

# PSYCHIC MAGIC

VOLUME  
TWO



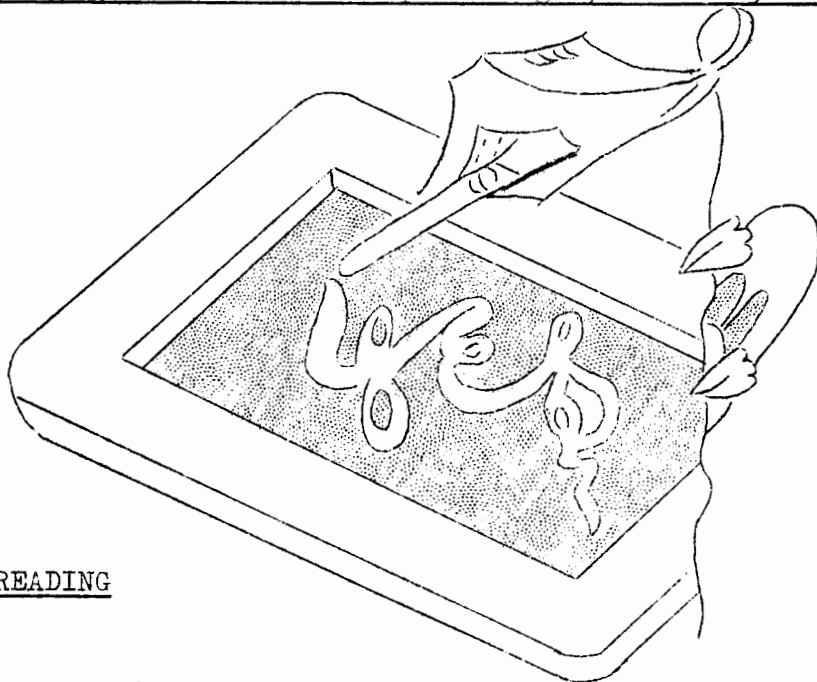
BY  
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### LODGE ROOM MINDREADING

Thirty million good fellows whose love of a good time forms that standby of show business - the "casual" engagement; the "bread and butter" to many a Magician.

Since the Magician considering adding a mindreading turn to his programme for club audiences will find his presentation must vary somewhat depending on the type of "casual" audience before which he is to appear, let us briefly survey the field.

#### The Monthly Lodge Meetings

After the meeting is officiated, its ceremonies and business conducted, the floor is cleared, and the members take their seats either in chairs hastily grouped in a semblance of theatre fashion, or, as is more often the case, lined up in the built-in seats along the walls of the lodge room.

Then the pianist takes her position, the lusty voice of the M.C. requests silence, and the show is on. This invariably follows along the line of informal least resistance - the show occasionally occurring on a small stage in the lodge hall, but more frequently being conducted right in the centre of the floor, a little toward the end of the room.

The girl dancer does her turn, a singer warbles and offers a flirtatious bit. Next comes the "novelty", either a Magician, juggler, or comic, followed, for a close, with a hula or team number.

Nothing very ascetic about that programme. There's no pace, no staging, no atmosphere - the acts simply do their stuff, and the fellows sit around and watch. But they're a good audience and most appreciative.

### The Smoker

Here the show is more carefully planned and staged. But usually the "boys" have made a few trips too many to the bar, so the general tenor of the evening runs a bit toward the "racy" side, and the strip-teaser comes into her own.

### The Annual Convention

Since this is an annual occasion, and groups of members have trekked from all sections to the conclave, the entertainment is selected and presented with thought. Liquor still runs a bit free since the gang is out for a time of it, but the dignity of the occasion calls for a semblance of respect.

### Ladies' Night at the Club.

Here "the boys" are on their good behaviour as the "little ladies" are along, and the show is selected and staged largely with the idea of entertaining their "better halves". On such occasions, far more than the usual dignity prevails in the lodge room.

From the foregoing surveillance of the field, the Magician can pretty well judge his entertainments, and pitch his mindreading act accordingly.

While club entertainment is not high-pressure, the "goodfellows" do like to feel that the act is presented with a certain routined precision and professional touch, and, if possible, that it be personalized to them. Nothing pleases the lodge bunch more than a laugh at the expense of fellow members.

Since the very nature of mindreading is personalized entertainment, it can be made a hit feature of the Magician's act. To that end, let us now consider a suitable method for club requirements.

### Secrets of the "Casual" Mentalist

Clubs have one factor very seldom found in any other type of audience, and that is: Every member of the audience is familiar (to a greater or lesser extent) with every other member of the audience.

That obvious, but frequently overlooked fact, is the basis for formulating of the club mindreading presentation as well as method.

Men have very little interest in writing questions for another man to answer, and especially are they adverse to airing their problems in the presence of their fellow club members. Right here is the reason so many attempts at selling mindreading to the club

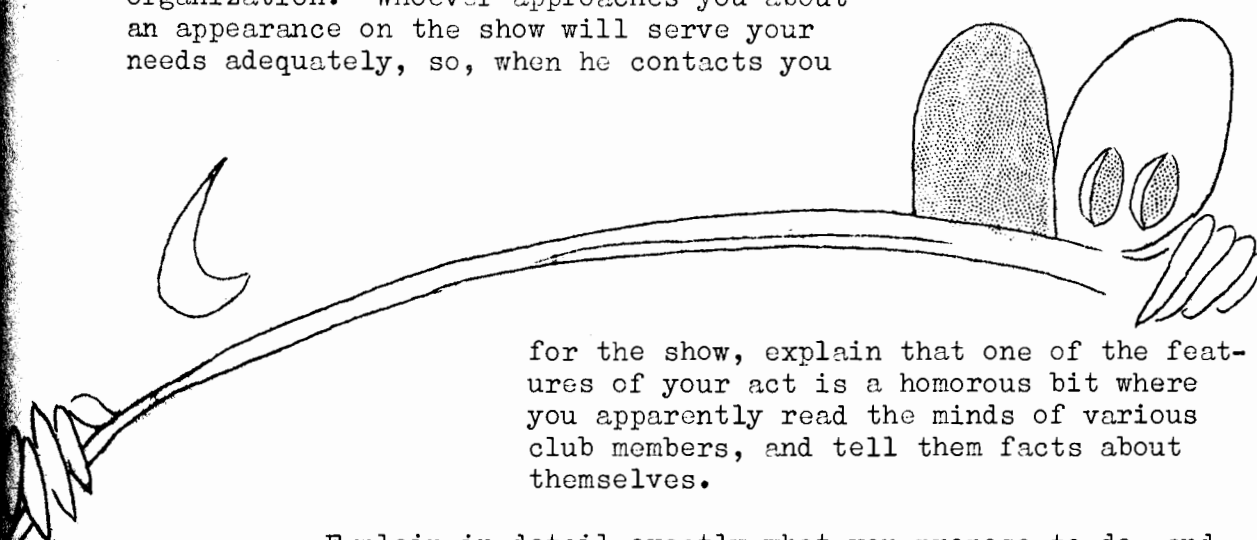
audience as entertainment has failed. The Magician should make it a rule that the conventional writing and gathering of written questions on the club programme (with the exception of "Ladies' Night") is out.

What they do get a "kick" out of is having a little "dirt" dished out on some of their fellow members to the tune of a laugh.

So, coupling these facts together, let us construct a suitable mindreading method for the Magician in modern club entertaining.

#### The Mindreading Method

Usually the hiring of an entertainer is up to the programme chairman, or, in the case of smaller clubs, the secretary of the organization. Whoever approaches you about an appearance on the show will serve your needs adequately, so, when he contacts you



for the show, explain that one of the features of your act is a humorous bit where you apparently read the minds of various club members, and tell them facts about themselves.

Explain in detail exactly what you propose to do, and how you handle everything in a humorous vein for some good laughs on the programme, and then ask him to give you some bits of information, on the Q T, about various members of the club that you can dish out during your mindreading act.

Any live-wire chairman will catch on to the spirit of the thing and get a big "bang" out of turning the laugh on some of the fellows. And you'll be amazed at the amount of dope he'll hand you about different individuals in the club.

As you go along, ask him some specific questions that you may get elaborations on what he tells you, and secure also some specific data about some of the members, such as licence plate numbers, social security numbers, etc. Also get some "dope" on their personal lives - married or not, number of children, divorces, girl friends, and some humorous incident that occurred - especially something that the party tried to hush up from the "gang".

In a few minutes, you'll get more than enough material for your

mindreading turn. You will find that the programme chairman will go out of his way to help you make it a good show, as he will be quick to realize its entertainment value. Also you may be sure that he'll keep it quiet about having given you the information, for not only will he want it to come as a "socko" surprise on the programme, but he likewise won't want it to leak out that "he has been telling stories out of school".

It is surprising how much club members do know about one another when they give it a little thought. Should you have need of a bit more specific data than he has handy to mind, a look through the lodge application forms will provide more than enough.

Armed thus, with your material jotted down as notes, you are ready to prepare for your performance.

Now, in private, write the gist of your information on the cards of your "faro Box", "Reader Under Velvet", or whatever prompting method you prefer. Personally, I merely write the data very small with a sharp-pointed pencil on a card. Lay the card in the centre of a piece of black velvet and place the crystal ball over it -



See Fig. 15. You will find this very practical as the crystal magnifies the writing, making it easy to read, and you can place the whole works on your table with the corners of the velvet drawn up around the ball - See Fig. 16 - which keeps it covered from inspection by unwanted eyes. Then merely pick it up, set the crystal on your left hand, which brings the card directly within your palm, fold down the corners of the velvet and you're all set - See Fig. 17 - to go into your club performance of mindreading and "knock the boys silly". Let us now consider the presentation.

Mentalism Moderne

As a magical entertainer, your mindreading demonstration should be inserted right among your tricks. This way it will not only come as an unexpected surprise, but also serve to lend variety to your programme. You'll find the stunt very strong, so a good spot to place it is right before the last, climactic trick.

Naturally, the exact details of presentation will vary with the type of club programme on which you are appearing. At the Monthly Lodge Meeting, your work can be direct and good natured. At the Smoker, you can lean a bit toward the risqué. At the Annual Convention, it can centre around the known dignitaries of the lodge. And for Ladies' Night, you can present the programme aimed at pleasing the wives of the lodge members.

Regardless of the specific type of the club entertainment, here is a general form of presentation you can build your act upon; it commences with a logical introduction to account for its occurrence, follows on into the revealing of the secret thoughts of the audience, and closes with a knockout test in modern telepathy.

Let us assume that your programme has successfully progressed, trick by trick, and you are now ready to introduce your mind-reading surprise. You patter:

"Gentlemen, there is one type of Magic that has been given very serious consideration by men of science, and that is the Magic of the human mind, involving such subjects as telepathy, clairvoyance, and psychical phenomena. I would like to propose such an experiment.

"Now, I could hardly expect you to believe me if I should state that I can read your minds and tell you exactly about what you are thinking. Controlled experiments in telepathy are indeed very difficult. But, I do believe that I can catch flashes of mental impressions from various members of this audience, if you will kindly just relax your minds and let your thoughts run free.... then we can see what will come through; usually it proves to be some often forgotten incident or event to which some emotional import is attached. Let's see what we can get.

"As a means of concentration I will use this crystal ball. (Pick up crystal and place in your left hand ready for the act.) Everyone please simply relax back in your seat, fix your gaze on the crystal and concentrate on your initials. Whose thought will come through first? That I cannot say, but if I call your initials, please respond immediately by saying, 'Here', or raise your hand, that I may work directly toward you. All ready - concentrate."

That introduction makes just enough sense to gather interest and make them curious. It admits telepathy is difficult, yet it proposes an actual experiment. You will find it produces a very

believable effect, and "sets" the stage for your act. Exactly how you will handle your club mentalism is up to the individual performer, but I will carry on with a couple of examples to illustrate the procedure.

"The first initials that come through to me are R.E.N. Who in this audience has the initials R.E.N....I believe your first name is Robert? Say, 'Here', please."

In the lodge room, other members will be acquainted with the party having the initials R.E.N., especially when you call out his first name, so you will quickly have him located.

"Thank you, Sir. Your thoughts come through exceedingly clear this evening. From your mind I sense a most amusing incident. It comes to me that you have been involved, or perhaps I should use the word - dodging two women; one seems to be named Ruth and the other Helen. If I were a Yogi, perhaps I could tell you what to do about it, but after all, what man can ever tell anything very much about a woman!"

That's the approach. Clubmen will pounce on material like that, and to conclude your "impression", you don't answer any question... you merely imply, and let the audience do the rest. Here's another example:

"Another set of initials keep hammering at me - A.H. Who has the initials A.H. - I believe the name is Hammerstein? Is that correct? Your friends call you Al. Where are you, Al?"

The commotion will locate Al for you.

"You know, Al, it seems to me that you've been holding out a bit on the boys. Isn't there a case of something or other of a liquid nature hidden in your basement? How about it, Al?"

That's enough - let the gang take it up from there. You've got a tremendous advantage in working mindreading in the lodge room where the members are pretty well acquainted with each other. It's the good old kidding gossip that clubmen love, dished right back at 'em. But here is a word of caution.

A man doesn't mind being regarded as a bit of a roue, a Casanova at large, a shrewd dealer. Perhaps they wouldn't admit it, but actually clubmen rather admire the "sly one". But don't ever punch where it hurts, or imply, in any manner, shape or form, that a fellow's been made "a sucker" of. Keep this rule, and you'll always be on the safe ground in dishing out and selecting your material - FELLOWS CAN TAKE A LAUGH AT THEIR EXPENSE IF THAT LAUGH SECRETLY FLATTERS THEM - REMEMBER, NEVER BELITTLE!

And so your club mindreading act continues, comment after comment;



initial after initial. Looking down through your crystal ball, you'll find it will magnify your writing on the card so you can read it easily, and being cupped in the palm of your hand, surrounded by the velvet, all is covered and concealed except from your own eyes. Save what you figure is your biggest laugh-getter for the last item; then when you're through with the ball, merely wrap the velvet around it, place it aside, and all's clear.

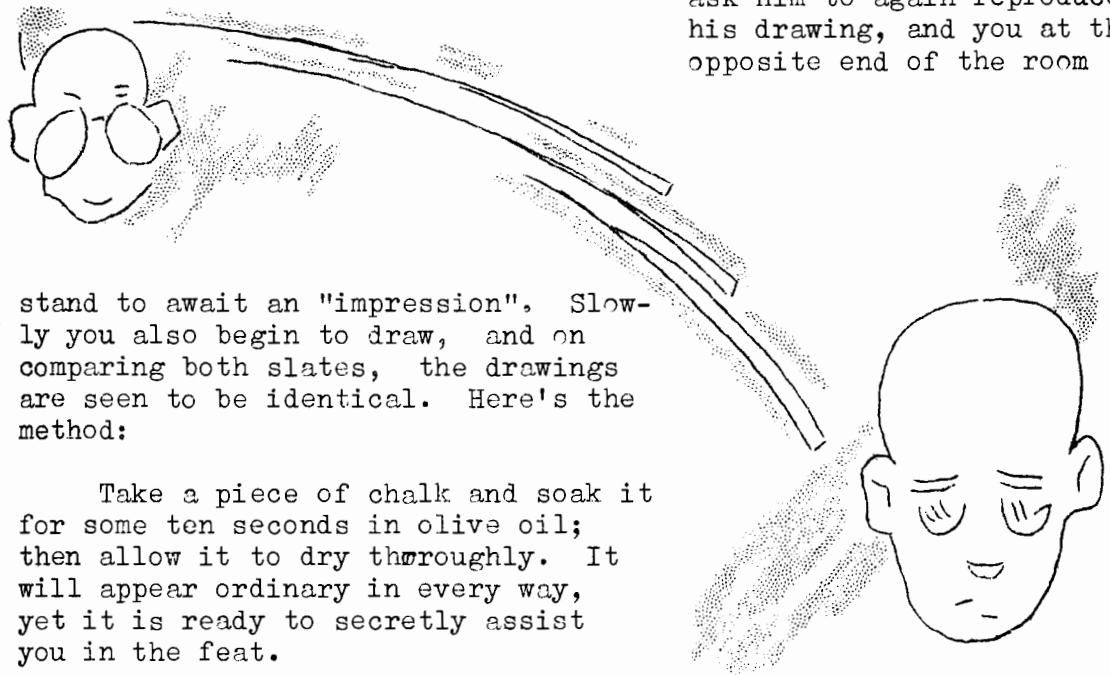
Bold as this modus operandi is, I can testify for its extreme effectiveness. Try it. It will prove one of the highlights of your show. And for a clincher on this mindreading turn, you are now ready for a smart telepathic test.

#### Telepathic Drawing

In this effect, a volunteer draws any sketch he desires on a slate, "to impress it on his mind", the performer says, and then wipes the slate clean with a damp sponge.

You then pick up another slate, and along with the first slate again carefully wipe the surfaces.

Returning the thoroughly cleaned slate to the spectator, you ask him to again reproduce his drawing, and you at the opposite end of the room



stand to await an "impression". Slowly you also begin to draw, and on comparing both slates, the drawings are seen to be identical. Here's the method:

Take a piece of chalk and soak it for some ten seconds in olive oil; then allow it to dry thoroughly. It will appear ordinary in every way, yet it is ready to secretly assist you in the feat.

Hand the chalk and slate to the volunteer with the request that he draw anything he likes upon it, to concentrate on his drawing, line by line, as he does so, and to be certain that no one but himself sees the sketch. The drawing complete, you hand him a wet sponge and instruct that he erase the drawing completely. This he does. You take back the sponge and the clean slate and place it on top of a second blank slate which you have meanwhile picked

up. With the sponge, wipe the surfaces of both slates, remembering which surface was the one on which he originally made his drawing, and then return a slate to him. He gets the yet unused slate, you retaining the one he previously drew upon. Thanks to the sponging process, however, no one is wiser to anything than that you re-sponged his slate along with one of your own and returned the slate to him.

Place his original slate, which you now hold, damp side down on the table and request that he go to the opposite end of the room and again reproduce his drawing to impress its image still further on his mind, explaining that you will then attempt to receive his thoughts, and will try to reproduce his drawing exactly as he is thinking of it.

While he draws, you pick up the slate from the table, damp side facing you. Since water on the slate's surface evaporates very quickly, by this time it will be nearly dry, and you will note a faint olive oil outline of his original drawing on its surface.

You have thus but to trace over this olive oil out-line to reproduce exactly the sketch that the subject is drawing. Of such are the wonders of the Magician's telepathy.

#### Mindreading for School Assemblies

There is another type of entertaining situation very similar to that of the lodge room, to which you can apply a related mind-reading method, and that is the school assembly field. Many Magicians frequently present such programmes, but very seldom has anything in the way of a mindreading act been attempted. Actually, it can be one of the strongest features in your show, and thanks to the intimate nature of school audiences is very easily handled.

First, I must mention that you forget about this for grammar school programmes; use it exclusively for Junior High, Senior High, and College audiences. Such audiences are very sex conscious and go for anything in the nature of gossip in a big way!

After your show is set up and ready to go, use that spare time before the programme commences by having the Secretary of the Student Body come backstage to see you.

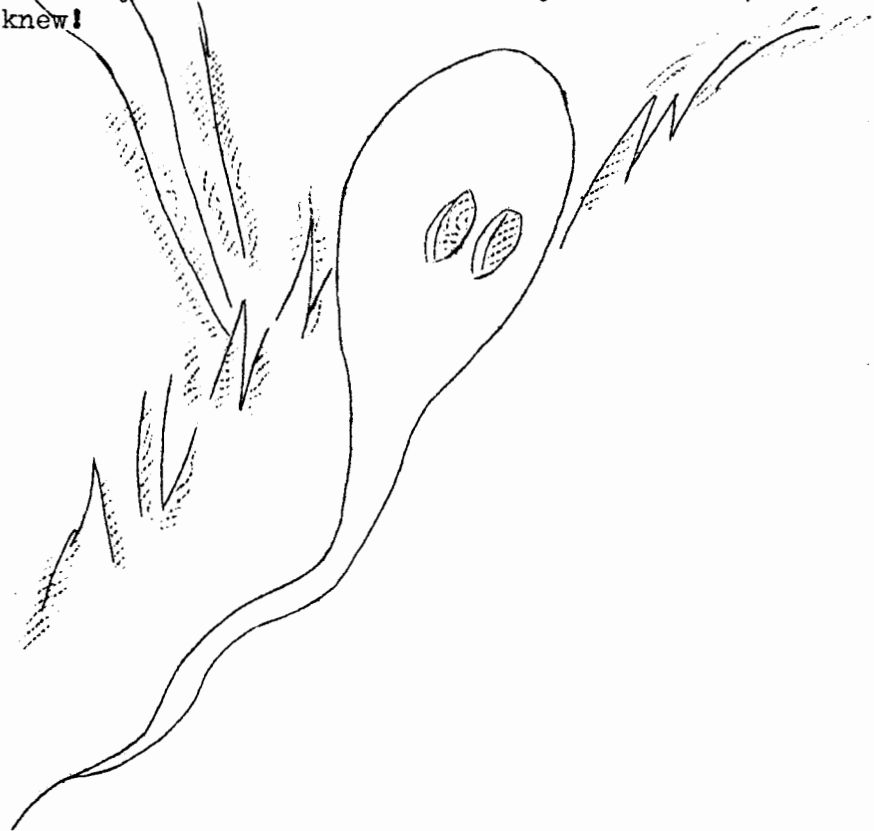
You'll find her a very personable girl, and that you can ask her for information on various prominent members of the student body exactly as you did with the lodge secretary. Explain that for laughs in the show, you do a mindreading act, and have her give you little bits of local school "scandal" about well-known kids. Student body secretaries are in an enviable position to collect gossip, and you'll find that girl a gold mine of information.

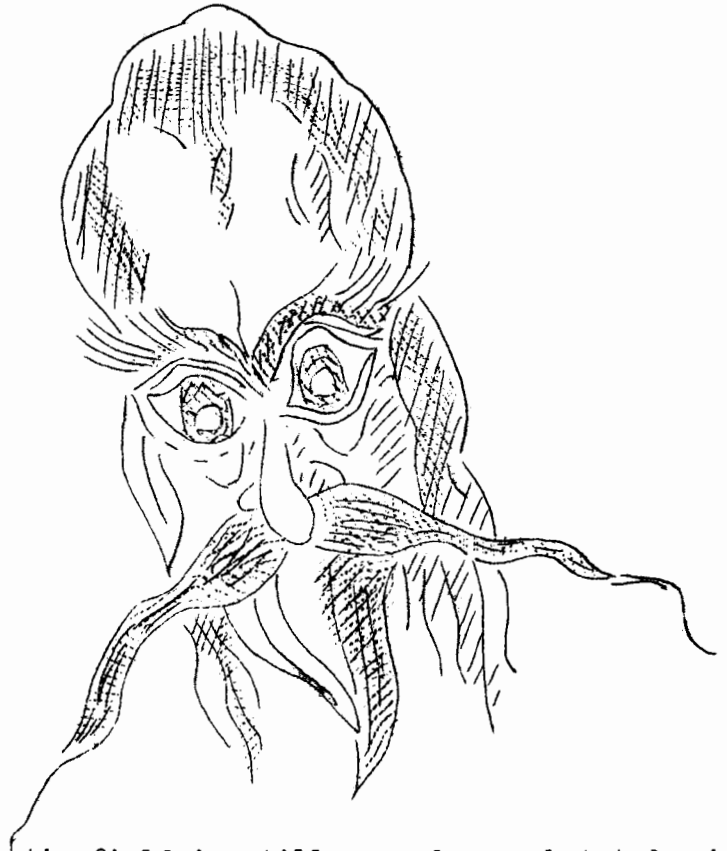
Get funny little angles on sports, student activities, and above all, the boy and girl angles - so-and-so likes so-and-so, but does so-and-so like so-and-so, and such and such. Ask the name of some very popular senior girl and link her name with some new freshman. Get the idea, play up the sex angle, but treat it lightly, fluffily, and harmlessly. The kids go wild over such material.

Jot down your notes, and when you are again alone, prepare your card and place it under your crystal, ready for use.

Comes the time for the mindreading turn, pick up the ball and dish it out. You'll find that you need barely mention a name of a person in the audience than the kids will whoop it up and point him out. Then give your "reading", but, remember be very careful how you give your material as you don't wish to arouse any criticism from the faculty. You actually need say very little, be as subtle as you like, and let implication do the rest. If any audience will snatch at implication, it's the high school bunch. Merely to say something along these lines is enough: "I receive the name of Robert Jones. Where are you, Robert? Oh, there you are. Say, Robert, do you know that a certain girl named Mary S. is thinking about asking you for a date to the next dance? Confidentially, her last name is Smith."

Always steer clear of embarrassing anyone - play it up humorously and good-naturedly. Handled lightly and pleasantly you can get a lot of fun out of this, and it will prove a real sensation in your assembly show. And the Secretary will never, never tell how you knew!





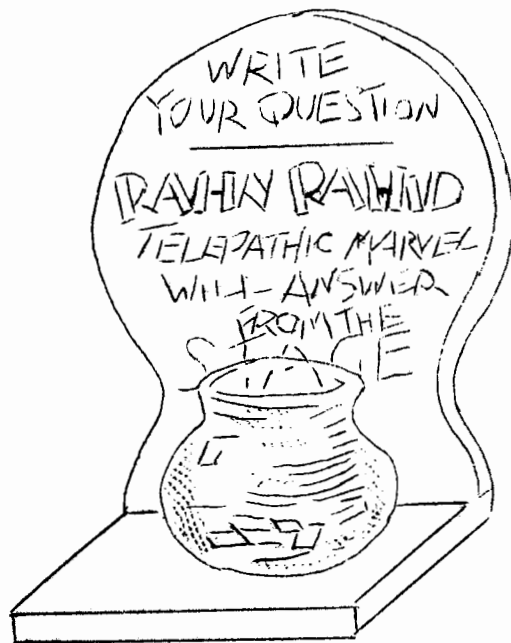
### THEATRICAL MINDREADING

The theatre Mentalist's field is still a good one, but today he is billed as "The Telepathic Marvel of the Age" rather than "The Man who Knows All, Sees All, Tells All". Here are some thoughts for the modern practitioner of the art.

#### Secrets of the "Theatre" Mentalist

The theatrical situation presents the exact opposite to that found in the lodge room. Here the spectators are largely unfamiliar with each other, and the pace of the act must fit the tempo of motion picture entertainment - it's on, do the act, and off!

In the theatre, the question-answering act, which has always been Mentalism's main feature, comes into its own. And since the pace of the act prohibits the ancient dodge of passing out envelopes from the stage and then collecting the questions, the question writing must be tended to in the lobby of the theatre long before the act even starts. For this purpose, various devices have been tried such as ballot boxes, changing baskets, envelope switches, and clip-boards... but the most practical of all is simply to have an unprepared fish bowl placed prominently in the lobby and behind it a sign advising that questions for the mind-reader to answer be written and dropped in the bowl. Always have a few blank slips in the bowl to indicate that others have done so; it starts the ball rolling - See Fig. 18.



Now the work that goes on in the lobby is anything but a "bed of roses". Modern theatre patrons are surprisingly blase, and are exceedingly skeptical of getting themselves involved in any unusual situation. They go to the theatre to relax and forget themselves, so that sign over the bowl won't begin to lure in enough questions. Some of the kids will go for it, but the adults will mostly pass it by. So here is where the mindreader's assistant must come in, and his is a most responsible job.

This assistant may be either a nice appearing young man or woman, dressed neatly but inconspicuously. The less attention he attracts as being part of the mental act the better - so far as the patrons know, he might merely be

a theatre employee. This assistant makes it a point to very graciously and diplomatically approach persons as they pass through the lobby, hand them a slip of paper and a pencil, suggesting that they write a question for the mindreader to answer from the stage during the show. Even with such a genial approach, many persons will still refuse to write, but with a little coaxing and persistence, enough questions will soon be in the bowl to make an effective presentation.

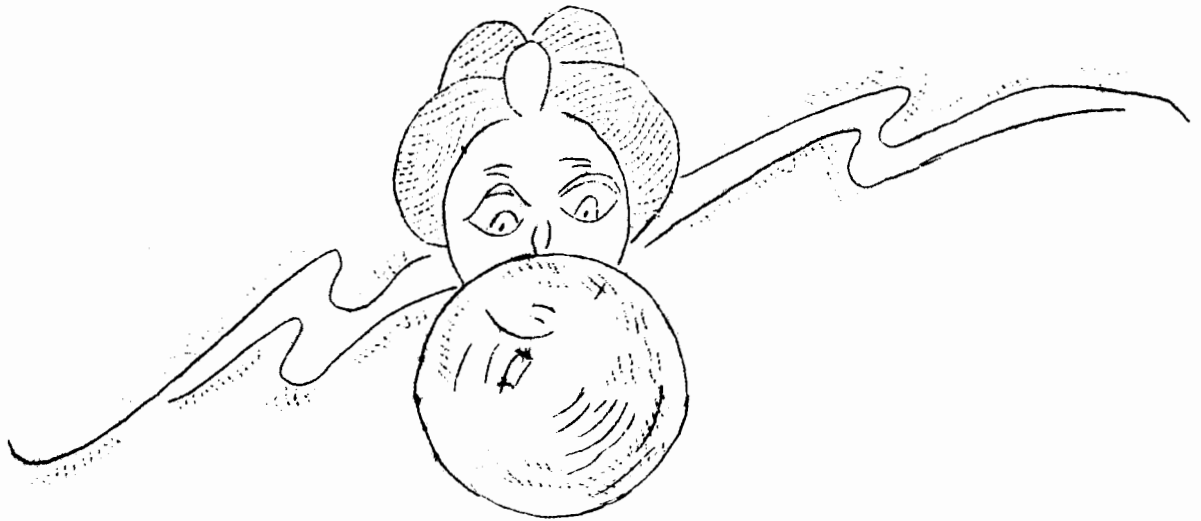
This job of getting the patrons to write questions is a most important one and calls for considerable skill in handling people. Some patrons will have to be kidded into "trying a question". Once the question is written, the assistant asks that they sign their name to it. If they refuse, then their initials will suffice, but he gets as many names on the slips as is possible. The slips are then folded with the writing on the inside and dropped into the bowl. The assistant then emphatically explains that if their name or initials should be called from the stage, they are to respond at once - this is very important. They then pass on into the theatre.

Now comes a bit of business that gives the theatrical mindreader some of his best "tests", for it will be found that many persons who agree to write a question will not have the remotest idea what question they should write and will ask the assistant for a suggestion. To this he can reply that a question isn't necessary - they can simply jot down anything that would make a good "test", such as their social security number, number on a bill that they

have in their pocket, the name of some personal friend, or any good "test" he happens to think of. Once the patron has dropped his slip in the bowl and left, the assistant deliberately reaches into the bowl and removes it, creases it tighter and seemingly drops it back in the bowl among the other slips - actually he palms it and eventually slips it in his pocket.

At other times, the spectator will discuss with the assistant his question, to which the assistant can say, "Yes, that would be a good question to ask about. What are your initials?" When the spectator gives these, the assistant continues, "Tell you what, never mind writing your question - just concentrate upon it and see if the mindreader can give you the answer."

When the spectator has gone within the theatre, the assistant gets into a dark corner and jots down the initials and the question so that the Mentalist now has an unwritten question to answer.... of such are the "miracles" of mindreading born.



Every so often a lull will come in the theatre lobby when it will be empty of persons. The assistant avails himself of such an opportunity to reach in the bowl and steal out a handful of questions and store them away in his pocket. He is always careful to take his time and await a good chance when no one connected with the theatre is looking. And even if someone should happen to catch a glance, it appears merely that he is stirring up the slips within the bowl - the stolen slips coming out concealed in the palm of his hand. Three "steals" of this nature are all that is necessary - one in the early part of the evening, one in the middle, and one just a half hour before the act goes on, giving a good representation of the questions that have been dropped in the bowl. Having thus secured enough questions, actually about twice as many as he feels the mindreader will need, he leaves the lobby and lets the bowl take care of itself for the remaining time.

The assistant then goes backstage and joins the Mentalist...and he must never go backstage down the aisle, but always around the outside of the theatre and in the stage door.

Once backstage, the assistant gives the Mentalist the questions he has stolen and the notes he has taken, and then starts the skill of the mindreader. For he must glean through the material and wisely select those items best suited for his act. And this selecting of good material is very important; that is why the assistant always makes it a point to "get" a goodly amount more than is actually needed. For it is in the question material utilized that lies the entertainment value of the Mentalist's act - a subject that deserves special consideration.

Since the theatre audience is largely unfamiliar with each other, it stands to reason that they are not particularly interested in the specific, personal problems of the other persons. However, they are interested in human-interest angles, they are interested in funny situations, and they are interested in good gossip material. Using these basic interests as guides, the mindreader selects those questions he will use, getting as much variety, humour, and romance into the list as he can. He places much emphasis on "Love questions", man and woman relationships, not to mention a scandal or two, if he can find one. In fact, so important is material of this kind, that whenever possible it is well to have a "plant" in the audience who asks some such question as whether his wife is running around with another man. To such a question, the mindreader scornfully replies that he should be ashamed of himself at being so suspicious of his wife when she has been supporting him for months now while he, himself, has been running around with another man's wife. As the Mentalist continues to "bawl him out", the "plant" seemingly can't take it any more, and, with his face hidden in his hands, he dashes from the theatre. That's the kind of stuff that brings in the business.

The mindreader having selected his material (six or eight good questions will be ample), he jots these down in abbreviated form on a small card, places it in the centre of the velvet cloth under the crystal exactly as in the club mindreading method. Placed on his table, it is ready for instant use, and the act is set.

#### A Theatrical Mindreading Act

Since the public in late years has come to look upon the mentalist more as a telepathist than a psychic, it behooves him to stage his presentation somewhat along such lines; further, the audience likes to see something more in the nature of a complete act rather than just the "answering of questions". Here described is a modern act:

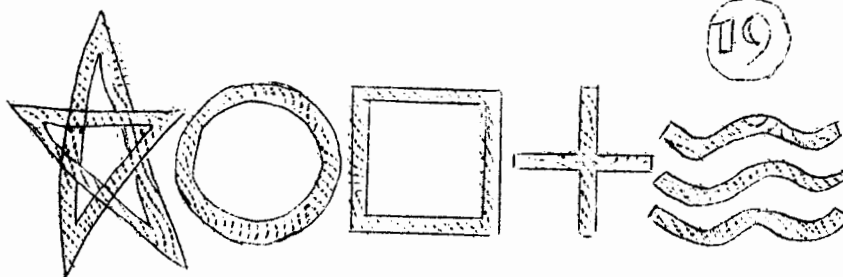
At the end of a screen feature, an introductory trailer hits the

screen, proclaiming, "The Management is proud to present THE TELEPATHIC MARVEL OF THE AGE!" House lights come up for a moment, a pause, a rustle passes through the audience, the lights dim, the spot comes on, the curtains part, revealing a blackboard placed on the left side of the stage, while a table with a crystal ball on it is near the mike, stage centre.

The mentalist briskly enters and commences his patter:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, you have all undoubtedly heard of the current, scientific research in telepathy and clairvoyance being conducted at Duke University. Dr. Joseph Rhine has made some most interesting studies experimenting with the Extra Sensory Perception Symbols, or, as they are popularly called, the E.S.P. Symbols.

These symbols are five in number (draw them on the blackboard as you name them),



a star, a circle, a square, a cross, and a group of wavy lines - See Fig. 19 at the left. The object of his experiments is to establish test conditions for

thought transference by having some person think of one of the symbols, while the 'receiver' endeavours to catch the thought impulse and record it correctly.

"In presenting this experiment for you this evening, I shall assume the part of the receiver, while members of this audience will be the transmitter. I will ask the young man to step down among you and ask some willing volunteer to try the experiment with me. (Assistant goes into audience with a slate and stands beside some obliging spectator.) You, Sir... thank you most kindly. All you have to do is decide upon one of these symbols. Select any one that you wish; just whisper it to the young man that he may record it on the slate that we may later check the test."

Spectator whispers name of the symbol he selects to assistant who records it on the slate so only the volunteer can see what is written. Performer continues:

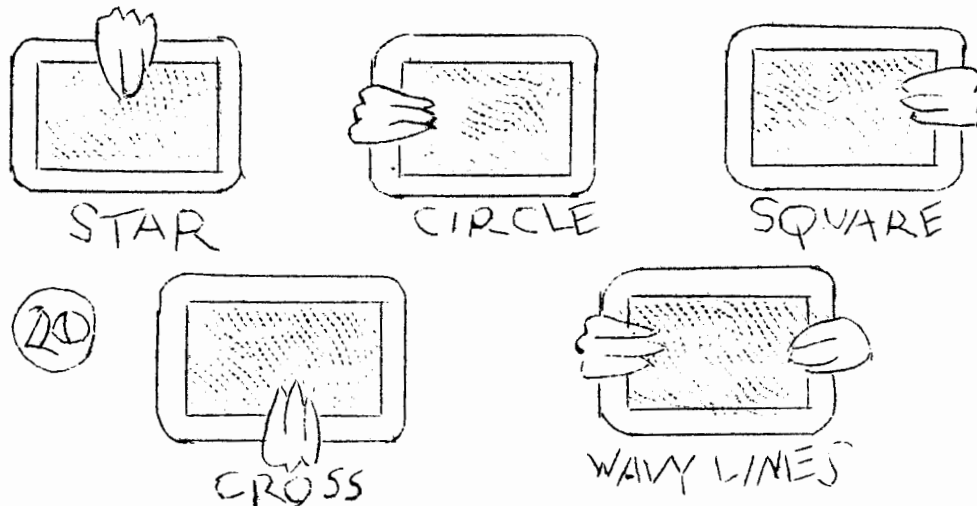
"Are you all ready, Sir? Then kindly concentrate on your symbol. (Performer passes his hand back and forth over the symbols on the blackboard, finally drawing a circle about one of them.) The symbol you are concentrating on, Sir, is a square! Am I correct? (Assistant yells out, "That is correct!" as he displays the slate, confirming the test. Assistant then wipes the drawing off the slate and locates another volunteer. Performer continues.)

"Suppose we repeat the experiment to see if we can again be successful."



The mindreader then proceeds to repeat the test twice more - each time successfully and rapidly.

The modus operandi for the experiment is simplicity itself. But since not a word is spoken between the performer and the assistant, and the stunt is worked with dash, it all looks most legitimate. To code the selected symbol to the mindreader, the assistant merely holds the slate in a variety of different ways as the spectator concentrates on his symbol. If he holds it by the top it indicates a star; if he holds it by right edge it indicates a circle; if he holds it by the left edge it indicates a square; if he holds it by the bottom it indicates the cross, and if he holds it with both hands, it indicates the wavy lines were selected - See Fig. 20.



The experiment complete, the mindreader rapidly erases the symbols on the board, and proceeds immediately.

"As I stand before you tonight, my friends, many flitting thoughts and impressions reach me here on the stage. Some come through quite strongly, while others are very faint. For our next experiment in telepathy, therefore, I shall suggest, that on a given signal, each of you in this audience concentrate intently upon your initials, and I will endeavour to mentally catch those initials and call them back to you.

"Now remember, I cannot say whose initials I will receive; it depends entirely on which minds prove the most in tune with mine. But if I should happen to call out your initials, please respond at once by saying, 'Here!' that I may consider the test completed."

The performer picks up the crystal ball, places it on his left palm in readiness for the mindreading act.

"All ready, everyone! Focus your eyes on the crystal ball as you concentrate on your initials. One-two-three! Concentrate!

"I receive an impression of the initials - I.C.B. (performer

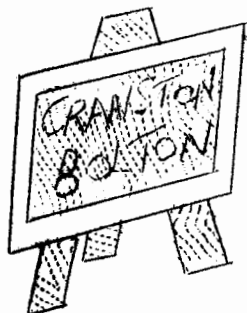
writes initials as named on the blackboard.) Who in the audience has the initials - I.C.B.? Your mind is very clear tonight and your thoughts come through splendidly. Say, 'Here!' please."

The party responds and the performer repeats the experiment twice more, each time obtaining a response confirming that the test is successful. Then on the fourth set of initials he proposes to carry the experiment a bit further.

"The initials C.B. come through to me. Where are you, C.B.? Say, 'Here!' please. (Spectator responds and the mentalist writes the initials on the blackboard - well spaced apart.) Suppose we attempt something very difficult. Concentrate on your name if you will, letter by letter, and let's see if I can pick it up from your mind. Concentrate on your first name first.

"The first letter is C, as we already have discovered. Next comes in an R, then an A, an M - No, that is not quite right. Let's see, it is an N, That's right so far, C-R-A-N. The next letter following the N is the letter S, and then I receive an impression of the word, TON. Your first name is CRANSTON. Is that correct? Good! Now, let's try for the last name. The initial B is followed by an O, is that correct? It is! Next comes L. Then a T....again I get that group impression of TON... TON...Your last name is BOLTON. (Performer writes the name in, letter by letter - See Fig. 21.) Bolton - is that correct?

Thank you very much. What's that? I just caught a flash from your mind that you'd like me to attempt to get your middle name also. Well, we can try. Concentrate please, this time on the complete name. That's fine. It just flashed in. Your middle name is CLYDE. Am I correct? Thank you so much!"



And here is a good spot for a bow.

At this point, the usher comes down the aisle carrying the bowl of questions directly from the lobby to the stage. He places the bowl on a small tabouret at the side of the stage. No mention whatsoever is made of the questions. That's the "smart" way to handle the act. There they sit in silent testimony to the performer's honesty.

You can easily visualize how very effective this test is, and note how the performer continually insists on confirmation of his impressions. It is showmanship like this that sells theatre audiences on mindreading. Actually nothing could be more simple to accomplish, as all the mentalist has to do is glance in his crystal to read a few initials and a name from the card. (Here is where you get a chance to put to use a few of those initials and names whose questional material you did not choose to use.) But the presentation lifts it into the miracle class. It seems that

the performer is reading minds directly on the spot.

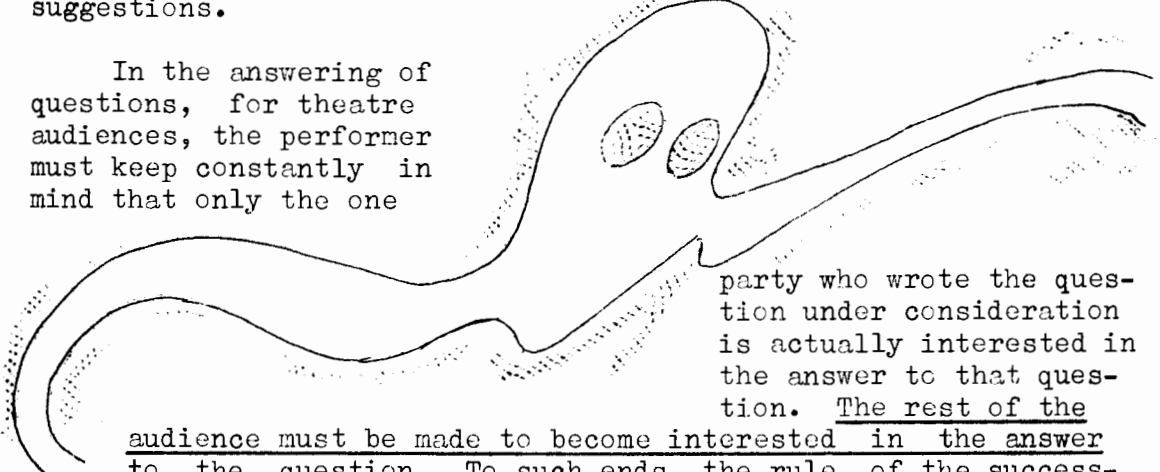
This test serves another purpose also, for not only does it establish your ability to read minds and build audience confidence in your "powers", but it also gets them in the habit of responding by saying, "Here!" when their initials are called. This is most important, for all too often, while playing a theatre, the mentalist will call out for a party to respond - a party he knows positively to be in the audience - and yet there will be a dead silence. A silence of this type does anything but contribute to the success of the act, as it is the audience responses that convince the spectators that the mentalist is actually performing mindreading.

All is ready to proceed now into the heart of the act.

#### Answering the Questions

The specific answering of the questions is so much a product of the individual performer's personality and experience, and so many excellent books cover the subject, from Burling Hull's "How to Answer Questions", published in 1927, to Buckley and Cook's "Gems of Mental Magic", published in 1947, that it would be repetitious to detail the technique. It will be sufficient to reiterate some suggestions.

In the answering of questions, for theatre audiences, the performer must keep constantly in mind that only the one



party who wrote the question under consideration is actually interested in the answer to that question. The rest of the audience must be made to become interested in the answer to the question. To such ends, the rule of the successful mental act is to make the answers to the questions universally entertaining. To accomplish such purposes the performer can even go so far as to make his answer distasteful to the one person, if by so doing he interests the rest of the audience. For here is the underlying secret of successful stage mindreading presentation: only one person knows the exact question under consideration, while the whole audience listens to the answer.

You will find that from six to eight genuine questions will give you plenty of material with which to work, as the entire act should not run more than twelve minutes. And among your authentic questions, it is well to always intersperse two or three "sensational answer" questions. These are fake questions that the performer makes up for himself, and are handled along these lines:

"I receive the initials of H.L. Where are you, please? This is a young woman's vibration. A young woman with a very serious question on her mind. Raise your hand, please. There you are. Thank you." Actually no one responded, but when the performer thus brazenly asserts that he sees the party, who is there to doubt it? After all, the performer has been answering some questions for parties who did not always make a verbal response, and the theatre is dark. The theatrical conditions give you a chance to get away with many such bold devices... and it is in the clever handling of these fake questions that you can get the real spice into your act - both for humour and sensation. Here are a few examples on the humorous side:

Question - Should I have any more children, and do you think I might some day have triplets?

Answer - By all means have more children, but as for triplets... must keep trying and some day you may hit the jackpot!

Q - Last night I dated a millionaire and charged him \$1000 a kiss. Do you think I should date him again?

A - Certainly not...why date an ex-millionaire!

Q - What would you suggest I do for my kleptomania?

A - I would suggest that you stop taking things for it.

Q - What is my husband's average income?

A - Oh, I'd say around midnight!

Q - Does Robert F. love me?

A - Yes, but watch out! Two other women have asked the same question about Robert F. this week.

Q - My little girl wants to know where babies come from. What shall I tell her?

A - Don't tell her anything, Madame. Wait another eight months and you can show her!

Q - Why did I let the man kiss me last night? Was I influenced by his funny talk?

A - No, you were influenced by his fancy drink.

Gag question material, such as the above, must be used in your act sparingly, but delivered in the same serious manner that you handle your other questions, while looking right out into the audience as though speaking to, and directing your answer to, a spectator in the audience. You will find that such apparently spontaneous wit will be much appreciated.

The serious and sensational side of fake questions you will find simpler to originate than the funny ones, as they are more general in nature. Such material as, "I receive the initials H.L. Where are you? Over there - fine. Concentrate a little harder, please. Your first name is Helen, I believe. Yes, it is Helen Lane. And, Helen, you ask me when your baby will be born. Well, Helen, I hate to tell you this, but I would advise you not to stay for the second feature, as your baby is going to be born tonight!" will produce all of the results you could desire.

It is these fake questions that give the mentalist most of his opportunity for "miracle answers". He can describe in detail where some party will find his long-lost wallet; where some woman can locate the man "who done her wrong". Keep all of your material in good taste, but remember that which gives the legitimate stage its one chance to compete with Hollywood; there is no Johnson office censoring you. Modern audiences are surprisingly sophisticated. And use a "plant" or so when you can. To have him or her respond to a sensational answer with an embarrassed gasp goes a long way in selling the mental act. And sometime, try this one, "Sir, your home is on fire!" To which the plant grabs his hat and dashes from the theatre.

Of such are the ingredients for the successful brewing of today's mindreading act.

#### A Climactic Test

If your purpose is purely commercial, then catch them while they're still in a question-answering mood, and go right into your spiel on book sales, and private, personal readings to be given in the lobby immediately following the act. However, if your act is in the nature of entertainment for which the theatre is paying you a salary, then close with a veritable "brainbuster". Here is a knockout:

"I have often been asked the question as to how it is possible to predict the occurrence of an event yet to happen in the future. This seems to be one of the innate abilities of that faculty of the mind known as clairvoyance. Exactly how it functions, science has yet to discover, but perhaps I can illustrate the principle by resorting to an example that can be found in the science of mathematics.

"On this large slate I am writing a number. Now what this

number is, no one is to know at this moment. However, I shall leave the slate back-outward in full view at all times."

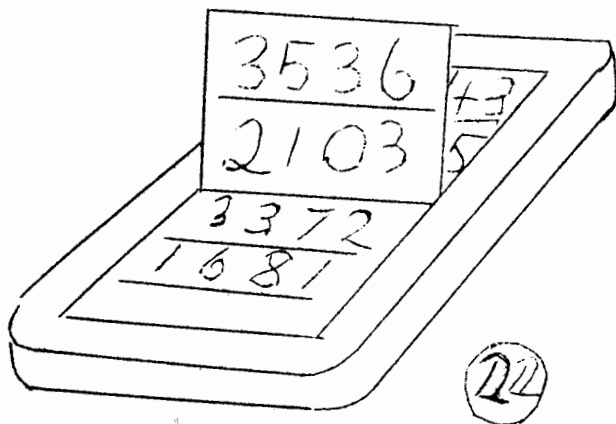
Performer writes a number on slate and stands same back-outward against a small stand.

"I next would like four persons in the audience to volunteer for the test. You, Sir, and you, Madame. Yes, and you, and you, Sir. (Performer indicates four persons.) Now will each of you kindly think of some number of four digits, such as - 1948, 2094 - any number of four digits that you desire. The young man will now take a slate among you; whisper your number in his ear that he may record it. (Assistant takes slate into audience and writes the numbers under each other as performer continues to patter.) Now you will recall that I wrote a figure on this large slate before any of you even so much as thought of your number. Therefore, your figures were in the future in relation to mine. (Performer addresses assistant in audience. Have all of the figures been recorded? Good. Now take the slate to some other party and have him total them all together. That gentleman over there will be fine (indicating some party on the opposite aisle away from those who originally thought of numbers). And what is the total, please?"

Assistant calls out the total - let's say it is 10,692, and then exits with his slate. Performer continues:

And the total of all four numbers that you merely thought of after I had recorded by figure is 10,692. AND THE NUMBER I WROTE ON MY SLATE IS LIKEWISE 10,692!"

Turn slate and exhibit. A quick bow, a snappy exit, and the act's over.



All Magicians will recognize in this test the working of the familiar ruled number slate which is a standard item with all dealers. Constructed on the flap principle which is disguised by rule lines (See Fig. 22), it has always been a very clever effect, but presented in this manner, letting the assistant handle the workings in the audience while you continue on the stage to sell it as an illustration of mathematical proof of the possibility of foretelling

the future - it's a staggerer!