this country or in Europe," said D'Alvini, the magician. "It was called the 'Tycoon troupe.' We gave one exhibition on our arrival in San Francisco, and then went directly to London. We exhibited in Europe for three years. Then the troupe disbanded, and such of the members as did not return to their own land became attached, as special performers, to various theatres or companies. The bringing of the 'Tycoon troupe' over was the introduction of Japanese conjurers into the western world. Since that time they have learned that they can make far more money in Europe and America than at home.

"Their most remarkable skill is in balancing feats.

The Jap is a balancer by nature. If a working-man is carrying a ladder along the street he does not bear it as any other man would. He balances it deftly on one shoulder, and speeds along as if only a feather rested there. If he is going to brace it against a wall for some one else to ascend, quick as a flash he turns it from his shoulder, and, resting his back on the ground, holds it in place with his feet instead of with the hands, as other people do.

I had gone out from England with a circus company and was stranded in their country. I was so impressed with the marvelous sleight-of-hand performances of the Japanese jugglers that I determined to learn the business. When I had acquired some insight into its methods the idea came to me that it would be a good scheme to take a native company to England. Here is the original contract. You see it not only contains the terms of agreement, but the permission of the government for me to take three jugglers with me, and also a list of the professional properties of the company and their personal belongings. The Japs were greatly concerned for fear they would be unable to procure tooth brushes or powder while sojourning in the lands of the western barbarians. Accordingly they obtained permission to carry with them what they considered would be a sufficient supply to last them during their absence from home. There were between twenty and twenty-five men in the troupe. But they carried with them, as the contract shows, 25,000 packages of tooth powder and 5,000 tooth-brushes for their personal use.



Their amazement when they saw similar articles for sale in American and English shops was comical.

"The Jap is the most skilled of all oriental jugglers. The wonderful tales related of the marvelous feats performed by the conjurers of India are mere fairy stories. The Indian juggler does not compare in skill with the professional magician of America or Europe. Their tricks are such clumsy affairs that they cannot be termed optical illusions. No trained western performer would think of giving them as they do. Crude as they are, however, they have furnished most of the ideas for the development of the wonderful stage illusions of the day.

"The Indian juggler has neither skill nor enterprise. He does not travel to other lands, but remains at home and gives his little performances in the streets and squares. He knows nothing of the science employed in latter-day legerdemain. He does not understand what electricity or compressed air means. For, you must know, electricity and compressed air are the modern magician's most important tools. Some of our best illusions are performed by the means of delicate crushable glass used to confine the compressed air. The stories of the marvels the Indian performs have their origin in the prolific oriental imagination."

"In what countries do people show the most interest in entertainments of the class given by magicians?"

"That is somewhat difficult to say. Where the entertainment is a novelty they will want to see it.

every night for a long time. For instance, I was the first European employed to go to Egypt to give legerdemain performances. I was hired expressly to entertain the harem of the ruler then in power. Well, I gave performances night after night for months and was still retained. The theatre was within the ruler's palace. The stage was at one end and all around the rest of the wall were compartments of different sizes. The largest were for the wives of the ruler, or those of royal birth, and the smaller ones for the Circassians and other low-born beauties attached to the harem.

“But the most peculiar audiences that I have ever had were the Zulus. I gave entertainments both in Madagascar and along the coast of Africa. I was induced to do so by Richard William Dunn, who was in power in Madagascar. He is the Englishman who was so active in supplying the Zulus with guns and ammunition during the war between the tribes and Great Britain. The only way I managed to give my performances among the Zulus was by exposing the tricks. Then they became interested and followed me around all the time as if I was a superior being. If I had not explained my illusions they would have fled from me in dread and watched their opportunity to put me out of the way. They are abjectly superstitious.

“We would travel from village to village, or more properly speaking, from camp to camp, and bartered with the natives for so much ivory for each performance. Without the guaranty they would have agreed

to give me ivory for an exhibition, but before I could have got two miles from their village they'd have fallen on me to recover it. That's their method of doing business.

"Of all bad countries, though, Russia is the worst. It is the bad country of the world. No one who has not traveled through it from town to town, and village to village, can form any conception of the ignorance and poverty of its peasantry. A stranger in their midst is viewed with suspicion. They dare scarcely answer his simplest questions or serve him at their inns. I was engaged to give an entertainment in the winter palace on the night that the emperor was assassinated. Here is the original programme for the occasion and the contract. You see the latter provides for an entertainment of February 17th of that year, and it is also the date of the programme. It is needless to add that I not only gave no performance on that night, but that I was escorted to my hotel closely guarded by a company of soldiery. I was not allowed to depart, and was kept under strict surveillance until the authorities were satisfied what my associates were."

From an interview printed in the Philadelphia News of March 13th, 1887, D'Alvini gives some further very interesting facts concerning his travels, and experiences, and from that interview the following excerpts are made :

Speaking again of his Japanese experiences he says :

"I liked Japan fairly well, but when I was there it

seemed to me that I might do better if I brought a troupe of 'Japs' from their country to England. Up to that time such a thing had never been attempted with the Mikado's permission; but by the use of official influence I was able to accomplish my object. Well my undertaking was highly successful, but while in Japan I had learned the art of necromancy and jugglery myself. I had also been in India, and there I had acquired the arts of the Indian jugglers. And I want to say to you here that much that has been written about the supernatural power of the Indian jugglers is all poppycock. They have not the aid of compressed air and electricity, and many of the feats which we perform by the aid of these adjuncts could never be done by them. The Indian jugglers apparently make a plant grow from a seed in a few minutes. They can not force nature, of course, and they accomplish this by means of advance agents, who conceal the full grown plant hours beforehand on the spot where the feat is accomplished. Another of their feats is an illusion. The jugglers put a boy in a large basket, and then impress the spectators with the fact that he has been removed by supernatural means.

"I have seen the trick, and the solution of the mystery is found in the fact that the juggler wears a bur-  
nous, or garment with ample folds. The boy is removed from the basket and concealed within the folds of his dress."

"Have I traveled much?" he answered, in reply to a question. "Well, I think I have. I have made the

tour of Europe, and there are few towns on the continent in which I have not played. In England I have played twice before Queen Victoria, and also at private performances for the Princess of Wales and the Duke of Edinburg. In Constantinople I have appeared before the Sultan of Turkey. I gave a special performance for the Shah of Persia in the Crystal Palace, London. The Viceroy of Egypt engaged me for six months, and I several times displayed my skill for the benefit of the ladies of the royal harem. Marshal McMahon got me to play for him at his residence in Paris, and the Emperor William honored me by giving me a special engagement at his royal residence. I played in the Winter Palace for the Czar Alexander, and while I was playing for him in the north wing of the palace the Nihilists blew up the southern wing of the building." "Yes," he added, "I think I am a pretty well traveled man."

Commenting upon D'Alvini's work, the News added: "D'Alvini's skill is due to a long and tedious practice. "I practice on an average," he said, "four or five hours a day. I have to do this or else I would fall off from the standard to which I aspire." Some of his feats are remarkable. The "Fairy Fountain" act is a triumph of balancing. In this act he builds a Japanese pagoda out of blocks of wood, the foundation resting on his chin. When the fountain has been completed a stream of water issues out of it, the structure revolving all the time. The feat is a most extraordinary one and the climax is reached when in place

of water, streamers of ribbon and showers of paper issue out of the fountain.

D'Alvini is a wonderful balancer. He seems to know the laws of gravitation exactly. He will take a cylindrical rod fifteen feet in length and balance a high hat on it. The hat will perform all manner of gyrations, but it will stick to the point of the rod under all circumstances, just as D'Alvini directs. It will be thrown from crown and caught on edge; it will dance on all sides and yet never leave the rod. Altogether the feat is a wonderful one, and the science of balancing is displayed in its most advanced developments.

In the art of illusion D'Alvini's triumph is accomplished in producing a boy out of almost nothing. He fairly gives the lie to the old Latin theorem *ex nihilo nihil*. The curtain rises as D'Alvini, in the dress of a Japanese executioner, is discovered. He advances to the middle of the stage with a casket in his hands fourteen inches square. Out of this casket he draws ribbons of paper. This is introductory. Then he puts a newspaper on the floor, to do away with the suspicion that a trap-door is used. Standing over and on the paper he makes a few passes and then he produces a full-sized boy of 16 years. The illusion is inexplicable and the audience is startled.

D'Alvini is now under the management of Reilly & Wood, and will make an extended tour of this country."

Speaking at another time concerning the fakirs of India and the Japanese, D'Alvini said: "The Japan-



ese set the example for us, and we, the Europeans, have improved upon it. As jugglers, conjurers and masters of all the arts of legerdemain, Europeans surpass the world, and that is a statement that can not be gainsayed. The Japanese are very intelligent, and take great pains with whatever work they do. It is very hard to copy after jugglers and requires endless patience and toil. I try to be original. There is only one trick performed by me that is done by others and that is, balancing articles on a rapidly revolving parasol. The others are all my own. I never do any ball or knife throwing, because that is mere child's play and can be seen almost anywhere."

"We hear a great deal about Indian juggling, and the wonderful trick of the marabouts, such as bringing birds into existence, causing them to fly a short distance and to return, but such stories are Indian fables—mere fairy tales. I traveled throughout India, and I never saw anything particularly wonderful, nothing in fact, but what I could do myself."

As mentioned elsewhere, D'Alvini after having dismissed his original Japanese troupe and having made a tour of Europe and Egypt alone, formed another company in England which he called "The Japs of all Japs," and took them on a continental tour with great success. Beside D'Alvini himself there were Mrs. D'Alvini who was known on the bills as Kara Miss Kara, Tom-o-Kitchi, and other assistants.



## CHAPTER XII.

### TO SOUTH AMERICA WITH PATRIZIO.

While in Spain, D'Alvini entered into a contract with Patrizio, who was himself a famous magician, to visit South America and the West Indies.

On the opposite page is a portrait of Patrizio, who made a tour of the United States, which was a remarkable success artistically throughout, though to him it was a financial failure. And yet his business was very large everywhere. Patrizio is said to have lost \$40,000.00 in that tour, but he imparted the loss to his lack of knowledge of the English language and the ways of those who had his affairs in charge.

Following is the contract between D'Alvini and Patrizio, as originally written in French, there follows also a translation of same:

“Entre Monsieur Ernest Patrizio d’ une part et Monsieur William D’Alvini de l’autre et convenu a qui suit:

1. Monsieur E. Patrizio engage Monsieur William D’Alvini pour une tournée dans l’Amérique du Sud pour la durée de six mois a dater du jour de la première représentation, en se réservant le droit de



PATRIZIO.



prolonge pour autres six mois le dit engagement si cela sera de sa convenance sans que pour cela Monsieur D'Alvini puisse pretendre une augmentation.

2. Monsieur D'Alvini met a disposition de Monsieur Patrizio son spectacle d'exercices d'equilibriste, de Jonglerie, d'illusion avec le concours de Madame Kara et du petit Japonais, pour prendre parte dans toutes les representations que Monsieur Patrizio donnera avec sa campagne soit pour paraitre une ou deux fois, dans la meme soiree, pour une duree d'au moins une heure et demie.

3. Les jours de fetes et Dimanches Monsieur Patrizio pourra donner deux representations sans que pour cela Monsieur D'Alvini puisse avoir droit a une augmentation.

4. Monsieur D'Alvini promet aussi son concours pour l'execution des Spectres ou Ombry et de faire de son mieux pour la reussite de la presente entreprise.

5. Pour tout le travail dont est question dans la presente convention Monsieur Patrizio payera a Monsieur D'Alvini la somme de trois mille francs (fcs 3,000.00) payable a dixaines echeves ne se calculand pas comme jours payable les jours employes dans les traversees maritimes.

6. Les frais de voyage en 2nd class et du materiel sont a partir de Barcelona a la charge de Monsieur Patrizio. Chaqun payera ses frais d'hotel.

7. Les frais particulier du spectacle de Monsieur seront a sa charge.

8. Les payements seront fait au numeraire d'or ou

argent, ou en papier du pays de la Nation ou on se trouvera au moment du payment aux taux de ce que vendra l'or ou l'argent selon le prix du dernier bulletin de la bourse.

9. Cette convention priver peutetre elevee a ecriture publique avec le concours des consuls des respectives Nations a la demande d'un des interesses.

10. Monsieur D'Alvini promet de n'avoir jamais donner son spectacle dans le Sud Amerique, et l'engage a demi relever Monsieur Patrizio des damages et interets que peuvent lui etre occassione si en etait autrement.

11. Pour toutes les differences qui peuvent originer entres les parties contractantes c'est convenu des a present que toute question sera remise aux arbitrage des Consuls de la respective nations.

Fait en bonne foi ce 19 Avril de 1883, Barcelone.  
(Signed) ERNEST PATRIZIO.

TRANSLATION :

"Between Mr. Ernest Patrizio, party of the first part, and Mr. Wm. D'Alvini, party of the second part, the following has been agreed :

1st. Mr. Ernest Patrizio engages Mr. William D'Alvini for a tour of six months in South America, to date from the day of their first performance, and reserving the right to prolong the said engagement for six months more should it suit him to do so, in which case Mr. D'Alvini shall have no increase of salary.

2nd. Mr. D'Alvini puts at the disposal of Mr.

Patrizio his specialties in balancing, juggling and illusions, also the services of Madam Kara and the little Japanese boy, who are to assist him in all the performances which Mr. Patrizio may give with his company, whether it be one or two appearances on the same evening, for at least one and one-half hours.

3rd. On holidays and Sundays Mr. Patrizio will give two exhibitions daily and Mr. D'Alvini is to assist him in the same, as above mentioned, without any additional salary.

4th. Mr. D'Alvini further promises to give his assistance in the production of the Ghost Show and Shadowgraphs, and to do his best towards the success of the present enterprise.

5th. For all the work above mentioned Mr. Patrizio will pay Mr. D'Alvini the sum of Three Thousand Francs (3000 francs), payable every ten days, the days spent on the water not counting.

6th. The expenses of the voyage out, second class cabin, and all baggage expenses starting from Barcelona will be defrayed by Mr. Patrizio. Each party shall pay his own hotel bills.

7th. Any expense incurred in the production of Mr. D'Alvini's specialties shall be paid by himself.

8th. The payments shall be made in gold, silver or paper of the country in which the parties may be at the time, allowances being made for exchange.

9th. This private agreement may be legalized by the consuls of the respective nations, at the request of either one of the parties.

10th. Mr. D'Alvini affirms that he has never given his specialties in South America, and if it is found otherwise, he agrees to pay one-half the damages, which may be caused thereby, to Mr. Patrizio.

11th. All differences that may arise between the contracting parties shall be submitted for arbitration to the consuls of the respective nations.

Made in good faith this 19th day of April, 1883, at Barcelona."

In pursuance of this contract D'Alvini sailed with his company from Barcelona, Spain, to Rio Janeiro.

D'Alvini opened at Rio and performed in other cities and towns of Brazil and then went to Buenos Ayres. Before leaving Rio one of the newspapers speaking of his performances, said these things which were not very flattering to other magicians among them D'Alvini's employer Patrizio.

Following is the excerpt alluded to:

"The four conjurers who are at present performing in this city and amusing the public are Patrizio Martini, Herrmann and Bosco, all noted for their remarkable tricks in magic, but neither of them has anything new. They are all doing precisely the same thing,—pulling eggs out of a man's hat, producing coins from a man's nose or head, doing the changing handkerchiefs, working the old glove trick, making it large and small, the ribbons and rabbits from the hat,—all things that are familiar to everybody.

The greatest and most skilled of the four is Patrizio, but the one who has the most money, which he







D'ALVINI'S JUGGLING ACTS.

has secured by making friends with the public, knowing how to advertise well and manipulate the columns of the press, is certainly Herrmann, but what a change if we look at the performances of D'Alvini, the "Jap of Japs" who is now attracting the attention of the Rio De Janeiro public, who gives the most admirable, marvelous, extraordinary and inimitable performance ever seen in the realms of mystery, juggling and conjuring, to say nothing of his Ghost Show and Shadowgraphing. Whoever wishes to be amused should by all means see his performances."

The entire first page of this paper was taken up by a lithograph of which the illustration on opposite page is a photographic reproduction. It will be seen that the four conjurers mentioned above were all represented as doing the same old familiar tricks.

While at Montevideo D'Alvini wrote: "Five performances and all good. Lodgings at Hotel Concordia. Good eating, rooms very bad—damp. Found an old friend, an American. Left Montevideo June 31st, 6 in the evening. Arrived Buenos Ayres July 1st. Very large town. Money all paper. Theatre very large. Business good. Success big. Every paper speaking well."

## CHAPTER XIII.

### D'ALVINI'S EXPERIENCES IN THE WEST INDIES.

After adding the South American countries mentioned to his great list of triumphs throughout nearly all the world, D'Alvini and company sailed for the Northern colonies of South America, especially British Guiana and Venezuela. At Colon D'Alvini opened a theatre which was called the "Colonia Theatre." This establishment, however was burned by the insurgents during a revolution and D'Alvini lost many thousands of dollars worth of property for which he was never reimbursed. Undaunted, the plucky magician sailed for the West Indies and played a long and successful season in Jamaica and in towns of other islands of the greater Antilles, earning large sums of money.

It was during his visit to Brazil that D'Alvini took up the practical work of a hobby that he had always been interested in. He put in all his spare time hunting and securing butterflies, birds and bugs, and being a skillful entomologist and taxidermist he preserved his collections in such a manner that they became very valuable and some of them are yet extant.

D'Alvini was also very fond of all sorts of out-door sports and lived as much as possible in the open air. He had a rugged constitution and was possessed of such powers of endurance that it seemed almost impossible for him to become fatigued, and especially was this apparent in tropical and semi-tropical regions, the conditions of which are almost invariably enervating to people generally.

While on the island of Jamaica D'Alvini engaged wagons and teams for the entire trip about the island, and thus traveled from place to place at his leisure making the circuit a glorious outing, in which he combined business with pleasure. Thus he would shoot and fish along the way and also continue the additions to his entomological and ornithological collections.

Being one of the most genial, jovial, sociable and generous of men, D'Alvini made friends of all with whom he came in contact, except now and then some one who attempted to impose upon him, and he even had a way of winning their respect. An incident of this latter kind is illustrated by the following paragraph, taken from a Demerara newspaper of that time. The paper says:

"Whatever may be the illusionist and juggling powers of the Jap of Japs, he immediately upon his arrival gave a lesson in the "noble art of self-defense" to one of our mule carters, that is worth noting. The carter after the fashion of his class, started with rudeness, and finding his man much smaller than himself "went for him." The Jap was

as cool as a refrigerator—said he knew many tricks, but he was always ready to learn, so he would take a lesson now. And he did—he learnt by sudden intuition how to spread out a blusterer twice his weight and bulk. The whole scene was so ludicrous that those present fairly exploded with merriment. Not the least ludicrous part of this impromptu performance, was the figure cut by the overturned carter. His expressions of astonishment at this kind of juggling were comical in the extreme, and he knows by this that the famous “Illusionist’s” muscular powers are no illusion—if a little delusive.”

In his generous way D’Alvini was always ready and willing to help along any good cause that appealed to him, and frequently he gave entertainments for the benefit of worthy objects, without cost to any one except himself, barring of course the price paid by those who visited the show, for their tickets, and they always got their money’s worth.

Once while at Kingston, Jamaica, he gave a benefit for a “Struggling Cemetery,” and the affair created an amusing war of words between the local newspapers. A clipping from the Kingston Call of November 23rd, 1886, will fully explain the situation. It is headed “A Shocking Affair” and is as follows:

“To-morrow the Rector of Kingston, the Rev. G. W. Downer, proposes to ask the public to assist him in getting together sufficient funds to beautify that sacred spot in the immediate vicinity of his church, so beautifully spoken of by some one as “God’s Acre.” He has asked the people to help him



in providing necessary funds to enclose and beautify the graves of those who have joined the "great majority"—those who have crossed the dark river, and who are awaiting the arrival of their friends and relatives, who sooner or later must join them in that great unknown space, concerning which there are so many, and so varied theories and differences of opinion. In order that the public shall have value for their money, and although assisting a good cause shall feel that they had received an equivalent for their outlay in the shape of tickets, the Rev. gentleman managed to secure the assistance of a number of ladies and gentlemen, and also enlisted the sympathies of the "Jap of Japs" who, with the big heart that is always to be found in the breast of a genuine artist, at once volunteered to give his valuable services FREE to assist in a cause which he thought deserved support. This "shocked" the fine sensibilities of the Gleaner, whose effusion on the subject raised a feeling of ridicule and disgust in every quarter—Jew and Gentile alike. We now produce the following, which we think exactly fits the case, and are sure that our readers will pick out the various "points" and appreciate them accordingly:—

You have really done good, though harm was intended,

When you wrote in your paper of 19th inst.;

However, you know, "least said, soonest mended"

And, while reading your strictures, we not even winced.



Oh! come to the Gala, and see that best chap of  
chaps

Delighting the people with tricks, old and new,

Oh! come and applaud him, whom men call the  
Jap of Japs,

Who at Juggling and conjuring is equalled by few.

Oh! come and encourage our excellent clergyman,

The Rector of Kingston, so honest and true;

For we know that if you, with your influence, urge  
him on,

There's no limit to all the great good he will do."

From the West Indies D'Alvini went to New Orleans, playing one month at the Avenue theatre; after which he went to Chicago and signed for two years with Fred Hodson, manager of Kellar.

D'Alvini's success in the United States was as great as it had been elsewhere and he not only won thousands of enthusiastic admirers of his accomplishments, but made hosts of friends. The newspapers wherever he went fairly teemed with praises of the genial magician and his work.

To give some idea of the character of D'Alvini's entertainments the following excerpts are made from newspapers in the West Indies and the United States:—

The Colonial Standard of Kingston, Jamaica, of June 3rd, 1885, said in the course of a long article:

"An exceedingly large number of our citizens were present on Monday night last at the Polytheama, Myrtle Bank, to witness the debut there of the "Jap

of Japs," whose performances had been previously heralded here by credentials from all parts of the world, as to his remarkable and amazing necromantic acquirements. Nor was it very long ere these beyond doubt well earned laurels received the hearty endorsement of a Kingston audience, the Jap of Japs keeping them spell-bound as it were by the startling, clean, rapid and imposing natures of the successive feats which he placed before them. So startling in their suddenness and their effectiveness of execution, as to induce on all sides from amidst the great gathering, exclamations, such as, Wonderful! Magical! Superb!

Possibly in these days when a portion of our local Press is so profuse in its laudations of whatever company or individuals come to our shores to cater to the public amusement, we may be thought indulging in the foregoing remarks, in somewhat of exaggeration. To those who may be of such opinion we merely say—go you and judge for yourselves, and see if these artists who have played before crowned heads and who have received the highest encomiums from the Press in all parts of the world do not in every way merit what we hear report of them.

In one and all of his feats which formed the first part of the programme "The Jap of Japs" was equally amazing—and as feat succeeded feat the enthusiasm of the audience was increasingly aroused. How the liquid which was plain to view in a vase on one table, disappeared to be seen afterwards almost instantaneously transferred to a previously empty vessel on

another table was matter of deep surprise—as was the eventual appearance of two pigeons from out of a saucepan in which was being cooked an omelet—and that—after a piece of paper had been set on fire, in the center of the saucepan. Nor was astonishment less intense when a bottle placed on one table and a candlestick on another opposite were made to change places from table to table at the will of the operator. When however Kara-Miss-Kara made her appearance, and proceeded to stand on a table having a Straw Cone put over her, which completely hid her from view—but from under which on its being removed she had disappeared, surprise rose to the highest pitch, inducing marked astonishment and consequent prolonged applause on the part of the vast numbers present.”

To Tom O’Kitchi, the Indian Rubber Boned Boy, was assigned the second Part of the Programme. As a Contortionist he is truly remarkable. We have seen in our experiences many Contortionists, but never do we recollect having seen any to equal Tom, his youth especially considered. It is however a style of amusement in which we do not take the least interest, and on Monday night the death-like silence which pervaded the audience whilst Tom was executing some of his most daring contortions, testified that they were possessed with considerable fear as to the possibility of some accident resulting to him from his daring feats. Kara-Miss-Kara we think has not yet been seen to the best advantage. Remarkable display of Equilibrium by the “Jap of Japs,” brought

the third and last part of the programme to a conclusion after which the audience separated having it was generally admitted witnessed a most interesting performance."

Another Kingston newspaper commenting upon the "Spiritualistic" part of D'Alvini's entertainment, printed the following detailed account of the flying table. "The entertainment given by the Jap of Japs of Saturday evening, surpassed any of his previous exhibitions, and made his audience wild with enthusiasm. The subject of illustration was "Spiritualism" and "Miracles." The wonderful and seemingly impossible things which he did in full view of his audience could only be thought of as—Supernatural! A round table which had been previously inspected, selected from the furniture in the residence at Myrtle Bank, could not, by any possibility, have had special mechanism concealed about it. A number of well-known citizens were invited from among the audience to come up on the platform and take seats round this table. Among these we noticed Mr. Dugald Campbell of Linstead (a Scottish giant), Mr. James Lunnan, Mr. James Gall, Mr. C. Depass, and some others with Mr. D'Alvini for a medium. Behind him stood Kara-Miss-Kara—"The Spirit Medium" (so called). She is supposed to possess an extraordinary and supernatural power over all things terrestrial. When all these gentlemen were seated, the palms of their hands were well spread upon the top of the table, the little fingers of each sitter just touching those of his neighbor. Kara-Miss-Kara then "willed" the

table to go in one direction, and it immediately gave indications of movements, Mr. Dugald Campbell, we believe, "disobeyed orders" by willing the table to stand still, and placed his thumbs under the table to prevent its further progress; but, to no purpose whatever; the table moved with increased speed; the chairs on which the gentlemen sat, were in the way of progress! Those round the table had then to rise, pressing the table downwards with their extended hands, and first it turned, then it walked on the stage until Kara-Miss-Kara ordered it to "rise"—whereupon, it rose in mid-air with the hands of the gentlemen still upon the table. Then it began to dance all around the stage, throwing down all the operators (except Mr. Dugald Campbell) until at last it fell itself on top of Mr. Gall whom it had previously thrown down in the dance, amidst uproarish and uncontrolled laughter. A little boy, selected from among the occupants of reserved seats, next walked upon the stage to be enclosed in "a sack;" his eyes were bandaged and the sack tied and sealed. He was put into a dark cabinet along with Kara-Miss-Kara, whose hands were tightly tied by a committee of gentlemen, and the rope drawn tightly through to the back and sealed. In a few seconds a bell rang inside—no one can tell how—the curtain was drawn and out stepped the youth, with the sack under his arm and Kara-Miss-Kara still tied up in the cabinet. The little fellow looked quite as astonished as the audience; for whilst the cabinet was opened, he knew of no change in his situation and could not say how he had been







PATRIZIO'S TABLE LIFTING.



removed from the sack. The sack was examined and found uncut, with the seal unbroken. The breathless attention with which these proceedings were closely watched could only be accounted for by the feeling that if these were not veritable "Miracles" it was hard to believe that such marvels could be accomplished in "This world" by its ordinary inhabitants. Yet there were the manifestations patent to all beholders!"

The photographic reproduction on the opposite page shows Patrizio, his secretary and assistants in the above mentioned table lifting feat.

The Antigua Standard, printed in the city of St. John, in its issue of March 4th, 1885, gives, besides the usual account of the performances of D'Alvini and his troupe something concerning the richness of the stage drapings and the costumes of the performers. That paper declared the performances to be: "Novel and unique, and the encomiums of the Press in the British, French and Spanish West Indies, British Guiana, Brazils and Venezuela are not one bit too high in their testimony as to the merits of the Company. We can add little to the volume of Press comments that would be more descriptive and commendatory than what is written by our contemporaries. The execution of the artists was *par excellence*. The *tout ensemble* of the stage was rich with oriental hangings, and immediately impresses one favorably with those who are catering for the public. The Blue and Gold satin hangings, the ornamental tables and the elaborate and unique paraphernalia of a Japan-

ese conjurer, impresses one that something above the ordinary is to be seen. As the entertainment is superior to anything ever witnessed in the West Indies and is as attractive as anything of the kind produced elsewhere, ours would be indeed a very fastidious public if the entertainments failed to please. We are glad to say that we have not heard such unanimous praise given to any Company that has visited us, as that accorded to Mr. D'Alvini's Company. Our readers will remember the visit of Sr. Delinsky and how he charmed all who saw him; we can confidently assert that Mr. D'Alvini excels him, inasmuch as his tricks are done with little apparatus, being more sleight of hand than by mechanical aid. Miss Kara's illusions on both evenings were done with a grace and perfection that simply enchanted her audiences; and her beauty and rich dress formed no small attraction. The last part—Miss Kara's disappearance—caused considerable astonishment. Her dress on the first evening was Cerise colored tights and bodice, trimmed with Silver. Last evening her dress was Green and Gold. She enters and is asked by the "Jap of Japs" to stand on the table; he then takes a cone shaped covering, made of three barrel hoops covered with cloth, and puts it over Miss Kara, and after the usual maneouvers of Conjurers he removes the cone, and she is not to be seen."

The Demerara Chronicle, speaking of another member of the D'Alvini troupe in the course of a long article on the entire performance, said: "Sabertini, the man with an appetite for two-edged swords

and bayonets, had the third part in the programme to himself, and various were the conjectures indulged in with regard to his performance, which was capped by balancing a heavy carbine on his teeth by the tip of the bayonet, and then running the bayonet down his throat till the muzzle of the weapon seemed to rest on his lips. The "Jap of Japs" (Mr. D'Alvini) appeared in the final part assisted by Miss Kara, and Tom-o-Kitchi as the attendant sprite. D'Alvini was fearfully and wonderfully gotten up, in flowing-robcs, vari-colored and grotesquely figured, with a mitre-like headpiece. Miss Kara wore a splendid dress, rich in color and curious in style, and the stage was agreeably furnished with the elaborate and unique paraphernalia of a Japanese conjurer."

## CHAPTER XIV.

### D'ALVINI IN THE UNITED STATES.

The St. Louis Post-Dispatch printed a long illustrated article, concerning D'Alvini during his engagement in the city named, and from that is excerpted such things as bear upon D'Alvini's performances and incidents of his career not before mentioned in this biography. Under the heading "Wonderful D'Alvini" the Post-Dispatch said:

"D'Alvini, the juggler who has entertained the audiences at the Grand Opera house during the past week, has aroused an immense amount of curiosity by exhibiting a number of new tricks, which are totally unfamiliar, even to those who have seen the skill of the other noted magicians exhausted. His entertainment is unique, and many of his tricks are so entirely dissimilar to anything that has been seen before, that questions innumerable have been asked concerning them. He exhibits most marvelous training and the delicacy of his work, the deftness of his nimble fingers and the wonderful success of all his feats arouse curiosity that is not to be wondered at. Everything is done with so much ease and accuracy

that one often suspects that some hidden mechanism is the real magician, not D'Alvini. When one sees him roll an egg back and forward on an ebony cane, balance a tissue paper hat on a bamboo rod or toss an egg in the air and catch it on a china plate without cracking the shell, one's credulity is strained, no doubt, but D'Alvini performs those feats and there is no chicanery about them or him. But the trick that stretches curiosity to its utmost is what the magician calls "The Bow and Ball Trick."

He has a hickory bow about four feet in length and from end to end are stretched two whip-cords, parallel and about two inches apart. They are raised above the bow by bridges, something like violin bridges, which are placed at each end. He holds the bow at an angle of about 45 degrees and turns on one foot, keeping up a steady, continuous circular motion. He first places a red ball upon the strings. It remains at the bottom of the bow for a moment, then rises to the top, rests there and then rolls slowly down the strings and it stops wherever the magician wills it to stop. In the center, near the top or bottom, anywhere upon those strings that he may desire, it remains, resting only against, not on, the inclined strings. Then he adds another and finally a third ball, and they move according to his desires, seemingly of their own volition. They are gathered at the top, or held midway, or distributed over the strings in any way D'Alvini may wish. It certainly does seem that there must be some mechanism that governs these

wonderful balls, but D'Alvini performed the feat at a private exhibition, where the bow and balls were carefully examined, and they are simply what they appear to the audience in the theatre to be. The centrifugal force created by the circular movement is sufficiently strong to overcome the attraction of gravitation, which easily accounts for the motion of the balls in flying from the lower to the upper end of the bow, and the only explanation that can be given of his power to hold them wherever he wills is that he has acquired a mastery of the centrifugal force, and by his movements can make it stronger or weaker, or equal to a nicety to the force of gravitation. It took years of practice to accomplish the feat, as indeed, it did to master his other wonderful tricks, but when one has learned how long and earnestly he has labored in his calling one is not surprised at his proficiency."

In an interview printed in the Post-Dispatch, D'Alvini said something more concerning the East India fakirs that does not appear before in this work. Being asked what he thought of the East Indian magicians he declared as always, that they are over-rated, continuing he said: "Feats that are ascribed to skill and even sorcery are performed by him by drawing on the religious superstitions of his audience. While seated on the veranda of the hotel in Calcutta the morning after my arrival in India, a band of these mountebanks approached and gave their exhibition. That was my line of business and you may be assured that I kept my eyes wide open. I was disgusted.

Their basket trick is performed by the boy assistant, who is supposed to pass through the earth, but who is concealed in the flowing trousers of the juggler, hanging on to a belt which the latter wears about his waist. And their sacred trick, which is that of throwing sand into water and taking it out as dry as when it entered, is performed by first baking the earth in sulphuric acid and common white wax and again in ammonia. By that process the ball of sand is rendered impervious to the action of water and emerges as dry as tinder. The East originated jugglery, but the European and American have perfected the art."

In person D'Alvini was below the average height, thick set and strongly built with a marked Japanese cast of features though his hair was curly, something that never occurs on Japanese heads. He was quick in movement at all times but never nervous, notwithstanding he was an inveterate smoker of tobacco, a habit which he declared did not affect his sight or do him any other physical injury.

D'Alvini's first prominent engagement in the United States was with Professor Harry Kellar, at the Madison Street Theatre, Chicago, where he made a great hit; he remained with Kellar for about four months when an arrangement was made with the Kiralfys and afterwards was with Reilly & Woods Company where he was considered by many the best part of the show. The next season he went with Professor Alexander Herrmann. After making a tour of Mexico with him D'Alvini returned to Chicago to



spend his vacation. He had been home but a short time when he was taken ill with typhoid pneumonia and his death was hastened by an ulcer on the brain. He died Wednesday, July 3rd, 1891, and was buried in Oakwoods Cemetery.

## CHAPTER XV.

### REMINISCENCES OF D'ALVINI.

In the course of such a life as that of D'Alvini's it was natural that hundreds of strange, humorous, pathetic and extraordinary incidents should be crowded into it, especially since D'Alvini was an exceedingly eccentric man and quite queer in many ways.

Unfortunately, however, but very few of these outside incidents of his life, beyond those already told in these pages, have been preserved. Following however are a few that will be found quite interesting.

D'Alvini was a great practical joker and sometimes his pranks barely escaped producing serious results. As an illustration of this the following incident is related as it came from D'Alvini's lips. "While we were in Cheyenne, a short time ago, he said, a very funny incident occurred. In our magic performance we use a cabinet, and while the 'spiritual manifestations' are going on therein all the lights are turned off in the building. This evening two or three of us were feeling a little glum, and we

put our heads together and made up our minds that we'd do something to liven up the performance. In all conjuring shows, you know, there is a board walk from the stage down into the centre aisle of the auditorium. We call this the 'run-down.' Well, when this cabinet act was on two of us who were not engaged started out to have some sport. The lights were to be out only thirty seconds, and so we had no time to lose. As soon as the gas was turned out we skipped down the run-down and into the aisle. There we banged around lively among the spectators, hitting one a flat-hand clip on the face and then another, pulling their hair, bumping two men's heads together, and playing all such pranks, and as quick as lightning. Just before the lights were turned on we skipped back onto the stage and into the wings, and there stopped to watch the sport. As soon as the light came we saw that there was a great commotion in the house. Fifteen or twenty men were on their feet, and half a dozen were fighting with each other. One man had knocked his neighbor down under the seat, and another had his two hands in the hair of the man sitting next to him. Revolvers drawn, and it seemed that everybody was accusing everybody else of having taken advantage of the darkness to play mean tricks. It was ten minutes before we could get the house quieted."

The St. Joseph, Mo., Herald printed, while D'Alvini was there the following little humorous story:

"D'Alvini, the Wonderful juggler connected with

the Kellar combination, does a trick that is simply phenomenal. He takes a common china bowl and borrows a silver dollar from some one in the audience. He places this inside of the bowl, when the coin begins a revolution on the inside, laying out perpendicularly, and races around as though inspired. A young lady who attended the matinee and witnessed this great feat, turned to a lady friend, heaved a sigh, and said: "Oh, dear! I wish I could make a dollar go as far as that one."

Frequently in newspaper paragraphs concerning D'Alvini, fact and fiction became mixed in the most startling manner. The following from a New York daily is an instance in point:

D'Alvini, the juggler and prestidigitateur, now with the Reilly & Woods show, is not, as many suppose, an American made up. He is a Mohammedan Sheik and does not speak one word of our language. He, however, converses fluently in Italian, Russian and Greek, and is a talented man. His engagement with the company came about in a novel way. One of Barnum's agents saw his performance in Hindoostan and at once engaged him for the venerable showman's own show. D'Alvini, however, not liking "tent-life," quit the circus after a few weeks. One evening at a reception given by John Stetson at the Hoffman House, D'Alvini was engaged to amuse the invited guests. Pat. Reilly happened to be one of them as also did Tony Pastor. After witnessing his performance both were anxious to secure his services, but neither could speak a language understood by

D'Alvini. Reilly could converse fluently in Irish, Giberish, and United States, while Tony's run of language was constituted of Bainery English. Both hurried off to find an interpreter and Reilly secured one sooner than Pastor and had the contract signed when Tony appeared with his interpreter. Tony bid high for the man, but Pat. went him one better and got him."

Speaking of ridiculous accidents that sometimes happen to a magician's apparatus, that spoil the tricks, D'Alvini said once to a friend:

"Conjurers often have funny accidents happen to them. I was once working the dummy head, out of the top of which comes any card a spectator may call for. When the trick has been worked several times the conjurer makes the whole pack come out of the mouth. I had a new assistant to pull the strings, and I had just ordered him to produce the jack of spades which a gentleman wished to see when the cylinder got out of order and the whole pack flew out of the mouth. I saw a similar accident happen to another magician. He produced the cards behind a glass in a frame, and before he could ask for a card or explain what his trick was his man pulled the string and up flew the whole deck as in my case. He, however, turned it into another trick and passed off the *contrétemps* very nicely. One night my wife was doing a flower trick. The flower was made to grow by fanning the pot, apparently. The trick was worked by means of clock-work. She had just begun fanning it when, to my horror, I discovered

that I had forgotten to put in the flower. In the meantime the clock-work was fast running down. I told her in an 'aside' from the wings, and then brought in the flower in my handkerchief and by a sleight-of-hand trick dropped it into the pot. It was the clumsiest and most laughable thing I ever did. But there was nothing else to do. A friend of mine who travelled with me had a skeleton which was worked by means of electric wires, and did sums, etc., in the manner of Psycho. We were playing in Java when the great earthquake took place there. The atmospheric disturbances were so great as to destroy entirely the power of the battery, and the skeleton wouldn't answer a single question. Electricity was therefore abandoned and the trick done in the same way that Psycho is run. How is that? Oh, that's a professional secret."

It may be interesting to the riders of bicycles to-day, to be informed that so far back as 1884, Kara, who was Mrs. D'Alvini, had perfect control of the bicycle and not only rode it in all sorts of astonishing ways, but took little Tom-o-Kitchi on her shoulders and juggled him about as though he were a doll capable of working like an automaton.

The recent death of Mr. John A. Cockerill, the world-renowned journalist, lends additional interest to the following testimonial of Mr. D'Alvini's talents:

NEW YORK PRESS CLUB,

120 NASSAU STREET.

New York.

JULY 2, 1888.

DEAR SIR:—As President of the New York Press

Club, I desire to thank you, on behalf of that organization, for the services rendered by you in connection with the benefit given by Prof. Herrmann, at the Academy of Music recently. You were a valuable feature of the entertainment, and the New York Press Club will ever hold your services in grateful remembrance.

As President of that Organization, I take pleasure in commending you to the brethren throughout the country. ·      Very respectfully yours,

(Signed)

JOHN A. COCKERILL,  
*President N. Y. Press Club.*



## CHAPTER XVI.

### D'ALVINI'S PROGRAMMES—BEFORE THE FOOTLIGHTS —BEHIND THE SCENES.

The following is a copy of Mr. D'Alvini's Advertising Programme :

#### ORIENTAL AND JAPANESE REPRESENTATIONS OF D'ALVINI,

Who has had the honor, at their solicitation, of presenting his entertainments in the presence of:—The Mikado of Japan, The Royal Family in Windsor Castle, His Majesty the Emperor Napoleon, The Sultan in Constantinople, The Shah Eddin of Persia, The Viceroy of Egypt at Cairo, The Prince of Wales, The Duke of Edinburgh, The Czar of Russia.

Wherever the performances of Mr. D'Alvini have been produced they have received the highest encomiums and are acknowledged as being unequalled in their art. Among others he has appeared at the following prominent places, and has obtained everywhere the unstinted praise and interest of his audience.

## ENGAGEMENTS IN GERMANY.

Berlin, Walhalla Theatre, 9 months.

Leipsic, Schuetzenhaus, 1 Month.

Dresden, Victoria-Salon, 3 Months.

Breslau, Victoria Theatre, 10 days.

Hamburg, Saegebuehl-Sall, 17 days.

Munich, Kils Kolloosseum, 6 weeks.

## AUSTRIA.

Vienna, Danzer's Orpheum, 7 Months.

## RUSSIA.

St. Petersburg, Circus grand Ciniselli, 3 Months.

Moscow, Circus grand Ciniselli, 2 Months.

## FRANCE.

Paris, Eldorado, Folies Bergeres, Cirque d' Ete,  
7 Months.

I have also performed in Japan, The Indies,  
Africa, Spain, North, South and Central America.

## ENGLAND.

London: Aquarium Theatre,	Crystal Palace,
Alexander Palace,	Globe Theatre,
Alhambra Theatre,	Grecian Theatre,
Britannia Theatre,	Royal Aquarium.

## LONDON MUSIC HALLS.

Cambridge,	Oxford Pavilion,
Evans Supper,	Royal,
London Pavilion,	South London,
Lusbays,	South Palace,
Metropolitan,	Sun Knightsbridge.

And in all of the cities of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales.

## MR. D'ALVINI'S PROGRAMME.

(All feats are produced in the Japanese national costume.)

1. *Feats of Juggling*, presented by Mr. D'Alvini, using Bottles, Plates, Balls, Bullets, etc., etc., more than 20 original effects.
2. *Tommy the Wolf*. Transformation Scene, executed by Tom-O'Kitchi while balanced on Mr. D'Alvini's feet.
3. *Comical Juggling Act*, by Mr. D'Alvini.
4. *Exercises on the Suspended Bamboo*, or Bamboo Volante, Nepom Losick Pom, by Tschisei Kitchi.
5. *Non plus ultra*. Original production of Mr. D'Alvini. Grand balancing feat with square wooden blocks, nothing like it ever produced. Years of practice by a skillful performer necessary to produce this Jewel of Juggling Feats.
6. *Japanese Contortion*. On a pyramid of Japanese boxes by Tom O'Kitchi.
7. *The Japanese Tea Box*. The most effective magical feat of Mr. D'Alvini. Real Oriental Conjuring. Mr. D'Alvini in view of audience puts together a small square box composed of five parts, and immediately produces from it, a large number of handkerchiefs, flags, 600 yards of ribbon, balls, and a rabbit larger than the box itself.
8. *Chinese Breaking Ladder*. By Tom-O'Kitchi while balanced on Mr. D'Alvini's shoulder.

9. *The Flying Stars.* Indian Magical feat. From a small piece of tissue paper burned to ashes, Mr. D'Alvini will produce over 60 yards of ribbons, a number of candles, concluding with a fine display of fire-works and the instantaneous appearance of a large open umbrella.
10. *The Shah's Flower Garden.* Persian production of flowers, favorite of the Shah. Mr. D'Alvini.
11. *Japanese Mysteries.* Using fifty different objects, each feat complete in itself, each article balanced on plates, swords, cards, glasses, bottles, revolvers, &c., &c., by Mr. D'Alvini and Tom-O'Kitchi D'Alvini.
12. *Tom-O'Kitchi D'Alvini's* balancing act on the wire. Its like not seen before.

### BALANCING FEATS OF D'ALVINI.

NEW.

SENSATIONAL.

NOVEL.

13. *Lamp Pyramid.* 12 lighted petroleum lamps and two plates balanced on a chair.
14. *Balancing Pyramid of Chinese Cups.*
15. *Balancing Pyramid of Bottles and Glasses.*
16. *Balancing Pyramid of Swords and Doves.*
17. *Balancing Pyramid of Walking Sticks and Filled Glasses.* Mr. D'Alvini will further execute more than 30 balancing feats with all imaginable articles.
18. *Bamboo Perch* by Tom-O'Kitchi D'Alvini balanced on shoulders of Mr. D'Alvini.

19. *Special feat of Mr. D'Alvini*, not introduced by any other juggler. Extraordinary feat of juggling with three loaded revolvers.
20. *Expert Juggling* with Glass, Egg, and plate.
21. *Expert Juggling* with three fans and three balls.
22. *Very Comical Juggling Act* with large elastic ball.
23. *Tight Rope Ascension*, executed by Tom-O'Kitchi D'Alvini walking up the rope from the stage to the dome over 150 feet.
24. *D'Alvini's Album. Extraordinary Sensation.* Greeted with the greatest applause everywhere produced. Mr. D'Alvini shows an artist's portfolio empty, and after placing it on an ordinary table produces from it, ladies' bonnets, shopping bags, flower-pots, bouquets, four large trunks, live ducks, fowls, rabbits, doves, birds in large cages, &c., &c., and in conclusion Tom-O'Kitchi appears in the portfolio.
25. *Japanese Magical and Juggling Feats* with umbrellas, eggs, plates, hats, then five baskets with butterflies. Juggling with three balls on a Japanese violin bow. Chinese Oracle or the disappearance and reappearance of a live canary.

Mr. D'Alvini's programme consists of 150 different feats.

The following is the programme he used behind the scenes, exactly as written by himself for his own guidance.

## “JAP OF JAPS” JUGGLING PROGRAMME.

1. Wolf Screen. Special Number.
2. Small Screen on the feet. Special Number.
3. Breaking Ladder. Special Number.
4. Bamboo Shoulder Balancing. Special Number.
5. Tassel Trick.
6. Water Trick.
7. Small glass, stick and plate balancing.
8. Eight glass bottles, plate and lamp balancing.
9. Card and Sword balancing.
10. Pipes and Pigeons balancing.
11. Sword and dove balancing.
12. Eight lamps on chair balancing.
13. Large dish and stick.
14. Sword, bottle and glass.
15. Throwing ball, plate, ball, sword and bottle.
16. Large elastic ball.
17. Hand and plates.
18. Three balls up the string.
19. Paper hat.
20. Bottle and plate.
21. Sword and Saber.
22. Bottle and Stick.
23. Juggling basket.
24. Umbrella Spinning.
25. New Umbrella Spinning.
26. The bottle dislocation,—passing under the arm.
27. Top and Sword.
28. Top and String.
29. Top box.
30. Six Baskets.

31. Egg Stick.
32. Egg, hat and cigar.
33. Spinning bowls and basins on boards.
34. Candle and Candle stick juggling.
35. Two swinging balls with boy holding cards and corks.
36. Two knob stick juggling.
37. Revolver Juggling.
38. Spinning bottle on point of sword with plate on top.
39. Handkerchief spinning with stick.
40. Large top and small tops spinning.
41. Butterfly fanning.
42. Spinning tall hat on stick.
43. Juggling cannon ball, bottle, egg and plate.
44. Breaking a stick of wood on the edge of two glasses.
45. Cigaret paper balancing on hat.
46. Cigar box and glass.
47. Large glass and plate.
48. Money spinning in bowls.
49. Stick and glass swinging. Tom O'Kitchi.
50. Serpent trick.
51. Plate and pipes.
52. Plate, bottle and sword.
53. Plate, glass and stick.
54. Whip and two plates.
55. Juggling two billiard balls and tube.
56. Balancing pocket handkerchief.

## SPECIAL ILLUSIONS.

1. Ghost Show.



2. Shadow Pantomime.
3. Pantomime Diablo ; Kara, Jap and Tom.
4. Bending Act by Tom O'Kitchi.
5. High Wire Walking Act by Tom O'Kitchi.
6. Bamboo Swinging. Tom O'Kitchi.
7. Bicycle Act by Miss Kara.
8. Cabinet Rope-tying by Miss Kara.
9. Dancing Skeleton on Table.
10. Slate writing with two slates.
11. Panorama ; Dissolving Views.
12. Necromancy—Turning Tables—Miss Kara.

CONJURING NUMBERS OF MISS KARA AND "JAP OF JAPS,"

1. Fire-works trick.
2. Ribbon box with rabbits.
3. Kara, box with boy, paper and cage of doves.
4. Jam-pot with ribbons and bouquets.
5. Flower Vase. Kara.
6. Flower vase clock work.
7. Flying bird cage with canary.
8. Bird cage, vases passing one to the other.
9. Taking three blocks of wood and coat off of two strings.
10. Shooting bird from box to cage.
11. Flower from the hat, vase of flowers and rabbit.
12. Egg and handkerchief and glass passing the same.
13. Catching the egg in the mouth with handkerchief.
14. Dove and bouquet with hat.

15. Billiard balls trick.
16. Flags of all nations.
17. Candle and handkerchief, passing same from paper,
18. Watch in loaf of bread.
19. Tying handkerchiefs.
20. Album D'Alvini's.
21. Bottles and candle stick passing.
22. Flying handkerchiefs from bottles.
23. Oranges and money passing.
24. Card on point of sword.
25. Dove and rings in bottle shot from a pistol.
26. Passing ink and water.
27. Rings—joining.
28. Gloyes, large and small.
29. Passing cages and pigeon from box to box.
30. Japanese box with boy.
31. Indian box with Miss Kara.
32. Magic stick.
33. Money catching in the hat.
34. Bird cage produced from a vase of flowers, Kara.
35. Vanishing lady, Kara.
36. Dove pan.
37. The raising cards from glass box, tied to chair with stick.
38. Cutting handkerchief with money in center.
39. Bottle and handkerchiefs.
40. Borrowed handkerchiefs, white, made large and small, with printed card and afterwards passed to the center of an egg in center of a ring.

41. Three cards chosen by the public and afterwards placed in the pack and made to rise from the same.
42. A box shown empty and placed on the table. Then take a bird cage in cloth and vanish it. The box produces balls and then the bird cage.
43. Ribbons from an orange.
44. Passing wine from bottle to two glasses,—three paper covers.
45. A card chosen by the company and afterwards placed in the pack, and a pedestal placed on table, the card flying from pack to figure on pedestal.
46. A candle lighted by passing the hand over it.
47. Eggs produced from a borrowed handkerchief.
48. Lady's parasol trick. The two handkerchiefs torn and wrapped in a paper. Parasol wrapped up in a paper. The cover of parasol takes place of handkerchiefs, and handkerchiefs are found on parasol frame. Now burn pieces of handkerchiefs and find them in a box placed in the public, and parasol produced from a sheet of newspaper.
49. A book shown with blank leaves, and afterwards containing drawings of many kinds.
50. Paper eating with cigarettes, and afterwards producing many yards of paper and then a large candle.
51. Multiplying money. Money trick.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### PSYCHOLOGY OF THE ART OF CONJURING.

[By Dr. Max Dessoir, with special reference to the feats of mediums, by  
H. J. Burlingame]

I still remember how I felt when I saw the first magical performance. As soon as the doors were opened I took my seat and waited a full hour for the moment when the curtain would rise in front of this world of wonders. And when the performance began, when eggs changed to dollars, dollars to pocket-handkerchiefs, when bird cages disappeared in the air, and empty boxes held numerous presents, I felt as if I was living in a land of dreams, far away from the earth.

Now books without number from the cheap "sell" of a ten cent pamphlet, to a finely bound and fully illustrated edition, offer to initiate you into the mysteries of the black art. But all these books and directions, with but few exceptions, only say in what the trick consists, not how it is done, without regard to the fact that the most interesting tricks are kept secret by the adepts or only revealed in consideration of an extra high price. Apparatus and explanations do not reveal the "kernel" of modern magic. If you

know how a conjurer causes a dollar to disappear, you know nothing, and you will be deceived hundreds of times by this same trick; and if you practice it exactly according to directions, the chances are that you will have only mediocre success in performing it. What makes prestidigitation the art of deception, is not the technical outward appearance, but the psychological kernel. The ingenious use of certain soul faculties weighs incomparably heavier than all dexterity and machinery. To prove this fact and to analyze it theoretically is the task of this article. We must first however introduce the reader to the society with whose doings we wish to make him acquainted.

The history of jugglery forms an important part in the long history of human deception. The first period in which the production of seemingly impossible occurrences makes a claim to higher powers, reaches from the beginning of the Egyptian priesthood to the beginning of the middle ages. Followers of this seriously deceiving tendency are to be found in our days in the spiritualistic mediums. To a second period belong the jugglers of the middle ages and modern times, for they admit that everything is done in a natural way. The third period dates from the beginning of our century. For the first time, the conjurers appear on the stage, they are received in society, they exclude all jugglerism from their programmes, and work with cards, coins, handkerchiefs and other ordinary objects. Of course the jugglers did not disappear altogether, but they retired to the villages, and had nothing to do with the better class

of their professional brothers. Only occasionally was such a nomad heard from. One of them was Signor Castelli, who travelled through Europe in the '20s, going by wagon and using a portable stage. He attracted great attention by announcing his intention of devouring a living person at each performance. The solution of the riddle was that the rough fellow would invite a volunteer from the audience and having secured one, would begin by biting his neck which caused the subject to retire precipitately, making the execution of the trick impossible.

The conjurers of the better class were mostly French or Italian, and called themselves *physiciens* or *escamoteurs*. The name of prestidigitateur comes from Jules de Rovere. He belonged to the masters of that old school, to which belonged also Olivier, Prejean, Brazy, Comus, Chalons, Adrien pere, Courtois and Comte, not to mention Lichtenberg's famous Pinetti. The most important was undoubtedly Comte. A Frenchman from head to foot, he did most extraordinary things with rare taste and great amiability. All of his illusions, meant for small audiences, carry the impress of finest humor. For instance, he would assure his audience he was going to steal all the ladies present, the gentlemen were a little frightened and somewhat amused, Comte reassures them that he will do it to their satisfaction, he waves his hands in the air and produces a quantity of the most beautiful roses out of nothing. He continues: "I had promised to take away and meta-

morphose all these ladies, could I select a more graceful and pleasant form? In metamorphosing you all to roses, do I not offer the copy to the model? Don't I take you away to give you back to yourselves? Tell me gentlemen, did I not succeed?" Then he begins to divide the flowers among them; "Here, mademoiselle, is a rose you make blush with jealousy." In front of another pretty girl he changes the rose into an ace of hearts, and the gallant wizard says: "Will you please, madam, place your hand on your heart, you have only one heart? Am I not right? I beg your pardon for this indiscreet question, it was necessary, for though you have only one heart, you might have them all." Such gallantries are told about Comte by the hundred. An important progress in the development of the art was made by Philippe and Torrini. The latter especially possessed such extraordinary dexterity in handling cards and such an incredible boldness of execution that the audience was involuntarily carried away to admiration without suspicion. His piquet trick stands alone of its kind. In other respects he also showed admirable boldness. He was an Italian nobleman who had, by adverse circumstances, been driven to take the career of a conjurer, and once while staying in Rome, he was invited to give a performance before the pope. The day before, he happened to see in a jeweler's window a very valuable watch, which was said to be the only one in existence like the celebrated watch of the Cardinal X. This one had but just arrived the day before from Paris. After Torrini



had ascertained that the cardinal would be present at the performance he bought the chronometer for the respectable sum of twelve hundred francs, and made the watchmaker promise to keep silent about the matter.

At the close of his performance he asked for any very costly object, which if possible was the only one of its kind in the world. At the pope's order and with evident reluctance, the cardinal handed his watch to the artist. Torrini took a mortar and pestle and pounded the beautiful piece of mechanism into a thousand atoms, to the horror of the audience. The cardinal announced with a trembling voice that his watch had not been exchanged, as he could recognize it in the pieces. In reality the watch had been destroyed. He used this moment of general excitement to slip the genuine watch unobserved into the pocket of the pope's robe. As soon as quietness was restored, Torrini asked the audience to name a person who was sure not to be in secret understanding with him. As he expected, everybody pointed to Pius VII. "Very well, continued Torrini, making some mysterious motions, I want to reproduce the watch and it shall be found in the pocket of His Holiness." The pope immediately felt in his pocket with signs of incredulity and blushing with excitement took the watch from his pocket, which he handed to the cardinal in a great hurry as if he was afraid of it, or might burn his fingers with the mysterious thing. One can imagine what a sensation this caused in Rome. Torrini never repented this expensive but original advertisement.

A conjurer must be able to show a varied pedigree. On his mother's side he must be a direct descendant of the witch of Endor, on his father's side he must descend from the magician Merlin, he must have had Zornebogh and Sykorax for god-fathers and count Faust's witch among his cousins. In other words he must be born to his profession. The modern wizard must possess in a high degree the same quality as a physician. He must inspire confidence. The audience must believe him when he says he holds an orange in his left hand, even if it has passed long before into his right hand. The capability to win at the start the sympathy of the public, in order that the audience without exception is willing to follow the intentions of the artist, cannot be acquired, and yet the chief help of the prestidigitateur lies in just this mood of the public. It is not by dexterity alone that he accomplishes his wonders. The word prestidigitation is not well chosen. A good conjurer makes the uninitiated believe that he does everything so skillfully and rapidly that you cannot be deceived. In reality however he makes the necessary motions with great calmness and slowness. The perfection lies in the art to influence the spectator to such an extent that he could do anything before his eyes without its being noticed. An expert must of course have a natural talent for this second requirement of his profession. We see many amateurs who could have achieved good results if they only had not had the foolish vanity to boast of their "dexterity." The charm of this art does not lie in the power to surprise

the spectator with ape like rapidity, but in the capability of making him go home with the feeling that he has spent an hour in a real world of wonders. The last effect is, from an aesthetic point of view much higher than the first, and raises prestidigitation above the level of jugglery. The reason for this is that persons from the best circles of society, take to conjuring without hesitation, but would never think of producing juggling tricks. The caution for less haste has another reason. The audience needs time to see the movements and understand their meaning. If for instance in some transformation, the second phase takes place without the first being properly announced, say; if in the changing of an orange into an apple nobody noticed that the first object was really an orange the whole trick is of course a failure. Therefore the real conjurer must have that perfect repose which is not given to everybody. Besides a presence which inspires confidence and an imposing address he must have the faculty to surround himself with a magical atmosphere in which the spectators believe the most incredible things possible and take the most simple as wonderful. In this direction lies the psychological importance of many little devices which the practical man generally uses. For instance he does not ask for the needed dollar, but charms it out of the nose of some stranger. He does not put his gloves in the pockets like ordinary beings, but rubs them away between his hands. At last the spectator does not know how to get out of such a labyrinth of witchcraft, and is in a frame of mind which makes

the conjurer's task an easy one. The main secret of all prestidigitateurs, however, lies in the power to direct the thoughts of the audience into such a groove that a solution of the trick seems for the moment the natural result of the artificially underlying causes. The public must think the card has been transformed by a breath; in this way following the train of thoughts which has been suggested by the conjurer in all possible ways. Then reason turns up and says: It is impossible that a breath can transform an ace of hearts into a jack of spades, and from this logical contradiction of two simultaneous ideas, results the unpleasant consciousness of illusion. Self consciousness is the subjective condition of this psychological foundation of the conjurer's art. From the moment he takes the cards in his hands the artist must believe firmly that he can do as he pleases. Every expression must fall from his mouth as though it was a real magic sentence, and his own false assertions must seem truth to himself. Only he who is convinced convinces. Much depends on the skillful grouping of the trick. In this way a comparatively simple trick can be used profitably as a pedagogic preparation for a greater wonder, and thought connections can be produced which are very favorable to the success of the experiments. The most important in the art of performing however is the language and the gestures. No rules can be given but perhaps an example can explain what is required. Let us take for instance the vanishing of a dollar. Directions say: Take the dollar between the thumb and middle

finger of the left hand, take hold of it seemingly with the right hand which is then immediately closed, then you open it and show it empty to the audience against their expectations. The whole trick consists in dropping the dollar into the palm of the left hand where it remains concealed. This is done at the moment you pretend to take hold of it with the right hand. One should see this simple trick performed by some first-class artist like Prof. Rouclere. He takes the dollar and throws it repeatedly on the wooden table top, to prove as he says, that it is a genuine dollar. In reality he gives every one the impression that a thing which makes so much noise cannot disappear noiselessly, an impression which increases the effect of the trick. Then the clear vibrating sound confuses the spectators to such a degree that they follow further developments in a sleepy condition. He then takes the coin in his left hand, looks closely at the right hand, as if it were the most important, and takes hold of the dollar. This trick is so convincing that you would be willing to swear the right hand held the coin, the position of the fingers adapts them naturally to this supposition. As soon as he has taken hold he moves his right hand sideways, away from the left hand, the whole body follows the movement, the head bent forward, the look in his eyes, everything forces the spectator to follow this hand. In the meantime the two first fingers of the left hand point to the right hand, while the two other fingers hold the coin which is covered by the thumb. By such shading and par-

ticularly by the constant talking of the artist the whole attention is concentrated on the right hand, and everybody makes up his mind to pay close attention, to see how the dollar will disappear from this hand. He makes little backward movements with the fingers, by which they move gradually away from the palm of the hand, and apparently deeply interested in the phenomenon, he says, "see how the dollar grows smaller and smaller, there, it has disappeared entirely, melted away." He opens the fingers wide, straightens himself up, and the sparkling eyes seem to say, "how queer that disappeared, it is strange!"

How can one be educated to become such a wizard? the reader will ask. First of all practice, practice constantly. You go from the simple tricks to the more difficult ones by practicing first the single part, then the whole. This first stage which can be learned from teachers and books, contains but few psychologically important elements. As soon as the technical side of a trick is mastered to perfection the student must turn to the dramatic, which is the most important as far as the effect is concerned. Hence in order to acquire the greatest possible naturalness it is better to practice in front of a mirror. In doing so the conjurer must do really what he later on only pretends to do. He must observe closely the positions and motions of his hands, and imitate them with great accuracy, that there may be no difference between reality and illusion.

First of all he must become accustomed to following with his eyes the hand which seems to hold the



object, as it is the surest means to draw the attention of the audience in the same direction. From the preceding we can see that touch and sight are the most important senses in the execution of our art. Methodical cultivation is the chief object of the studious prestidigitateur. It is a good plan to practice the juggler's art in order to learn the accommodation of motion. In researches in so-called Myology we have had much to do with jugglers, and must admit that the fine sensibility of these people for the slightest vacillation of balance and the adaptation of their movements are almost incredible. A Japanese performer juggled once four differently weighted balls in the air, and at same time read aloud from an English paper; he must therefore calculate exactly what motions to make with his hands, though his eyes and attention were occupied in another direction. The French conjurer Cazeneuve possesses an equally wonderful sensibility of touch. He is able to take from the top of a pack of cards, by placing his fingers at the ends of the cards, any number he wishes at one grasp. You ask for six cards, he takes the cards off and gives you exactly six, without stopping to look at or count them himself. You ask for twenty, he does the same, thirteen, thirty, twenty-four, always the same success. What fabulous sensibility is necessary for these slight differences in height can best be learned by trying the same experiment. Houdin gives important hints for the development of sight. He had always admired in pianists the capability of looking over a large number of black dots; he saw that this



appreciative observation could be carried further if based on intelligence and memory. He began a series of exercises which can be explained in a few words. Nearly all normal persons can give the number of a few objects at a glance, mostly five. Whether there are three, four or five coins lying together, one can see without thinking but as the number increases a little reflection is necessary. Houdin with his son Emil undertook to cultivate their perceptions to such a degree that they could calculate the number of domino stones which were taken at random from a set. After some weeks' practice the maximum had reached 12. Now he changed the experiments to include objects of different kinds. For this purpose they took daily walks through the streets together, when they came to a show window filled with different articles, they looked in attentively, then walking away stopped after going a few steps, and made notes of the objects they had seen in that short time. At first they only saw four or five distinctly, in a few months they had carried it to thirty, the little one even sometimes to forty. With the help of this abnormal power of perception, Houdin was enabled to do most of his brilliant tricks, among others the experiment called "Second Sight." Now-a-days we can easily explain this so-called Second Sight, which in the '40's and '50's attracted the attention of the whole civilized world. The father collected on a table a number of objects, say twenty, and turns around for half a minute in such a way that the boy could see them, then he was able to tell the number of objects and describe

them, what is missing could be helped out by an ingenious code of signals. This was specially used when the articles were wrapped up. In this case Houdin would draw the giver into a short conversation, using the time to bore a little hole in the wrapping paper with his thumb nail which he kept sharp for that purpose, and to examine the contents with the eagle eye of the former mechanic. It is astonishing to hear that experiments were made in this way are almost wonders. We are also told that he profited by his studies in another direction. This practicing had given him the faculty of following simultaneously two different ideas or things, he would think of what he was doing and what he was saying, two very different things with the conjurer. It is a very important thing for the artist to make the play of his hands quite independent of the motions of his body, and to perform the trick without moving the parts of the body not in use. The fingers must form a mechanism for themselves, which work quite independently. Only then is the conjurer able to observe the faces of the spectators with sufficient care to avoid threatening dangers. So armed he will be invincible. The practiced artist never fails in his tricks. The facility of execution is the only thing that depends in a certain way on the public. The ignorant are more difficult to deceive than the educated. The former sees in every "tour" a mistrust in his intelligence, an attempt to dupe him, against which he fights with all his might, while the latter gives himself up willingly to the illusion as he came

for the purpose of being deceived. But it is almost incredible what naivete the best educated often display. We have seen a professor who when speaking of the well known linking ring trick, swore high and low that he had examined all eight rings, though in reality he had held but two in his hands. The explanation for this lies in the two elementary functions of our psychological organism; association and imitation.

The laws of representative reproduction are the leading points for the mechanic of consciousness. (thoughtful mechanic?) Modern psychology teaches that when representation A, has been simultaneous with representation B, or followed it immediately, it has a tendency to return to consciousness as soon as A returns. It is then said that B is associated to A. The sight of a knife handle awakens in you immediately the idea the blade always seen with it, and the flash of lightning always produces the expectation of a thunderbolt. The simplest type of deception consists in that certain expectations are not fulfilled by unusual outward circumstances. When I can feel with crossed fingers more than one round object, where there is only one I can only be convinced by seeing that I have only one sphere. The experience made a thousand times that what is felt double is also double produces in this case an illusion. It happens sometimes when you are travelling that early in the morning you lift your water pitcher in such a manner that it almost flies up to the ceiling, the reason is the carelessness of the chambermaid, who has forgotten to fill the pitcher.

The weight of the pitcher and the required exertion are associated together in a peculiar way. The reader has surely already seen the puzzling trick of breaking several borrowed rings and loading them in a pistol, which is then fired at a box, from which is taken half a dozen others in the innermost of which are found the rings. Without stopping to explain the first part of this trick we shall examine the second part. The artist places a large box on the table, he unlocks and opens it, in it is found a smaller box which is taken out, opened and found to contain a third box. When the conjurer has shown to the public that 2 came out of 1, and 3 out of 2, he can easily take the last and smallest box from the ledge of the table in such a manner as if it came out of the next largest box. The observer is fully convinced of the truth by the reality of the first circumstances and never doubts that 4 came out of 3. The psychological foundation of deception lies in the ingenious use of the usual association. The taking of a box, and the taking of this box out of another box are two representations, between which the cleverness of the conjurer has artificially drawn a close connection. The spectator is led to draw a logically correct conclusion from two first causes, also in the third case, where the suppositions do not take place as in the first and second cases. We have herein a new principle in conjuring. It is first, to really do that which you want the observer to believe you have done. In fact this rule is often followed in reality: First, the artist really throws a few dollars into the hat before

he prevents the others by palming, from following their predecessors; he actually places one card on the second pack, before he slides the other four into his sleeve. The disappearing of an orange in the air is a classical illustration of this fact. You sit at the head of a table, throw an orange about two feet high, catch it with one hand and drop this hand below the table top as you do so, the orange is again thrown up, and this time about 4 feet, it is again caught and again the hand goes down below the table for a third throw, but the orange this time is dropped on your lap and without a moment's hesitation the third throwing motion is made. Nine-tenths of the public see the orange disappear in the air. In this simple and instructive experiment there is no covering as in the trick of passing the coins into a hat mentioned above, and there is no apparatus as in the trick with the boxes. Everything depends on the subjective conditions of deception not on any outward means. Some small tricks are to be understood in the sense of psychological measures. Suppose that a coin left in the right hand passed seemingly into the left hand. If the conjurer would open the left hand immediately and show that the coin was not in it, the spectator would easily find the proper explanation, namely that the dollar never passed into the left hand. But if he waits one or two moments before he shows the hand open in order that the spectators get used to the thought that it holds the coin, and if he rubs the palm of the left hand gently with the right hand, he not only gives the latter a proper occupation but also

gives the spectators an impression that the mysterious movement of the right hand is in some way the cause of the disappearance of the coin. One must experience how such trifles can deceive sharp and competent observers. The spectator knows in the abstract very well that the rubbing of the palm with the fingers of the other hand is no adequate reason for the disappearance of the coin, but as the disappearance is beyond a doubt, the mind involuntarily accepts the explanations offered indirectly.

The really senseless "ruffling" of cards works in the same way. Suppose the case that the conjurer puts a certain card in a certain place in the pack necessary for the trick without the spectator being aware of it. First he shows that everything is in its proper place, he ruffles the cards and most spectators believe that the transposition took place in that moment and will understand less about the trick than they would otherwise. This last trick can be counted among those belonging to the category of diversion of attention. By awakening interest for some unimportant detail the conjurer concentrates the attention on some false point, or negatively, diverts it from the main object, and we all know the senses of an inattentive person are pretty dull. The pickpocket is psychologist enough to select theatres and exhibitions for the field of his exploits, because he is sure that in such places people pay little attention to watch and pocketbook. Just so the conjurer never reveals in advance the full nature of a trick, that the spectator may not know where to center his attention.



The French conjurer Decremps gave a similar rule. When causing the disappearance of some object the conjurer counts one, two, three, the object must really disappear before three, not at three, because the attention of the public being directed to three, they do not notice what happens at one or two. Personally we have often wondered at our own unpretentious performances before friends how men of deep research can be so blind to what takes place before their eyes. The course of thought of the uninitiated never goes the natural way. He cannot imagine that the conjurer works with such simple means and such boldness. He looks for the most complicated hypothesis, or leads everything back to a favorite performance, as for instance, the disappearing of the object up the coat sleeve, which is very seldom used in practice. But no matter what he does it will always be possible to divert him for the moment so that the coup can be made unnoticed.

A specially successful method of diversion is founded on the human craze for imitation. We are inclined to imitate all actions we have witnessed. If we see somebody yawn, we yawn also, if we see him laugh, we feel a tickling in the corners of our mouth, if we see him turn around we have the same wish, if he look upwards we do the same. The conjurer counts on this in many cases. He always looks in the direction where he wants the attention of the public, and does everything himself which he wants the public to do. If he looks pensively at the ceiling, the heads of all present turn with an audible



movement upwards, and it is a funny sight during this to see how the fingers exchange cards quietly or perform some other manipulations. If the trick is in the left hand the conjurer turns sharply to the person to his right presuming correctly that the spectators will make the same movement and will not notice what is going on in the left hand. In a great number of tricks he must bring a card to the top of the pack that has been placed in the middle of the pack. Naturally it would be wrong to make the necessary movement as soon as he has the card, because even the quickest and most skillful execution would be noticed by the spectators. On the contrary the conjurer holds the pack quietly and after a short pause asks the one who drew the card: "You are sure you will recognize the card again?" As soon as he begins to speak everybody will involuntarily look at his face and he can then "make the pass" in an easy manner. Every sharp short remark will for a moment at least divert the eyes from the hands and direct them to the mouth, according to the above mentioned law of imitation.

Enough of the results of theoretical research for the practice of magic. The relations to scientific psychology are numerous and varied. Let us look at the series of experiments by Houdin which treated on a momentary perception and counting of different objects. These objects deserve attention because they show a new way to class the higher actions of the soul-life numeratively. Psycho-Physics has confined itself till now to the lower psychical functions

of the senses with the reaction in motions or judgments. Mr. Ebbinghaus some years ago began to put down complicated processes in numbers. This searcher examines how many words or syllables a person can remember, after hearing them once, further how often he must repeat a certain number of words to know them, how often he must repeat the same process after a few hours or a few days and what practice has to do with it. The same thought underlies Houdin's series. It treats of the slowly acquired faculty of giving the number of objects after looking at them once without any conscious addition, in other words it treats of that peculiar faculty of developed beings which can be called unconscious counting. According to the French conjurer and to the occasional communications of Mr. Preyer and others, the limit of a momentary calculation lies between 5 and 6, and that would correspond with the limit beyond which we cannot remember one syllable words by hearing them only once. This shows a new possibility which deserves consideration, to put the mystery of our inner life in numbers and dates. When besides the number a description of the object is asked for, the task is complicated in a way which makes the solution much more difficult. Then the "interest" comes into play. A lady who can scarcely remember four equal objects at once can describe accurately the toilet of a lady who passed her in a carriage. Therefore the psychologist will be able to do but little with Houdin's second series. The trick to make an orange disappear in the air,

looks at first to be a positive hallucination. We mention the peculiar fact that even in quite normal persons artificial representations can be produced which have the character of outwardly induced perceptions, without there being anything in reality to bring them forth. The apparition however requires first a preceding attraction of the senses which removes it from hallucinations and brings it near to the so-called perception of repetition, and secondly there is no outward attraction. There is no object flying up as substitute for the false conception of the orange, but only a motion. But the impression on the senses made by the motion is sufficient to produce the repeated picture of the associated object. We have to deal with an illusion, the subjective interpolating of a given object of perception. Mentally and physically healthy persons have illusions, especially when fear or other effects excite the imagination. Those who understand hypnotism know that the concentration of all soul faculties on one certain effect will produce this effect subjectively. Whilst there are no positive hallucinations to be found in the realm of deception, there are enough negative hallucinations. A positive hallucination makes you see something which does not exist, a negative causes you to see where there is something. Who has not happened to look for an object which was right before his eyes? The impression on the senses exists, is received, but not taken into consciousness, and in this way a momentary condition of soul-blindness is produced in which negative

hallucinations are possible. The conjurer produces artificially such abstractions and uses them systematically for his purposes. Mr. Moll says very correctly that "the perception of objects can be prevented in hypnotized people by suggestion." Look at the conjurer's hands and pay close attention, and you will see how he conceals objects, makes the pass, and how he exchanges cards right before the eyes of the spectators. The conjurer however knows how to attract the attention by adroit speeches, so that even those who see the hands are not able to explain the transactions. The exchange of cards for instance is seen by the spectator, the sense is excited, but it does not touch consciousness. We can go further yet in citing analogies between the psychology of hypnotism and of prestidigitation than Moll has done.

In conclusion we will mention a contribution which magic gives us for the compression of free will. The well known trick of having a card drawn from a pack and to correctly name the card immediately, consists in that the spectator believes he is choosing one himself, while the conjurer confines the will and forces it into a certain direction, mostly by putting the card to be selected in an easy place, or by moving it forward at the moment when the fingers of the person reach for it. There is probably no better illustration for the determination of all of our actions; and in playing the cards of the game of life, we do not seize haphazard any card but select those which some known law prescribes for us.

“Spiritualism is magic.” You often hear this explanation made by those who do not know, and a number of harmless fellows try to prove it by “anti-spiritualistic demonstrations.” The kernel of the thing is not reached thereby as is proved by the ever increasing number of the followers of the new doctrine, and by the number of scholars who persist in the defence of mediumistic facts notwithstanding all exposures.

The principal reason seems to be the following: In our age of natural science, religion and philosophy do not offer the masses support enough to gain clearness about the problem of life. Still the metaphysical need of all deeper minds drives them over the materialistic desert; spiritualism in the armour of exact science steps in and says: I will prove to you, that there is a life after death. Can it be wondered at that such experimental ethics find a loud echo in thoughtful people, and that a social stir takes the place of the seeds of those beliefs which have existed at all times and with all nations?

The circumspect science is powerless against such streams. He who believes with all his heart in spiritualism cannot be convinced by reasoning; logic always succumbs to feeling and humors. It will therefore be useless to throw a few drops of water into the fire of psychological epidemic.

Side by side with the fanatics of the spirit belief are many who consider it their duty to examine in an unprejudiced mind all remarkable reports and all phenomena. For those only are meant the following

remarks as a sort of application of the foregoing explanations.

We owe our knowledge of mediumistic apparitions almost without exception to written reports. In other words : we never know what has happened somewhere, but only what certain persons believe to have experienced.

There is a great difference between the two, as we have seen. A person sees an orange disappear in the air, without being able to explain the wonder ; he believes to have examined eight rings, while he only had two in his hands ; he believes to have drawn a card according to his own free will, while it was put in his fingers ; he believes to have held an object continually while it was in quite a different place for some minutes. When later on he describes these tricks to a third person the latter considers them incomprehensible. It is extremely naive when the reporters maintain to render exactly the objective transactions in describing their subjective observations.

Davy's experiments are a proof of the reverse. This gentleman who is a member of the London Society for Psychical Research and was a prestidigitateur from inclination, acquired by constant practice such a perfection in the well known slate writing, that he gave successful performances before numerous people. He never told the guests that he had communications from the spirits, nor that it was magic, he let everyone think whatever he pleased. After the seance, which was given free of charge, Mr. Davey requested those present to send him on the following day their



impressions in writing. He published the letters received which sound so extraordinary that one could believe in secret forces.

Writing on slates which were closed and kept carefully secluded; writing on slates which were pressed by the witnesses against the lower surface of the table or held by them near the table; answers to questions which were written secretly in double slates; correct quotations from books which had been chosen at random by other witnesses, sometimes only in thought, when the books were not even touched by the medium and the slates carefully watched; messages in different languages unknown to the medium.

Although self-writing pieces of slate pencil were heard and moving pieces of chalk were seen, none of the spectators saw the most interesting phenomenon, namely, the writing of Mr. Davey.

The sources from which come such exaggerated reports can be classed in four groups. First: the observer interpolates a fact which did not occur, but which he has been forced to believe to have occurred, he imagines he has examined the slate, when in fact he has not. Second: he confuses two like ideas; he says he has examined the slates thoroughly when in reality he only did it superficially or without knowledge of the main points. Third: the witness changes the order of events according to a very easy deception of memory. In his opinion he examined the slates much later than he really did. Fourth and last; he overlooks certain details which he has been



purposely told were of no consequence, he does not mention that the medium asked him once to close the window, by which the trick was made possible. You cannot remember everything much less write it down. How difficult it is to write in unobjectionable completeness an every day occurrence, how much more difficult to describe an event which bears the character of the inexplicable and which by its skipping appearance makes a constant observation almost impossible.

Added to this, most people go to the seances expecting wonders. Mr. Davey has proved by experiments that of equally able spectators, those are better capable of seeing through the *modus operandi* who know that magic is at work. It is easy to understand how expectancy, the charm of mystery and the crude illusions to the most sacred affairs of the heart (by citing dead relations) must excite the nerves and impair the sharp eye. Besides the medium is specially careful to leave the audience in doubt as to the interpretation of what has been seen and heard and this psychical condition of the spectators holds the key for many otherwise inexplicable events. Every rustling passes for a rap, every light reflection for a spirit form, every accidental touch for the manifestation from higher spheres. The spectator overlooks the natural, physical explanation on one side and on the other creates wonders out of nothing. He infects others with his excitement and is in his turn influenced by them.

The same form which is recognized by a spectator

in cold blood as the skillfully draped figure of the medium, is taken by the audience as the faithful image of different persons who in their lifetime had no resemblance whatever.

An American naturalist tells us he had to put his hands to his head when he heard the same puppet addressed as "grandmother," "my sweet Betty," "papa," "little Rob." Everybody sees what he expects to see, and what touches his interests most closely. Create a belief and the facts will come of themselves.

When an object disappears or changes its place, the spiritualist sees in the fact a sign of supernatural influence, like the Papuan who suspects a spirit behind every cannon-ball. Because he does not know powder, he lacks certain knowledge without which it is impossible to judge rightly.

Common sense alone does not entitle a person to judge competently of the safety of fetters, only the man who is familiar with the technic of knots and the different ways of tying can express an opinion. To decide whether a closure is right or not, requires technical knowledge. Most people imagine that they can go unprepared to a spiritualistic seance and pass a correct opinion on the existence or non-existence of prestidigitation. This standpoint is as childish as when a layman expresses himself on the genuineness of the seal of the middle-ages or on the nature of a nervous affection.

Let us explain this with an example.

The conjurer often uses the trick to make an oc-

currence of greater importance by referring it to a heterogeneal bearer. The trick to make "any watch a repeater," consists in that a little watch carried in the pocket makes the sound and the manipulations with the watch are only made apparently. Those who do not know this, will hardly think that the harmonica of Monk and Home, played by invisible hands can be explained in the same way. A constant number in Dr. Monk's program was to put a musical box on the table, to cover it with a cigar box and to make it play and stop as desired. General explanation: "Spirits." In reality the sounds proceeded from a musical box, which concealed by the wide trousers was carried above the knee and set in motion by being pressed against the table. Here also the old psychological rule proves true: the simpler a trick, the harder it is to find it out.

A great advantage for the deceiving medium lies in the fact that he makes "conditions for his success," and at the worst gets the blame of a failure on the audience or on the spirits. We hear that half-darkness is very advantageous, because it is 'positive,' that we must never look where something is in its development, and other nice things. Mrs. Sidgwick, the wife of the well known Cambridge professor of philosophy and president of the Society for Psychical Research counts five reasons for doubt in Slade's performances: his efforts to divert attention, his position which always allows him to manipulate the slate with his right hand, the vague character of his communications, the limitation of the spectators to two

or three and the way he places them, which excludes all possibility of their looking under the table.

She might have added, that according to the observation of Seybert's commission Slade and other mediums, with the genuine conjurer's craftiness, perform the tricks before they announce what is going to happen.

To the accomplished magician and conjurer it is comparatively easy to explain the smallest fractions of spiritualistic experiences through the psychology of magic. I mean to say that they can be traced to deceitful manipulations, and to the use of known means. In reaching this conclusion, diametrically opposite to that of Dr. Dessoir, I am not only expressing my own opinion but also that of many persons of many years experience in spiritualistic circles.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### BELLACHINI.

Bellachini probably the most popular of modern German conjurers, was born on the 5th of May, 1828, at Ligotta, in Russian Poland. He was the son of a hotel-keeper named Berlach. During the first thirty years of his life he led a nomadic existence passing through many adventures and visiting many countries, which seems to be the lot of all conjurers. According to what he himself said, he did not think much of school when he was a boy and it was a hard matter to keep him engaged for any length of time in any one occupation; he tried to learn several trades and confesses he remained longer at the carpenter and joiner's trades than he did at anything else, but he did not show much taste for this, and hence to use his own words "devoted himself to conjuring," which he took up in a very adventurous manner.

His father at last finding he could do nothing with him in their little country village, gave him \$10.00 and started him on the way to America, where he finally arrived after shipping as cabin-boy on a vessel from London.

It seems the young adventurer was not pleased with America, because he soon stowed himself away

on board a steam-ship bound for Lisbon; arriving there he at once started to walk the long distance to his home. On the way he fell in with a band of gypsies with whom he traveled about for a long time.

It was during this vagabond existence that the nimble fingered young man developed the tricks, which in later years stood him in such good stead and conduced so much towards his success in the profession of which he became a master.

It was at this time that he formed the idea of becoming a professional conjurer.

He commenced his conjuring performances in a very modest manner, introducing his simple tricks at fairs to the intense astonishment of the simple minded natives who always flock in great numbers to these annual festivals.

In Kalitsch he fortunately made the acquaintance of a merchant who supplied him with sufficient means to purchase a proper outfit of conjuring apparatus, with which he could give performances in higher circles. From this time on he made rapid progress and in a short time he had laid by a handsome sum, all made, as he so frequently expressed, "by nimble fingers alone without any visible apparatus."

He married the daughter of a very prominent physician and changed his common name of Berlach into the high-sounding name of Bellachini. Under this name he became known through entire Europe. Although he made a few tours in foreign countries he passed most of his time in Germany, where he succeeded in making both fame and fortune.

He received many decorations and was highly honored. His manner was exceedingly jovial and he was known far and wide for charity, and thoroughly understood how to enliven interest in the Art of Conjuring, which he brought to the front and made exceedingly popular in all circles.

He confined himself strictly to Magical performances, always investing in the latest and best tricks and apparatus.

He neither knew nor made use of any anti-spiritualistic tricks, so often introduced by English and American conjurers, and although he made a success with the tricks he purchased and used, there were many tricks which when first shown to him he could not fathom. It was therefore easy for some spiritualists in Berlin who called him in as an expert to witness their tests, to secure from him a statement that such things could not be accomplished by conjuring. But a few years later it was shown that these spiritualistic feats were nothing else than clever conjuring.

Hundreds of anecdotes are told about him, most of which relate to his peculiar language, for instance, it is related that while giving a performance in a palace in the presence of Counts, Princess' and high dignitaries, he asked, "if anyone present happened to have a clean handkerchief?" nobody could take offense at his manner, but on the contrary looked at it as a humorous accompaniment of his trick.

It is generally well known how he came to be appointed Court Performer; he was giving a perform-



ance in the presence of Emperor William the 1st, in the Royal Palace; after showing the Emperor several tricks in sleight of hand, Bellachini handed the Emperor a pen and requested him to write the words, "Bellachini knows nothing," the Emperor tried to write, but the pen refused to do its duty, whereupon Bellachini said: "Write, Bellachini is Court Artist," which the Emperor did, this time the pen obeyed, and the Emperor added smiling: "A German Emperor always keeps his word, especially what he has written."

Bellachini suffered an attack of apoplexy in 1882, from which he soon recovered and said in a joking manner, that he had "conjured the pain away." This attack, however, so weakened his hands, that he was unable to execute his best effects and in 1883 he lost his favorite son, whose death was caused by the premature explosion of a pistol. Bellachini failed rapidly after this and soon suffered the final stroke that carried him off quickly, on the 25th of January 1885.

A very attractive number in a magicians programme is any comical trick with eggs and the following description of Bellachini's famous egg trick will no doubt prove interesting to the reader.

In the best days of Bellachini's professional career he introduced this trick every evening in his programme and always created much amusement with it. One of Bellachini's assistants stood near the back of the stage a little to one side, apparently awaiting his commands, finally Bellachini would cause an egg to disappear only to reappear in the mouth of this as-

sistant, who seemed to be resting carelessly with both hands behind him. He however, held three fresh eggs in each hand and in his mouth was concealed a hard boiled egg from which the shell had been removed; this was a necessary precaution, because having to hold the egg for some time in his mouth, he might find it necessary to cough or might laugh at some trick of Bellachini's which would be a dangerous thing to do if he had a fresh egg in his mouth; should such a catastrophe occur he could at once swallow the boiled egg. When Bellachini had caused an egg to disappear at the end of some trick he would walk over to his assistant to find the missing egg in his mouth, and taking a position at his side he would strike or press him on his stomach with the left hand, at the same time pressing his right against the assistant's back, when the latter would open his mouth and allow the egg therein to protrude a little. Meantime Bellachini had taken with his right hand an egg from the assistants hand and just at the moment when he opened his mouth to show the egg, Bellachini would bring his right hand holding the palmed egg directly up in front of the assistants mouth, the latter would at once allow the boiled egg to slip back into his mouth and Bellachini would shove the egg concealed in his hand a slight distance into the mouth of assistant, and at once open his hand, thus apparently taking the egg from the assistants mouth. Placing the egg on a plate he would push up both sleeves, show both hands empty, and then repeat the trick as many times as there were eggs in the

assistants hands. Occasionally Bellachini would turn the assistant around with his back to the audience to show that he had nothing concealed in his hands, of course, this was previously understood and before being turned around the assistant would put whatever eggs he held in his hands in his coat-tail pockets and allow his hands to drop for a few moments at his side, as soon as he took the first position again he would immediately take the eggs out of his pockets to enable Bellachini to proceed with the trick as before. While this was going on Bellachini's second assistant, a colored boy, would walk on the other side of the stage bringing a plate upon which Bellachini would place the eggs produced from the first assistants mouth, then placing the plate on the table and looking sharply at the colored assistant Bellachini would strike him back of the head and take from his mouth a black or brown egg. After producing an egg from first one and than the other he would in conclusion produce a black egg from the mouth of his first assistant and a white egg from the colored boys mouth, by thus changing about he would create much laughter and a great deal of amusement.

In this trick Bellachini has had many imitators, but very few have executed it with the skill and laugh-creating powers which he possessed.

A comical feature of this egg production and one not yet adopted by American performers is, while the professor is bending forward a little, pressing on the stomach of the assistant, for the latter to

strike him on the back of his head and then the professor straightens up and produces an egg from his own mouth, with as many comical grimaces as possible. Of course, at the proper time a few seconds before he had smuggled this egg into his own mouth.

LEAVES FROM 

Conjurers' Scrap Books,  
OR  
Modern Magicians and their Works,  
BY  
H. J. BURLINGAME.

The most successful book of its kind published. Old-time and modern Conjurers, Mind Reading, Second Sight, Hypnotism, Memory, Illusions, etc., etc. 274 Pages. Cloth and Gilt, Illustrated. Price \$2.00.

Revelations of a Spirit Medium  
OR  
SPIRITUALISTIC  
MYSTERIES  
EXPOSED....

By A MEDIUM.

As an exposition of the doings of Mediums this book is indeed a Revelation.

The results of 20 years practical work as a Medium, 324 Pages, illustrated, paper covers. Price \$.75.

TRICKS  
IN MAGIC.

Illusions and Mental Phenomena.

Complete explanations of the *leading* modern effects in above lines now before the public including the celebrated

SILENT THOUGHT TRANSFERENCE.

In all 63 effects. Paper covers. Price \$.25.

CLYDE PUBLISHING CO.,  
Box 851, Chicago, Ill.

In Preparation (COPYRIGHTED.)

# MODERN MAGICAL MARVELS

---

A

Practical Treatise on Magic and Conjuring

FOR

PROFESSIONALS AND AMATEURS.

---

BY

H. J. BURLINGAME.

---

FULLY ILLUSTRATED.

---

This work will contain many brilliant TRICKS and ILLUSIONS, secrets of which have never been published; a complete evening's programme in Magic with appropriate patter, and the latest and best feats of Mediums and Second Sight performers.