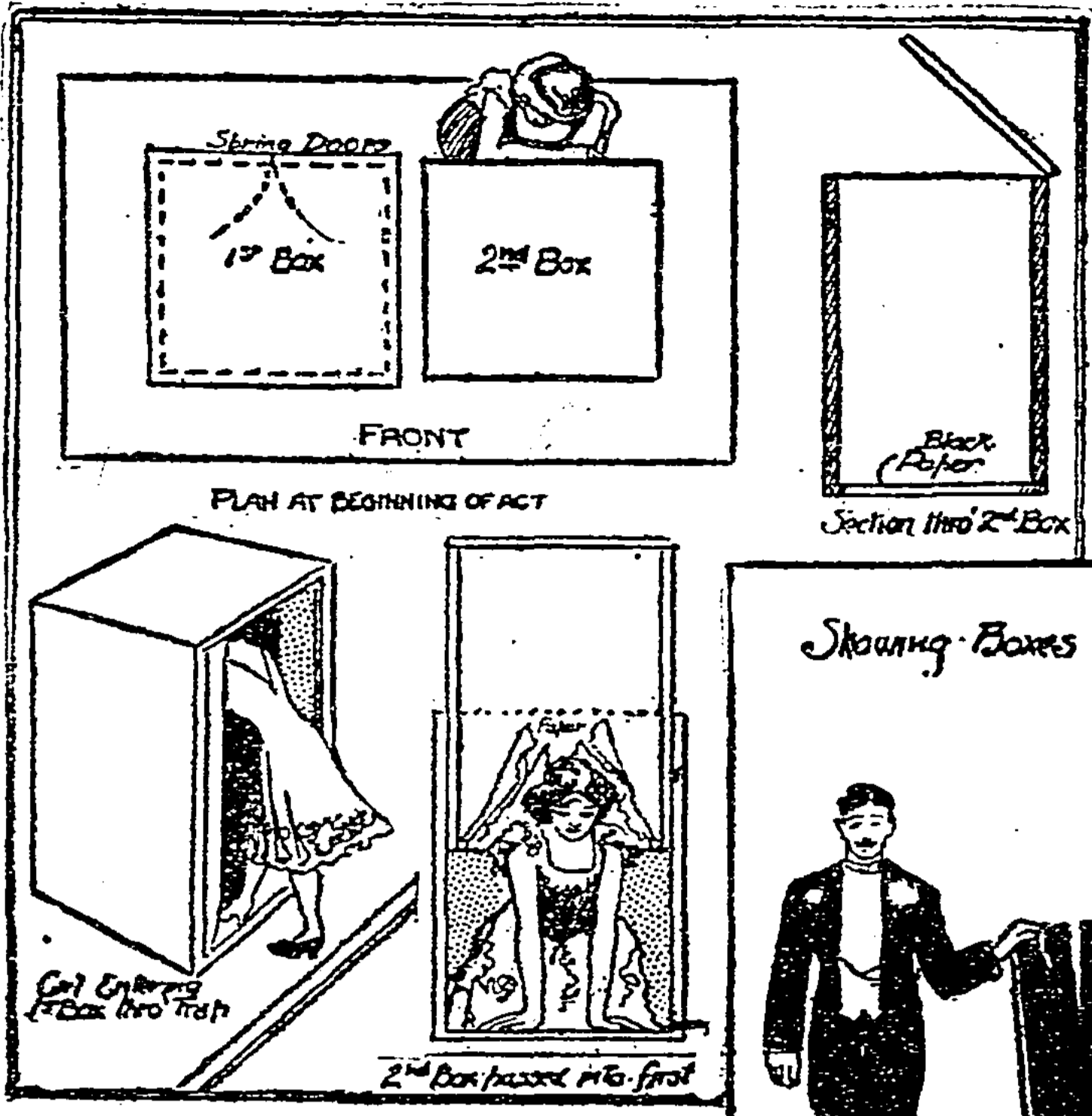
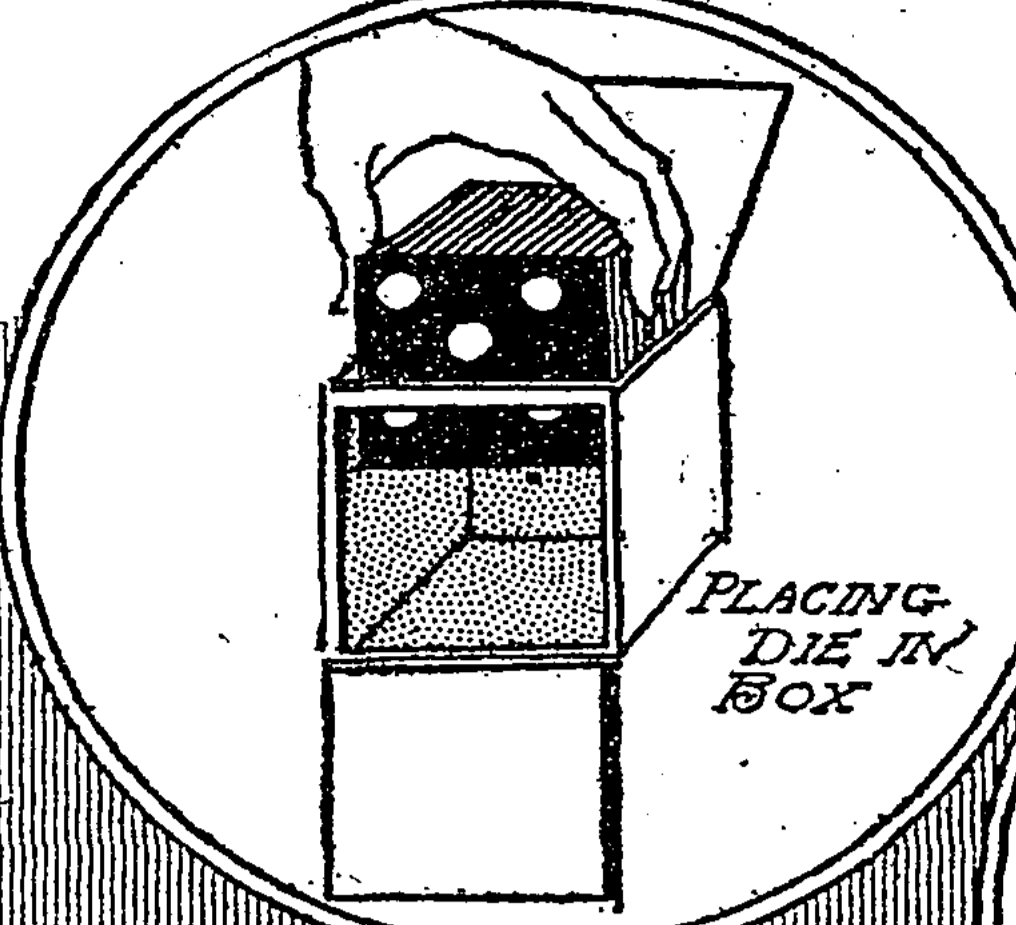
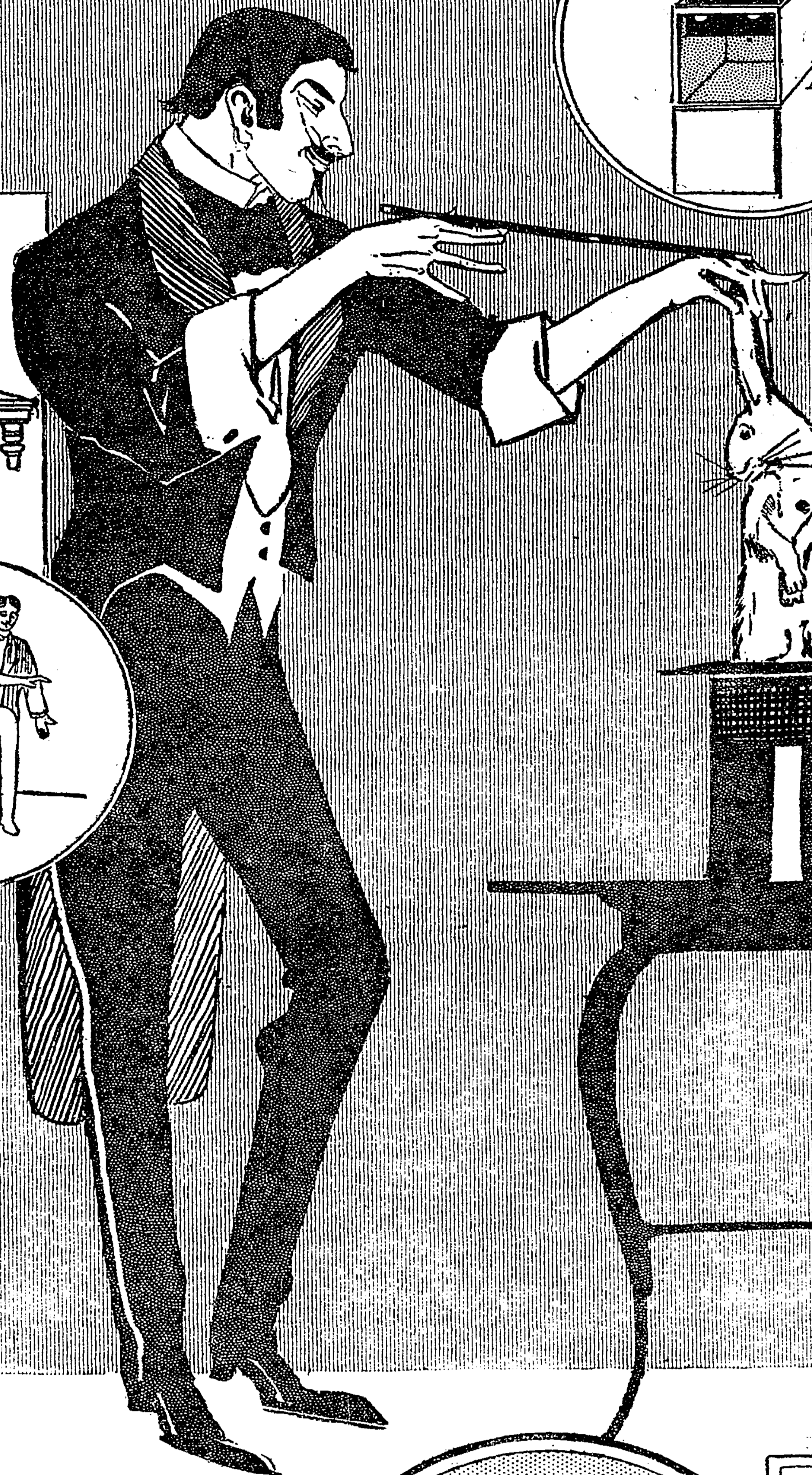
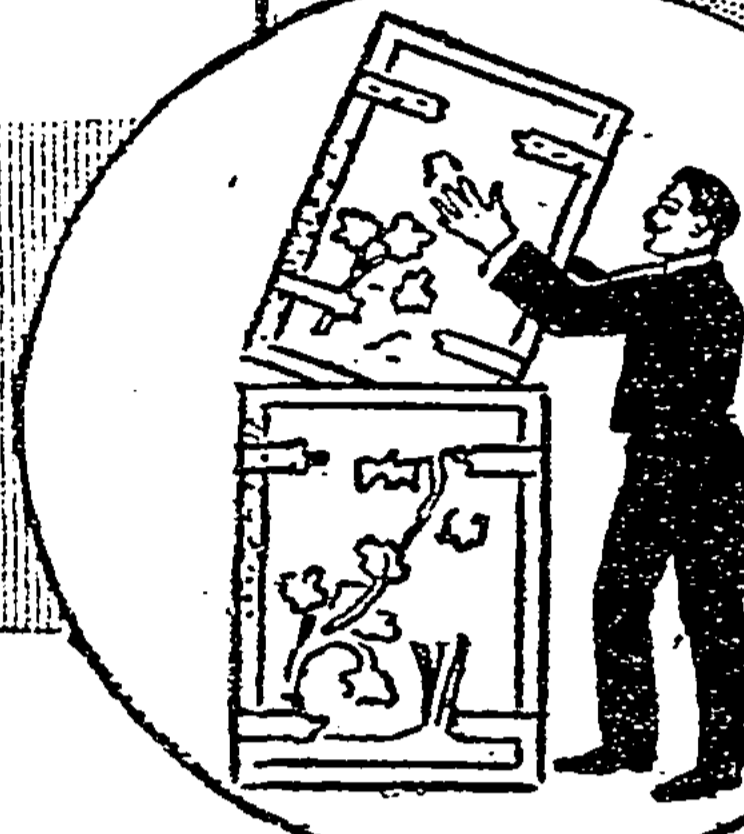
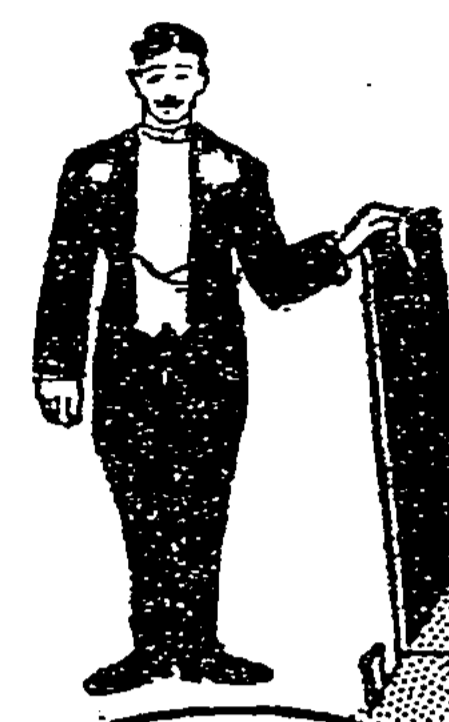


# MAGICIANS TELL THE SECRET OF FAMOUS TRICKS

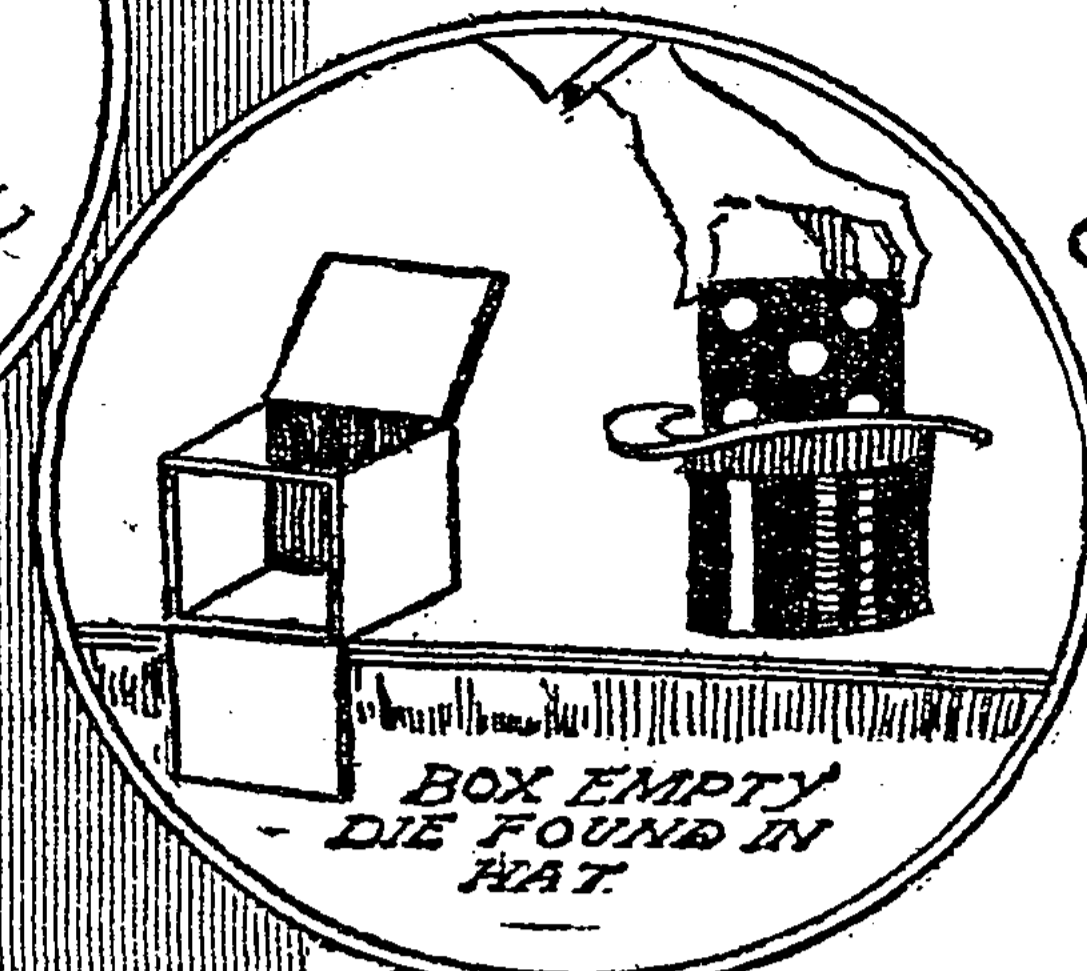
Henry Hatton and Adrian Plate Give Some of Their Methods and Experiences in the Art of Mystifying the Public.



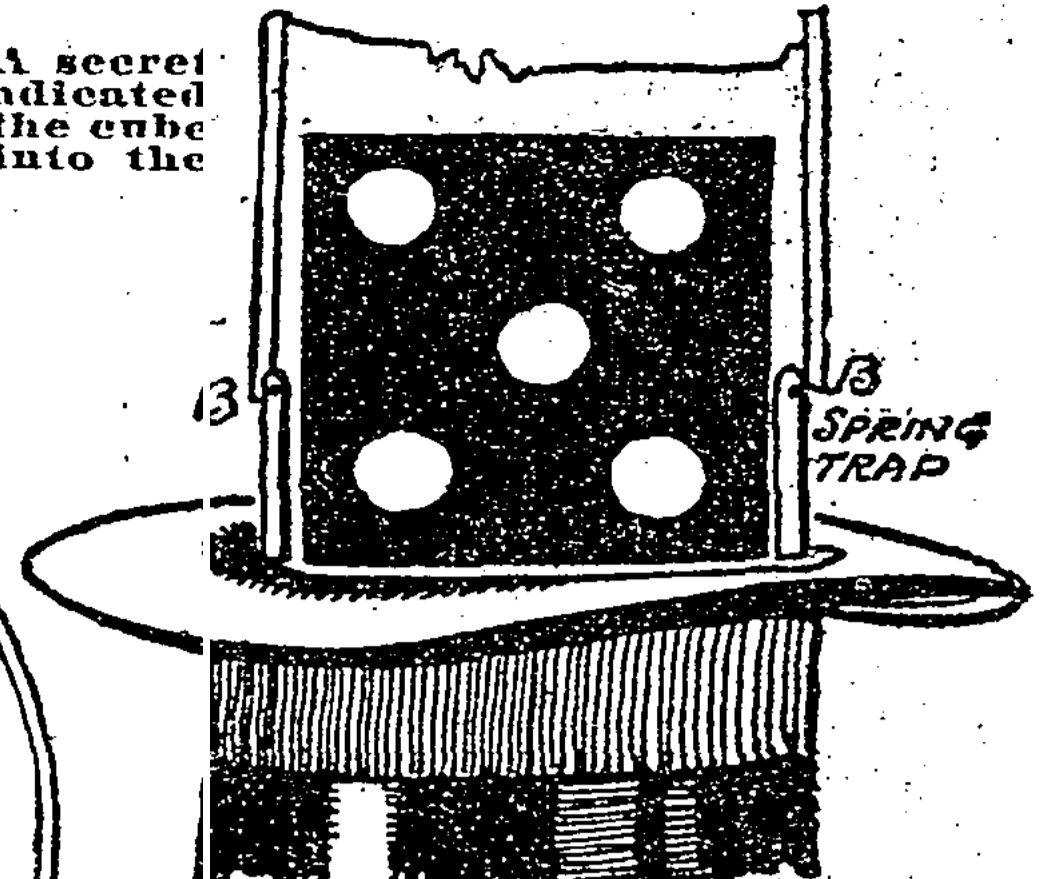
Showing Boxes Empty



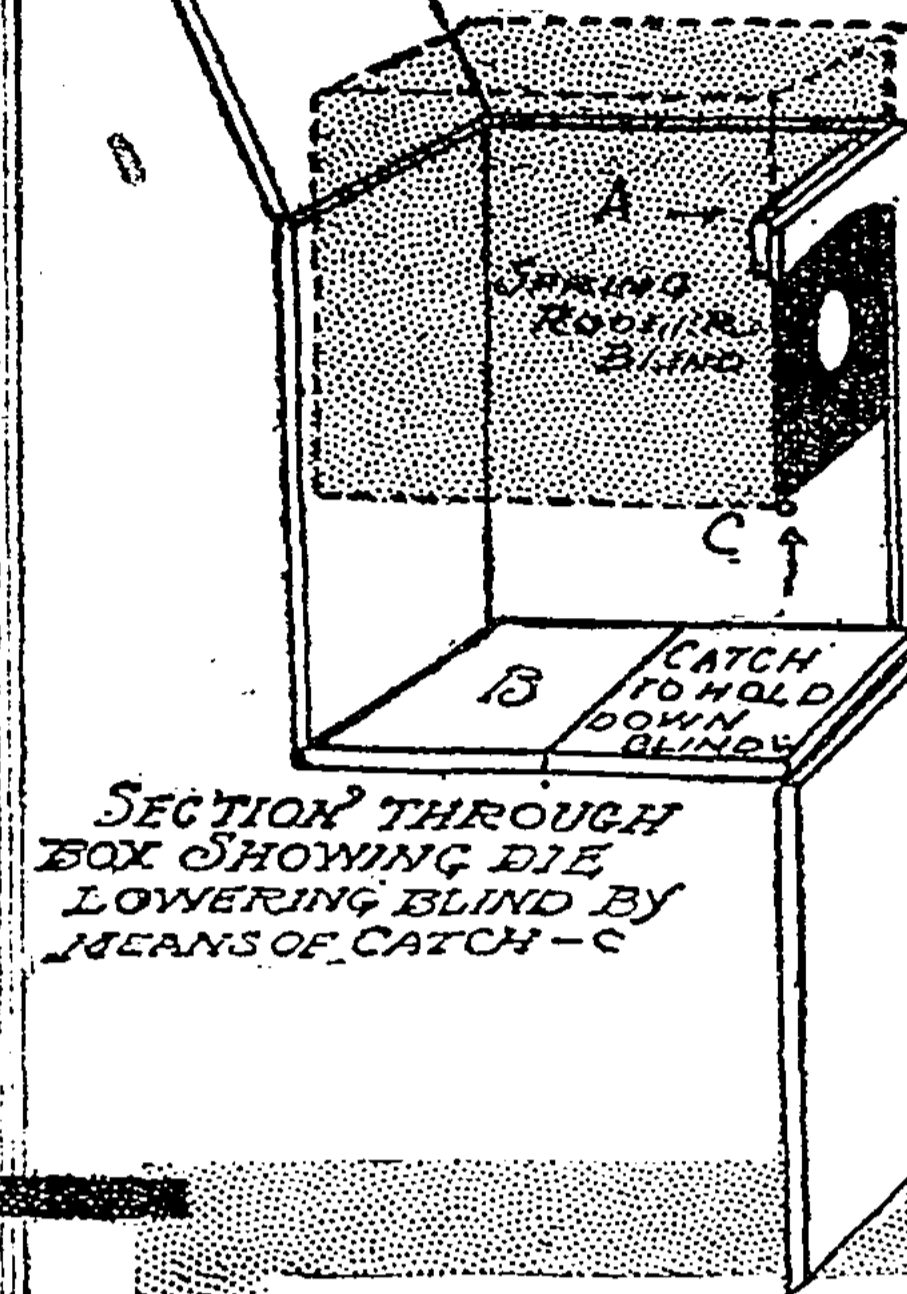
PLACING DIE IN BOX



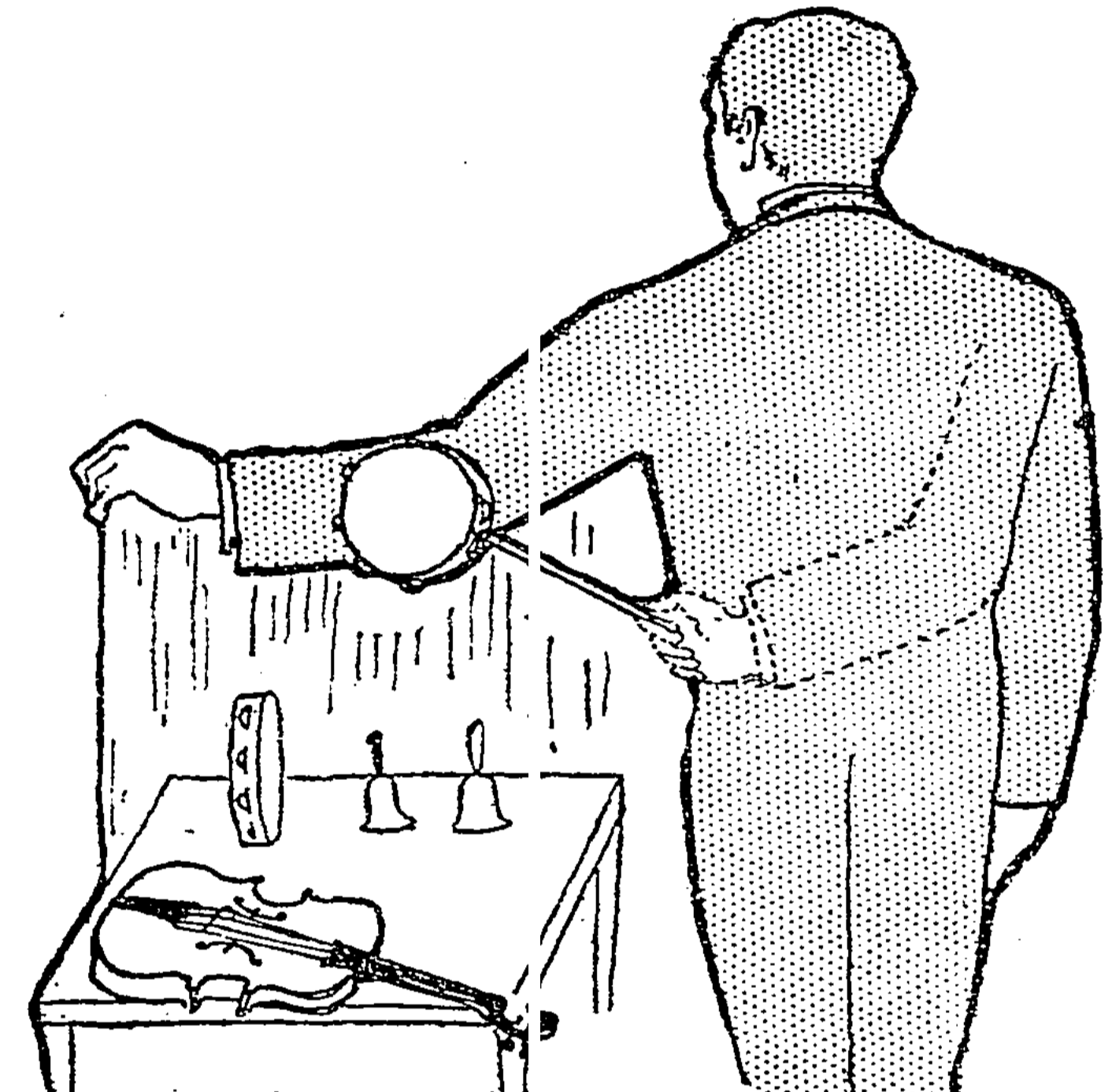
BOX EMPTY - DIE FOUND IN HAT



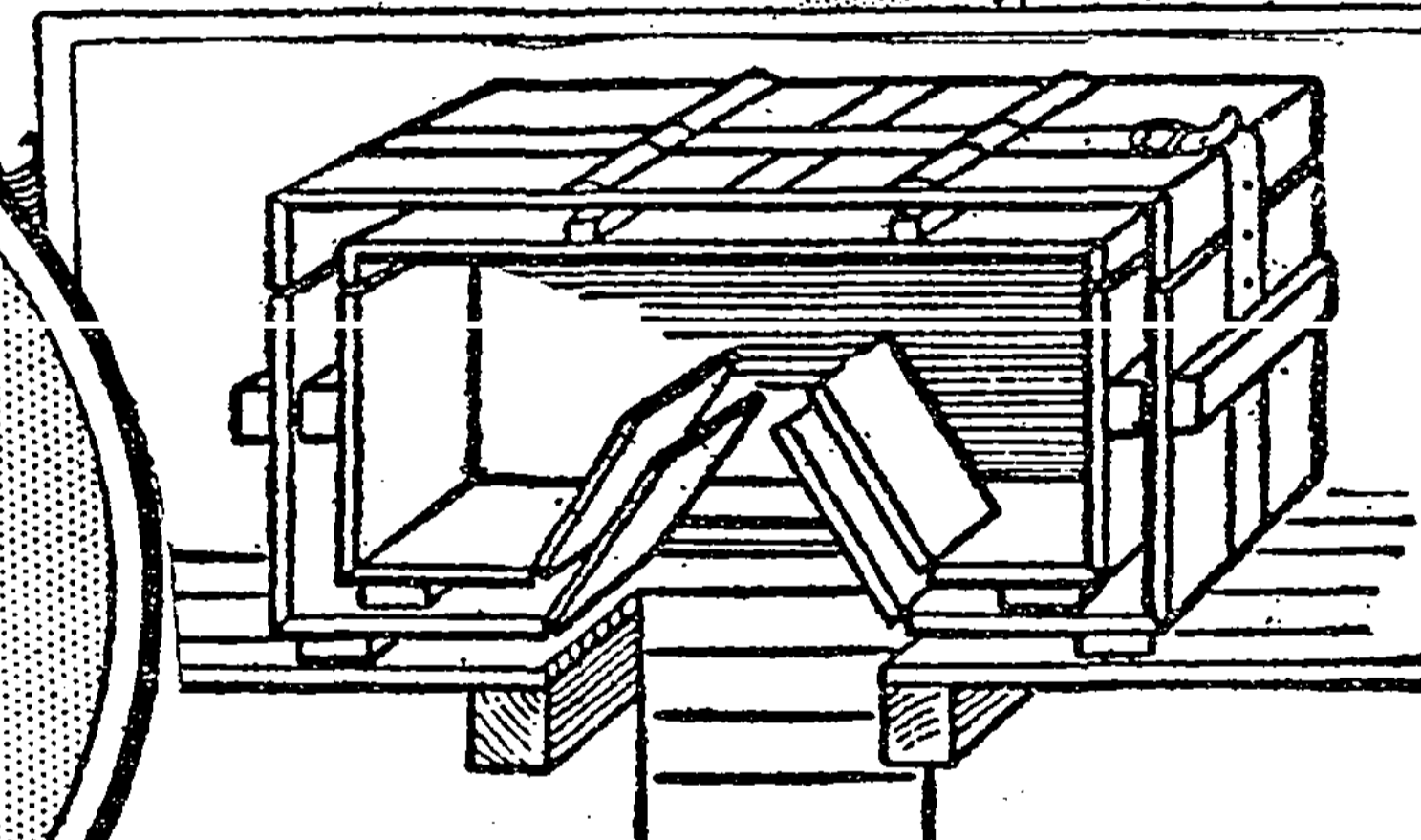
DIE SLIPPING THROUGH TRAP - B -



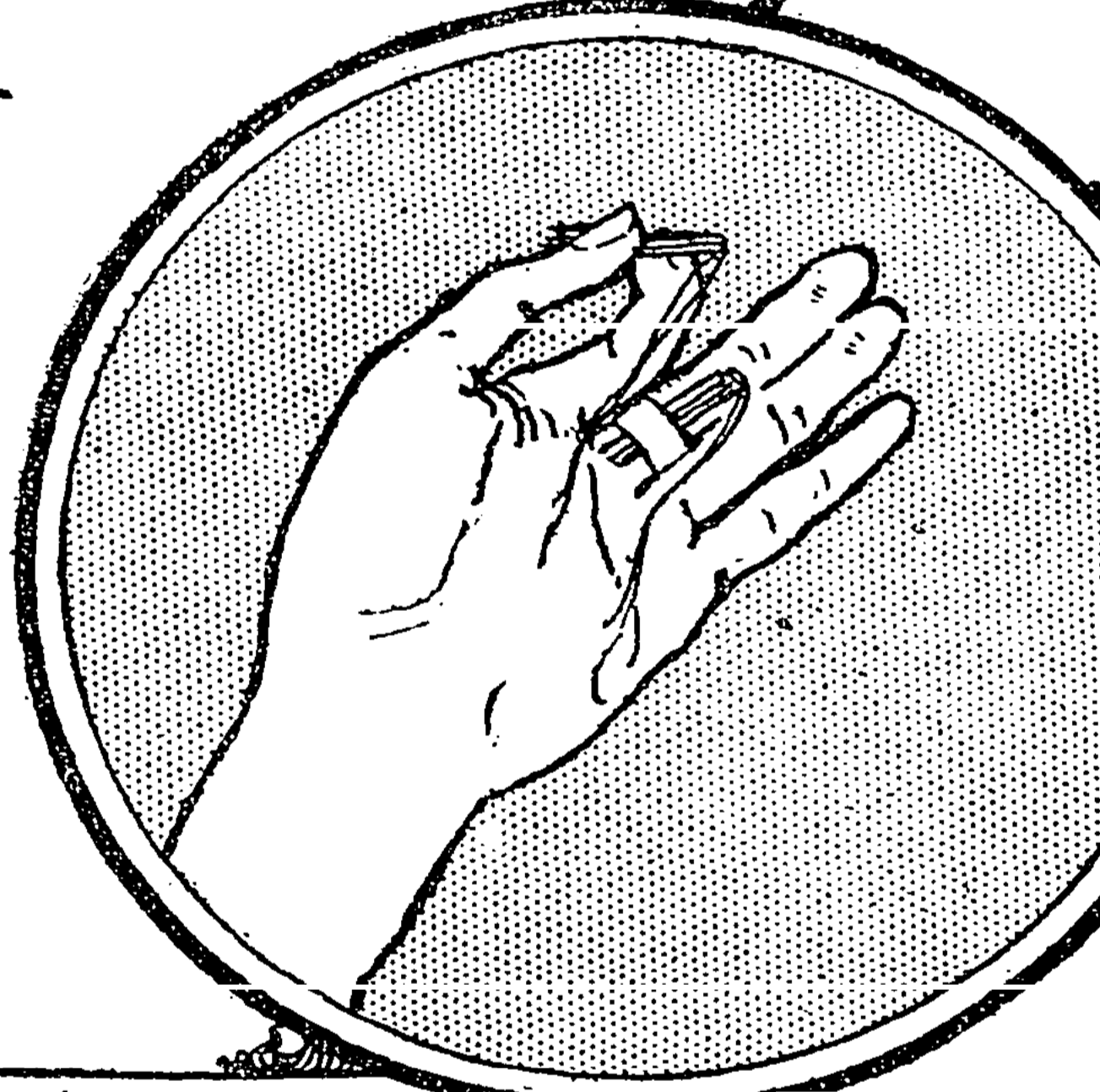
SECTION THROUGH BOX SHOWING DIE LOWERING BLIND BY MEANS OF CATCH - C



THE SPIRIT TABLE TRICK.—By means of the dummy arm, shown in the cut, the performer is able to duplicate, in broad daylight, the floating behavior of the spiritistic mediums.



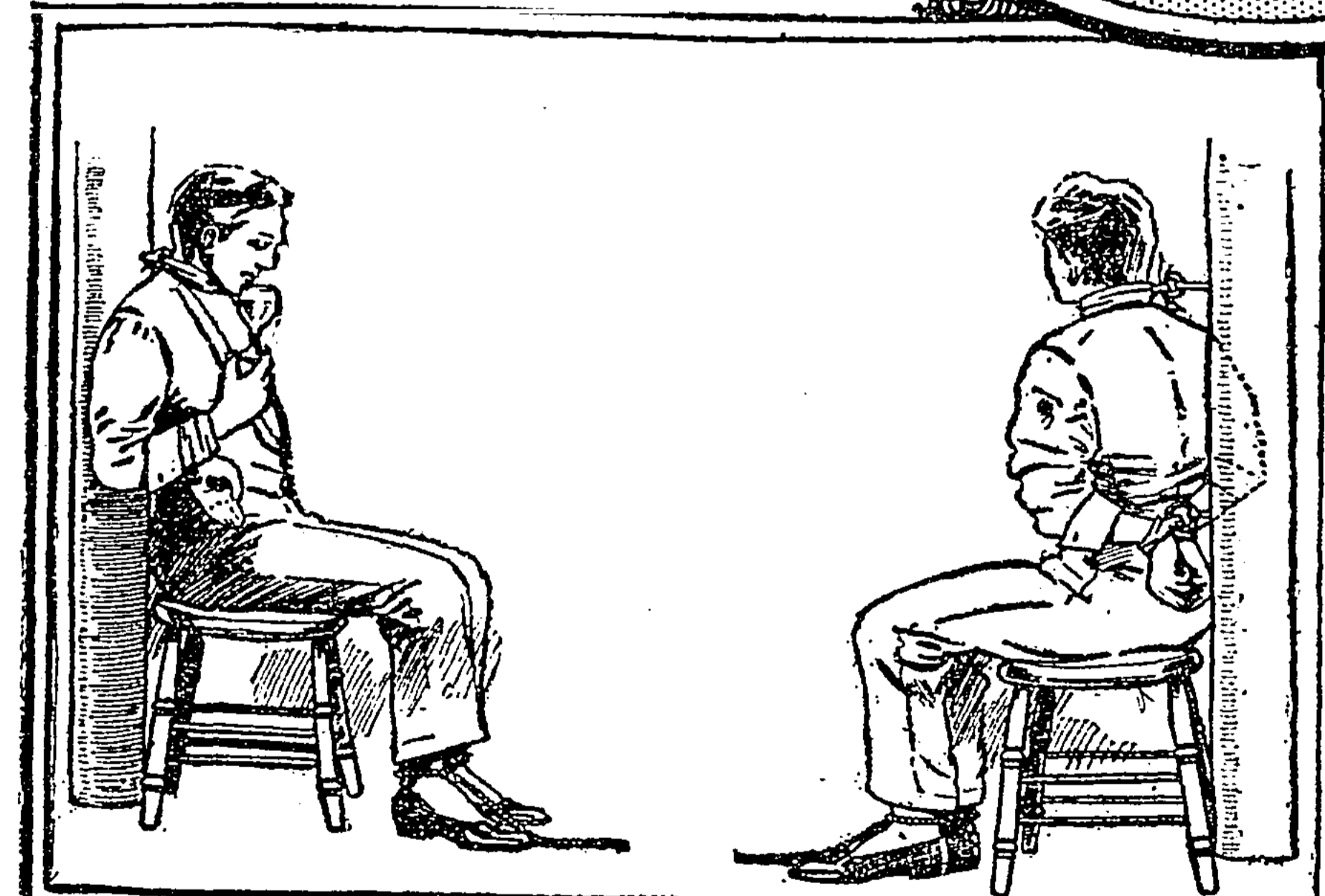
SHOOTING A GIRL FROM A CANNON INTO A BOX.—By a trap door on the stage and similar traps in the two boxes the girl, supposed to be shot from the cannon, is able to enter the inner box.



THE NEEDLE TRICK.—By concealing a bundle of needles in a ring attached to the forefinger of the conjurer, by a sleight of hand, he is able to convince his audience that the needles have been swallowed.

same number of spoils painted on it that are on the side of the die presented to the audience as it drops into the box. A hook, C, catches the eye of the curtain at the bottom of the box, and holds it until the performer releases it. The bottom of the box B, which is held over the inside of the hat when exhibiting the trick, has a spring trap which allows the die to drop into the hat, the front lid hiding this.

This is the way, we are told, that a girl is produced from empty boxes: "Two large boxes are standing, side by side, on a platform, when the scene opens. The sides, back, and front of each box, together with the lid, are



THE MUSLIN TIE.—By an ingenious arrangement of knots and the use of rings allowing for unexpected movements of hands and body the bound conjurer duplicates various "spirit manifestations."

hinged together, and are kept in place by spring catches and may be opened out flat. Taking one box at a time, the performer spreads it out on the stage. When the audience is satisfied that there is nothing concealed, the boxes are replaced on the platform; the small box is dropped into the large one, and the boxes are closed. Immediately after the lid is opened, a young woman springs out.

"At the beginning the girl, in a crouching position, is concealed behind the small box as shown in Fig. 163. When the large box is replaced on the platform, after the performer has opened it out for the audience, it is stood close to the other which gives the girl an opportunity to pass behind it and to enter it through a trap. The bottom of the small box is of black paper instead of wood, enabling the girl to go through it, as it is dropped into the large box."

Resembling, in the illusion which it creates, the spirit table trick, but much simpler than the latter in the device employed, is what is known as the muslin tie. Mr. Hatton thus describes and explains it:

"each ankle and led out among the audience, and a nickel piece is laid upon each shoe so that he cannot lift his knees without dropping a coin. A tambourine is placed on his knees and a hand bell is stood inside of it. A screen is now put in front of him so as to conceal him from the sight of the audience. Immediately the bell is rung and thrown over his screen, the tambourine is shaken, and that, too, goes flying in the air. The screen is removed, the performer is still seated on the chair, the knots are undisturbed. The tambourine is replaced on his knees and a goblet half filled with water is stood on top of it. The screen is again placed so as to hide him, and when removed the goblet is seen to be held, empty, between his lips, and is taken away by one of the committee. Then follow in succession a number of 'manifestations,' as, for instance, an empty pail placed on his knees is found over his head; a piece of board with a hammer and nails is laid on a wooden-seated chair that is placed alongside him, the sound of hammering is heard and a nail is driven into the board; a guitar is thrummed, a horn is blown, and after each manifestation of assistance from some unseen source the knots are examined and in each case are found to be intact. The illustrations show very clearly what the 'unseen source' is, to wit: the hands of the performer stretched around one side. It hardly seems possible, but the bandage that passes through the lower ring is always tied in five or six knots 'to make it secure.' The diameter of the ring helps, and so does the length of the staple, the bandage slips up the arm a little, and when the performer is about to reach around his side he stretches his hands out as much as possible, and then pulls his body to the opposite side of the post, past the lower ring, and is able to reach anything that is placed on his lap. A small waist is necessary, and for this reason, a woman or a child is more successful with the trick than a man; one thing is certain, no one with a 'corporation' will ever succeed in doing it."

To a reporter for THE NEW YORK TIMES Mr. Hatton recounted some of his experiences "on the road" as a professional prestidigitateur.

"About a year after the close of the

"civil war," he said, "we were showing in a Western town. We opened to a packed house, with a considerable sprinkling of well fellows, men who had served in the war and at that time had not fairly settled down. My stage assistant was a remarkably pretty young woman, who was dressed as a page. Our most sensational trick was one known as 'The Pillory.' It was the conventional article—that is, two boards resting on a post. The upper board could be raised and lowered. Holes in the boards, held firmly, when the upper board was shut down and held in place by a padlock, the head and hands of the person placed in the pillory. When my assistant was fastened in this cage, supposedly, could not move. In front of her on a small table stood a tambourine, a tin horn, and two cowbells, the usual tools in trade of the 'medium.' A screen hid the girl for a moment from the audience, and instantly the tambourine jangled, the horn sounded, and the bells were rung. Following this the articles came flying across the screen, and yet when that was removed the girl was found to be still in the pillory. To satisfy the audience that she had no one to help her, some one was invited to come on the stage to see that everything was all right. The 'some one' that night was a rough, good-natured fellow, who caused considerable amusement by his attention to my assistant. Finally, as I stepped toward the footlights to address the audience, he deliberately walked over to the girl, and, saying, 'Give me a smack, sis,' attempted to kiss her. He got what he asked for. Like a flash her right hand shot out from the pillory and he received a smack on his face that resounded through the house and called forth a burst of applause from the delighted audience.

"The fellow was astounded, for he never guessed that the hole in the pillory that clasped the right hand was, unlike the other, which was tight, large enough to allow the hand to be withdrawn at will, so that the girl could manipulate the articles on the table, and, when necessary, administer a 'smack' to any one asking for it.

"In one of my pet tricks I used to borrow a man's hat, and when I was about to return it my assistant, who was to take it to its owner, invariably stumbled (?) accidentally and fell upon the hat, crushing it all out of shape. Finding that pieces were of no use I tore the hat in places, put those in a mortar, and fired

"One of my tricks on the road was a very clever illusion known as 'The Sphinx.' In this a human head resting on an undraped table answers questions, opens its eyes, and gives other evidences that it is alive. The secret of it is that between the legs of the table are mirrors that reflect the stage draperies in such a way as to give the audience the impression that they see directly under the table, and also conceal the body and limbs of the one who personates the Sphinx. On one occasion our man who usually took the part was taken ill, and rather than cut it out of our programme our manager, who was a great wag, volunteered to take our man's place. He made up his face in a grotesque fashion, and to my questions answered in a broad German accent. The audience was in roars, but it was very disconcerting to me, and to repay him for his joke I decided to keep him longer than was usual in his most uncomfortable position.

"Say, old man," he said in an undertone, "cut it out. I am getting cramps in my legs and can't stand it much longer."

"I paid no attention to his appeal, and continued to play him with questions to repay him for striking me. At last, unable to sustain the strain, he deliberately stood up, and, to the amusement of the audience, walked off the stage, the table resting on his shoulders and the mirrors clanging behind him.

"One night I had announced on my programme, 'A Modern William Tell,' the fanciful name for a startling pistol trick. In this the performer allows one of the audience to load a duelling pistol with powder and ball and then to fire at the performer, who is supposed to catch the marked ball in his teeth. In doing the trick the performer slips into the muzzle of the pistol a sort of thimble, and it is into it that the unsuspecting voluntary assistant drops the bullet. By a deft movement this thimble is afterward removed, thereby giving the performer possession of the ball. Not many attempts the trick, for more than once it has led to fatal results when the ignorant or malicious manages to get the bullet into the pistol barrel. The result is that he who exhibits the trick must watch every move made. On the night in question my attention was called away for a second, and when I attempted to remove the thimble I discovered that it was not in the pistol. Whether or not the bullet was in the barrel I did not know. What was I to do? I had only one life, and as for that I had an undying love I was averse to risking it. There was no time for hesitation, so walking to the footlights with the effrontery that is a factor in 'the profession,' I addressed the audience: 'Ladies and gentlemen, I said, 'I cannot go on with this part of my programme. Something wrong has happened, and should I continue you undoubtedly would see in to-morrow's papers: 'Bullet-in Hatton Killed While Attempting a Trick.' Would you believe it the generous audience received this statement with as much applause as if I had performed the trick successfully!"