DAI VERNON'S
MORE INNER SECRETS OF CARD MAGIC

Compiled and Photographed by
LEWIS GANSON
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IN THIS FINE trick, which is a great favourite with Dai Vernon, the four Aces are shown, the cards are squared and held face down in the left hand. By giving the packet a twist in his hands, Dai shows that one Ace has now turned face up. Another twist and a second Ace turns face up, the first Ace having turned face down again. The twisting is repeated until the faces of all four Aces have been shown singly in the face down packet.

Alex Elmsley evolved a move which Dai Vernon uses in this trick. This move has become known as Counting Four as Four, as although only four cards are used, and are seen to be counted separately as apparently four cards, actually one card is not seen, the effect being obtained due to one card being counted twice. This idea was contained in a letter from Alex Elmsley to Dai Vernon, who appreciated its value and now employs it in several effects. This method of counting will be explained in the routine.

Arrange the four Aces in the order Diamonds, Spades, Hearts, Clubs, reading downwards from the face of the face up packet. Holding the packet face up, show the faces of the cards by taking two in each hand, then place them together in the same order in the left hand, square the packet and turn it face down. The reason for displaying two cards in each hand is that it does not allow the spectators to remember the order in which the cards are eventually held.

Suggested patter is, "Very few people realise that the Ace of Spades, being a conspicuous card, is difficult to manipulate—I'll demonstrate what I mean". Holding the packet face down in the left hand, buckle the bottom card and flip over the top three cards as one to the left. To do this, box the three cards with the right forefinger at the outer end and the thumb at the inner end so that they keep in perfect alignment, and toss them face up on top of the bottom card. It looks as if only the Ace of Spades has been turned face up in keeping with the patter. It is important that the three cards should be flipped over and immediately boxed again, not turned and held carefully, as this ruins the effect.

Tilt up the left hand to obscure the face of the packet and simultaneously slide off the Ace of Spades with the right hand. Turn the left hand packet to bring the Ace of Diamonds face up. Tap the Ace of Spades on the face of the Ace of Diamonds remarking, "These other Aces are child's play to handle", then slide the Ace of Spades, face up,
under the packet. Performed correctly, these actions appear as if the face up Ace of Spades has been removed from the face down packet, the packet turned face up and the Ace of Spades placed under the packet, apparently keeping all the cards face up. Actually the order of the cards is:— Ace of Diamonds face up, Ace of Clubs face down, Ace of Hearts face down and Ace of Spades face up.

Turn the packet face down in the left hand, holding it by extending the left thumb across the back to the centre of the right side with the second finger underneath (see Figure 1).

Say, "By twisting the packet like this . . . . . — take the outer left corner of the packet between the right thumb and forefinger as in Figure 1 and pivot the cards round, so that the left thumb and second finger are now at very edge of the centre of the left long side. This is the starting position for Counting Four as Four which is carried out as follows:—

With the right thumb above and the second finger below the centre of the right side of the packet, pinch off the top card, slide it to the right (exposing the face of the Ace of Hearts underneath, continue the patter . . . . the Ace of Hearts turns face up''), and begin to slide it under the packet. Just before it contacts the left fingers, the pad of the left thumb, which is on the very edge of the cards, pushes two cards over to the right. The right thumb and second finger take these two cards as one as the left fingers take the first face down card square under the packet. When the right hand cards, with the face of the Ace of Hearts showing, has cleared the left hand cards, push the top card of the left hand packet to the right with the left thumb and take this card on top of the Ace of Hearts, by sliding the centre of the right side under the pad of the right thumb. Now take the remaining card from the left hand on top of those in the right in the same manner. A trial will show that the appearance is that first a face down card is counted off, then the face up Ace of Hearts, then two face down cards. Actually the first face down card is seen twice, the face up Ace of Clubs being hidden under the face up Ace of Hearts.

Suiting the patter to the actions, make the twisting move with the packet again then perform the count as before. This time it will appear as if the first two cards counted are face down, the third card
face up (Ace of Clubs) and the last card face down. Place the last card under the packet instead of on top, leaving the Ace of Clubs on top.

Hold the packet in the dealing position in the left hand, then buckle the bottom card and flip over the top three cards as one, the appearance being that the Ace of Clubs is turned face down. Make the twisting move with the packet, then make a legitimate count (which will reverse the order) but hold the cards at the centres of the long sides, simulating the moves made previously. During the count, when the face up Ace of Diamonds is revealed, count it and push it forward so that it visibly projects from the front of the packet. Fan the cards a little in the left hand, and with the right hand remove the face up Ace of Diamonds and place it, still face up, on top of the packet, but secure a break under the card below it with the left little finger while squaring up the cards. Seize both these cards as one from above with the right hand, turn the other two cards together (but slightly out of line) in the left hand face up, so all the cards are apparently facing the same way (actually the Ace of Spades is face down) and place the right hand cards on top of those in the left hand. Turn the packet face down in the left hand.

Explain that the twisting move has no effect on the difficult Ace of Spades. To prove this make the twisting move, then count the cards in the same way as you did the second time (remember, the last card goes under the packet). By this method the backs of four cards are shown, but actually the face up Ace of Spades is now second from bottom.

State that the only way to make magic effective in the case of the Ace of Spades is to tap the packet with the finger (do so). Do not count the cards again, but to gain greater effect, hold the packet with the pinch grip at the middle of the sides, and swivel out the bottom card to the left with the left fingers (Figure 2). Now pull the top card to the right with the right thumb and forefinger. Pause, then reach to the right outer corner of the two middle cards with the right thumb and forefinger and slowly pinch the two middle cards apart, revealing the face up Ace of Spades. This handling heightens the effect for the climax.

The manner in which the cards are handled throughout gives the
impression of everything being performed at the finger tips, permitting a clear view of the cards the whole time, and apparently emphasising that all is fair and straightforward. This is certainly a trick which is destined to become a classic.
CHAPTER TWO

THINK OF A CARD

IF A SPECTATOR thought of any card in an ordinary pack, then the performer revealed that card without asking questions or imposing conditions, we would have the perfect effect.

Being ordinary mortals we must resort to trickery to locate the card, and the strength of the effect we can create depends upon how close our method of arriving at the solution resembles reading the person’s mind.

In the routines of this nature which Dai Vernon has devised, he has eliminated all suspicious looking actions and provided logical reasons for everything which takes place. In consequence, though he has not solved the problem of genuine mind reading, he does produce results which have that appearance.

SIMPLE ARITHMETIC

The following effect appears to the spectators as a genuine example of mind reading as only one question is asked before the thought of card is revealed.

PREPARATION. It is only necessary to have any deuce as the fourth card from the top of the pack.

PERFORMANCE. State that you are going to show a spectator a Bridge hand and that you want him to think of one of the cards and also to remember at which number it is from the top of the pack.

False shuffle the pack without disturbing the position of the deuce, then hold the pack face down in the left hand and lift the top card to eye level with the right hand so that the spectator can see its face. Continue lifting cards from the top of the pack (without reversing the order) until thirteen cards have been shown. Place the cards back on the pack and square them.

Tell the spectators quite frankly that you are going to place the pack behind your back to arrange the cards in a certain order.

When the pack is behind your back, run the cards singly from hand to hand from the top of the pack (without reversing the order) until you
come to the fourth card (the deuce) and reverse it. Now run off three more cards (making seven in all) and push them all together into the centre of the pack. Take off three more cards from the top and place them on the bottom of the pack. Square the pack and bring it forward.

Ask for the number at which the thought of card was from the top of the pack, then with this information you are able to reveal the card dramatically in the following manner.

If the number is:—

ONE. Spread the pack and show the deuce reversed in the centre. State that this indicates the position of the card thought of; count two cards to the right and push the third card forward (Figure 1). Ask for the name of the card—turn it over.

TWO. Same procedure but count two and push out the second card.

THREE. Same procedure but state that you have reversed a card, next to the card thought of. Push out the card on the right of the deuce.

FOUR. Spread the pack and the card thought of is seen reversed in the pack—almost a miracle!

FIVE. Same as THREE but push out the card on the left of the deuce.

SIX. Same as TWO but count to the left of the deuce.

SEVEN. Same as ONE but count to the left of the deuce.

EIGHT. Show the deuce reversed in the centre. Square the pack and turn face up. Count two cards off the pack and the card thought of is revealed on the face of the pack.
NINE. Same as EIGHT but the second card is the one.

TEN. Do not reveal the deuce—just turn the pack face up.

ELEVEN. Do not reveal the deuce—flip over the top card.

TWELVE. Show the deuce reversed. Square the pack then count two cards from the top. The second one is the card.

THIRTEEN. Show the deuce reversed. Count two cards from the top and turn over the third card.

Actually, there is very little to remember in performance, as once you have arranged the cards behind your back, a moment’s thought gives you the position of any card.

Any one of the thirteen numbers allows you to find the card in a logical manner, which makes the revelation very effective.
RIFFLED THOUGHT

Readers will be familiar with the trick in which the pack is riffled at the outer end and a spectator asked to think of any one card he sees. The name of the card thought of is then stated, or the card itself located by the performer. The usual method is for a slight pause to be made in the riffling, causing one card to be seen more clearly than any other—in fact it is often the only card which can be recognised.

It is a clever principle and creates a strong impression, providing the spectator is not conscious of the fact that he has only one choice. Having been asked to think of any card he sees, he is anxious to get one firmly fixed in his mind as the cards are riffled before his eyes—one is seen clearly, so he fastens his mind on it with a feeling almost of relief.

The result is based upon sound psychological principles, and with practice a performer can be almost certain of success every time.

In Dai Vernon's method the outer end of the pack is riffled quickly, but when about the centre is reached the remaining cards are bent back further than before and a break is held immediately the extra bending commences. This is simple as the hands work in unison, the left second finger tip moving in to hold the break. The extra bend ensures that the break is held, for when the first card (the one which will be clearly seen) of the bent packet is released, the left second finger tip almost automatically fits into the widened gap. The extra bending causes no appreciable pause in the riffling, but more of the face of the card is seen, in fact with a quick riffle, this is the only card which can be seen clearly enough to be identified. After the riffling has been completed it is a simple matter to transfer the break to the left little finger.

A nice form of presentation is to say, "Some people have quicker vision than others. For instance, if I riffle a pack of cards quickly, like this (do so and hold the break as described) it is almost impossible for a person to identify a card unless he has a very quick mind". Often the spectator will say that he did see a card and a strong effect is registered when that same card is produced in a dramatic manner. The important factor with this presentation is that the spectator does not think that the trick has commenced and he is flattered to think that he has unusually quick vision.

Some performers try to accomplish the slight hesitation in the riffling by holding a break beforehand, others use a short card or have a step in the pack. In all cases the hesitation which occurs is obvious to a keen observer. The sharper bend as described causes no appreciable pause, or break in the riffling sound and is infinitely superior.
THINK OF AN ACE

Because there is very little for the performer to do in this trick, the reader may be tempted to pass it by. However, although the method is simple, the effect is excellent—as a trial will prove.

The effect is that the performer asks a spectator to think of any Ace and when he is really concentrating hard on his choice, to name the Ace. The performer immediately cuts the pack to the Ace named.

It depends upon a very simple set-up which can be done during a shuffle if preferred, but for simplicity we will assume that the reader decides to arrange the pack before beginning his performance.

Place the Ace of Diamonds on the bottom of the pack. The other three Aces must be together in the centre of the pack, the lowest being the Ace of Clubs with the Ace of Hearts above it but injogged so that it projects at the rear. The Ace of Spades is the top card of the three.

If the Ace of Diamonds is thought of, slowly turn over the pack to show this card on the bottom—then turn the pack face down and flip over the top card to show it is not an Ace. This touch makes it puzzling to the onlooker and he concludes that you must have been lucky, so in this instance have another Ace named.

For the Ace of Spades, bring the right hand over the pack and cut above the projecting card, turning the right hand packet to show the face card. As the cut is made the projecting card can be pushed flush with the pack by curling the right thumb inwards.

The Ace of Hearts is shown by cutting at the projecting card, while the Ace of Clubs is produced by cutting at the projecting card and turning over the top card of the bottom packet.

Done only once and given an air of importance, this little item has a strong effect.
The novelty and strength of this effect depends on the fact that the performer takes a shuffled pack, and without looking at the faces of the cards while one is being thought of by a spectator, successfully locates the card.

**METHOD.** Have the pack shuffled by a spectator, then take it back and hold it face down in the left hand. Before proceeding say, "I want you to think of one card you see". Begin lifting one card at a time from the top of the pack with the right hand, holding it with its face towards the spectator. Take each card slowly and show it deliberately, the idea being to get the spectator to think of a card near the top of the pack. Experience shows that he will think of a card within the first seven from the top, but in any case show nine cards in all. To ensure that a card is thought of within this number, keep talking, saying, "You can think of this card, or this, or this one; perhaps this one—but let me know when you have made up your mind".

When a card has been thought of and nine cards are in the right hand, riffle the outer left corner of the pack with the left thumb, opening the pack at the corner about a third of the way down, and insert the packet of nine cards. Push the packet in diagonally so that it will project at the inner right side. Cut at the projection, lifting off the top portion of the pack with the right hand then immediately riffle the corner again with the left thumb and insert the cards into the centre of the pack. The important nine cards are now on top.

The next action is to shuffle the pack with an overhand shuffle, but as trickery is involved, it should be carried out with an air of indifference and without looking at the pack. The method of shuffling is to undercut about one third of the pack and shuffle off on top, but in jogging the first card. Undercut to the injog, run three cards, injog and run the next three cards, then throw the balance on top. Turn the pack face up in the left hand without disturbing the jog; press down on the jog with the right thumb, cut the cards and complete the cut but hold a break.

The position is that three of the original nine cards are on the face of the pack; three are immediately above the break and the other three are underneath the face up pack.

Ask the spectator to hold your right arm and tell him to watch intently as you fan the cards, but turn your own head away so that you cannot see them. Commence to fan off cards slowly, silently count-
ing three cards, then begin the silent count at one again. When your 
count has reached twelve say, "Have I passed your card yet?". If the 
answer is negative, forget about the count and continue fanning, 
making sure that the three cards above the break are clearly seen. 
Start a new silent count below the break and when twelve cards have 
passed ask if the card has been seen. If the answer is again negative, 
forget about the count but continue fanning until three or four cards 
remain above the three last cards. In this instance you know one of 
those three remaining cards is the one thought of. Do not show them 
at this point, but cut the pack, taking note of the face card before cut-
ting. Fan the cards to the noted face card, then spread the cards 
carelessly, so the spectator sees the cards as you say, "Your card must 
be here somewhere". Silently count four cards to the left of the noted 
face card, hold a break, close the pack, cut at the break and complete 
the cut. Place the pack face down on the table, with an end towards 
you.

There are now five cards above the three important cards, so place 
the right fingers on the top card of the pack and commence drawing off 
cards singly in a backwards direction and placing them in the left hand. 
When five cards have been silently counted off, count off two more, but 
sight each card. This is simple as the manner in which you are drawing 
off cards from the pack entails bending up the back of each card to 
lifting it to the left hand. As the sixth card is placed into the left hand, 
hold a break below it. When the seventh card is in the left hand, stop 
and say, "I feel an impulse to stop here".

The position now is that two of the important cards are above the 
break in the left hand (you know each card) and one is on top of the 
pack. Have the thought of card named. If it is the sixth card in the 
left hand, double lift the two cards as one. This is simple because of 
the break. If it is the seventh card, then turn over the top card of the 
left hand packet. Should it be neither of the two cards sighted, then 
turn over the top card of the packet on the table.

In the example we have assumed that the thought of card eventual-
ly came to position amongst the three underneath the face up pack. 
Should it have been in the first three or the three above the break, then 
it will be remembered that we started a count of twelve after the last 
card of the group of three. By cutting the pack when the count of 
twelve was reached (after being told that the card had been seen), we 
would have twelve cards above the important cards when the pack is 
placed face down on the table.

The procedure is now the same as described, except that twelve 
cards instead of five are taken from the pack and placed in the left hand 
before the next two cards are sighted.

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THOUGHT TRANSPosed

In the *Dai Vernon Book of Magic*, under the title of Penetration of Thought (Chapter Four, page 51), Dai Vernon disclosed an excellent effect in which four red backed Aces and four blue backed Aces are used. A spectator is asked to think of any one of the Aces. The four blue backed Aces are counted, placed face down on the table and the spectator is asked to place his hand over the packet. The four red backed Aces are counted and held by the performer who then asks for the thought of Ace to be named for the first time. The performer shows that he now holds three cards only, but when the spectator’s packet is counted it is seen that one red backed card has joined the four blue backed cards. The red backed card proves to be the Ace thought of by the spectator.

Since its publication, this trick has become a firm favourite with card enthusiasts, as the effect is strong and the method clear cut. It would seem that the effect and method could not be bettered, but Dai Venon has recently evolved a trick with a similar theme, in which the thought of Ace changes packets, the red Ace being found in the blue packet and the blue Ace in the red packet. Additionally, the method is perhaps even more straightforward than the original.

A set-up of the four red backed Aces and four blue backed Aces is necessary and the way in which this can easily be remembered is by the C.H.S.D. formula. Holding the fan of eight cards facing you, have the blue Aces to the right, then reading from right to left the order is Clubs, Hearts, Spades and Diamonds with the red Aces following in the same order. Now remove the red Ace of Diamonds from the extreme left of the fan and replace it three cards to the right; that is next to the blue Ace of Diamonds.

METHOD. When ready to perform, fan the cards to show the faces, then turn them face down and spread to show four red and four blue backs. Turn them face up and fan them between the hands. Place the left thumb on the face of the blue Ace of Diamonds (Figure 1) and the right second
finger on the back of the red Ace of Diamonds. By moving the hands slightly together then apart, the cards are split into two packets of four cards each, but the blue Ace of Diamonds has automatically been transferred to the red packet and the red Ace of Diamonds to the blue packet. Place both fans, face up, on the table about three inches apart, the blue packet on the right and the red on the left, the action of transference taking place during the movement of placing the cards down. Then ask the spectator to merely think of any Ace.

Remarkings, "Most people, when asked to think of an Ace, will most often think of the Ace of Spades", pick up the two top cards from the right hand pile and use them as a scoop to pick up the other two cards, which brings the Ace of Spades to the face. Point to the Ace of Spades, square the packet, turn it face down and place it on the table. Pick up the other fan, square the cards, turn them face down, push the top card a little to the right and retain it in this position by holding by the ends as the right hand places them on the table. Place the tip of the left forefinger on the left inner corner of the second card, pick up the top card with the right hand and slide it under the packet (this method prevents hazard, so that the back of the bottom card is not shown). Pick up the packet, hold it face down in the left hand in position for Alex Elmsley's method for Counting Four as Four (see Chapter One). Make the count but as the third card is counted injog it (Figure 2), complete the count, cut at the jog, complete the cut and replace the packet on the table. The blue backed card is now second from the top. Pick up the other packet and make the count exactly as before, injogging the third card, cutting at the injog, completing the cut then replacing the packet on the table. By employing this count, each packet is shown to consist of four cards with backs of the correct colour.

Place the palms of the hands, one on each packet and say the magic word (or use whatever magical by-play is most suitable to you). Spread each packet and show that a transposition of two cards has taken place. Pick up the left hand pile then ask the spectator to name the Ace of which he is thinking. According to his answer proceed as follows:
ACE OF DIAMONDS. Your luck is in as the trickery has already been completed, so make the most of it with a dramatic revelation, showing the blue backed Ace of Diamonds in the red packet and the red backed Ace of Diamonds in the blue packet.

ACE OF HEARTS. Spread and show the backs of the cards, then square the packet. Fan the top card to the right and backwards about one and a half inches, buckle the bottom card and move all the cards above it forward until the card which was moved backwards is lined up with the bottom card. Figure 3 shows this being carried out; two cards (as one) will now protrude from the packet. Grasp the outer right corner of the protruding blue card(s) with the right thumb and forefinger, remove the card(s) and show the face of the Ace of Hearts, then drop the two cards face down on top of the cards in the left hand. Say, "This card came from here", take off the blue card and drop it on top of the other packet. Place down the packet you are holding, pick up the other packet and fan off the two top blue cards to the right and back, buckle the bottom card and move forward all the cards above it so that two cards (as one) protrude from the fan. Remove the red backed card (the blue Ace of Hearts is below it and the two are taken as one), show the face then drop the cards on top of those in the left hand. Take off the single top red backed card and drop it onto the red packet, then drop all the cards in the left hand on top of the red packet. Lift the new top card and show its face (Ace of Hearts) as you say, "The odd thing is that you thought of the very card which changed packets!".

Showing the blue backed Ace of Hearts at the end is extremely convincing, as being the top card it appears to be the one previously taken from the red packet. This latter dodge is always used at the finish regardless of which Ace is thought of.

ACE OF CLUBS. Take the top card into the right hand. Push off the blue card with the left thumb onto the top of the card in the
right hand, then do likewise with the next card, displaying the blue card as the centre one of the three in the right hand. Drop the three cards from the right hand on top of the card in the left hand.

Now carry out exactly the same procedure as described for when the Ace of Hearts is named.

Of course, when the other packet is dealt with, the two top cards are counted off singly (reversing the order), then the red card on top, then another blue card on top, and finally the last blue card on top. This brings the Ace of Clubs second from bottom with the red card immediately above it.

ACE OF SPADES. Fan off the top card, taking it into the right hand, then fan off the next (blue) card, taking it underneath the card in the right hand. For the third count, pull off the bottom card of the left hand cards with the right fingers, taking it below the two cards in the right hand. Take the last card on the bottom of the right hand packet.

Carry out exactly the same procedure as described for the Ace of Hearts, except that the second packet must be counted to bring the Ace of Spades second from bottom, with the red card immediately above it.
CHAPTER THREE

OIL AND WATER

IN HIS TRICK Follow the Leader, Dai Vernon evolved a routine in which he uses two packets of cards, one containing all red cards, and the other containing all black cards. A face up marker card is placed cut from each face down packet to show which is which, then the packets are changed over, the red packet being placed adjacent to the black marker and vice versa. When the top cards are dealt from each packet it is seen that a change has taken place as the top cards match the markers. No matter how often the packets are changed, the cards change too, until all the red cards are face up in one pile and all the black cards in the other, proving that they have "followed the leader".

Working on different lines, Ed Mario developed the Oil and Water theme, the effect being that no matter how one tries to mix black and red cards, they will always separate again.

From Ed Mario's effect Dai Vernon has devised the following routine which he includes in his own performances. It begins with the original Ed Mario method, then continues with Dai Vernon's own variation.

REQUIREMENTS. For the purpose of contrast red picture cards and black spot cards of high value have been used in the photographs, and it will be found that these cards are also ideal for performance.

The set-up of the cards is four black cards on the face of the packet, then three red cards, two black cards and one red. Actually only four red cards and four black cards are ever seen.

PERFORMANCE. Patter to the theme that oil and water do not mix when put together—the red cards can represent oil and the black cards water.

Hold the packet of cards face up in the dealing position in the left hand. Thumb off the four black cards and place them in a squared packet, face up on the table. Although four black cards are seen as they are thumbed off, by squaring the packet, the actual cards will not be remembered.

Count the remaining six cards as four red cards by buckling the bottom card after the second count, counting the block as one card, then
placing the last card on top of the packet. Turn the packet face down and as you say, "These four cards I will keep face down", count the cards onto the table (reversing the order), buckling the bottom card after the second count as before.

Pick up the same packet and hold it face down in the left hand. Fan the top card to the right, grasp the block at the right outer corner with the right thumb and forefinger and hold it still while you do a double buckle under the two bottom cards of the packet to spread these two cards singly to the left, the appearance now being that a fan of four face down cards is held in the left hand. When arranging the cards in a fan, pull the top card of the block very slightly to the left. This ensures that the block appears to be only one card.

Pick up the first black card from the face up packet on the table, turn the card face down and insert it between the last two cards on the left of the fan, leaving the card protruding from the fan. Alternate the rest of the black cards between the four (?) cards in the left hand, the last card going on top of the fan under the left thumb. This position is shown in Figure 1.

Square the cards and say, "Now we have attempted to mix oil and water". Show the top black card, place it face down on the table, then show the second (red) card and place this on top of the black card. Push off the next two cards with the left thumb, take them fanned into the right hand, give a flash of their faces, then place them back on top of the packet in the left hand in the same order. Pick up the two cards together from the table and drop them on top of the packet.

Take the packet at the inner right corner between the right thumb and forefinger, shake the packet and say, "By a slight shake, a magical transformation takes place". Turn the packet face up and place it in the left hand. Fan off the top four cards, taking them into the right hand, then after showing that all the faces are black, square them and place, face up, on the table. Count the six cards in the left hand as four, taking the second card under the first, buckling the bottom card after the second card has been counted and taking the block as one card. Place the last card on top—only four red cards are seen.
Take the cards back into the left hand and say, "Perhaps you would like to see that again. This time I'll make it more visual by keeping the cards face up—then you will see exactly how it's done". Fan the top three cards, the last three cards remaining in a block with just the top card showing to make the fourth red card in the fan. Pick up one of the black cards and starting from the right, insert it under the first red card, then continue alternating the black cards in the fan, the last black card going to the very bottom of the fan. Figure 2 shows what the spectators see as this is completed. Now square the packet.

Say, "This time I want you to be firmly convinced that the cards are really alternated". Count the face up cards from the left hand to the right hand, without reversing the order, saying aloud, "Red, black, red, black, red, black . . .". As you say "black" for the third time, slightly lower the first three fingers of the right hand, but keep the little finger on the bottom of the cards. As the third black card is taken into the right hand, it goes above the three fingers but below the little finger (Figure 3 — exposed view), the last red card goes into the V shaped opening, then the entire right hand packet is placed on top of squared block in the left hand. Being squared, the block appears as the fourth black card. Turn the packet face down.

Secure a break with the left little finger above the two bottom cards. Take off the top four cards with the right hand, spread them in a fan formation, turn them face up to show four black cards and drop them on the table. Without hesitation, fan off the top two cards of the left hand packet to the right, then reach under the inner end of the cards, the right forefinger going into the break, and with the right thumb above the fanned cards, lift the two fanned cards and the two cards
squared as one to the right. This leaves the bottom two cards squared as one card, the appearance being that a fan of four cards only is held by the left hand, the right hand having been removed. By raising the left hand, show the faces of the cards which will be all red.

Now lower the left hand to bring the cards face down and square the packet. With the right hand, pick up the cards from the table, turn them face down and drop them on top of the left hand packet. Fan the top four black cards, take them into the right hand, turn them to show the faces and at the same time, push the top card of the left hand packet slightly to the right. Remark ing, "I'll make a magical mixture", bring the right hand down (cards now face down) aligning the card on the left of the right hand fan with the top (slightly fanned) card of the left hand packet. Grip both by extending the right second finger under the cards and place the left thumb on top of the original bottom card of the right hand packet. By a slight movement to the right then a sharp upward movement of the right hand (but holding back the original bottom card of the right hand packet with the left thumb so that an exchange of two cards is made) slap the left hand packet with the right hand packet. Place the right hand packet on top of the left hand packet. Turn the whole packet face up and deal the cards, overlapping in a line when they will be alternated red, black, red, black etc. By dealing in a line and starting the deal away from the performer as in Figure 4, the last three black cards being dealt in a block as one card, the spread can be immediately squared by a forward sliding action of the right hand. In this way insufficient time is given for a critical scrutiny of the spread cards (which might reveal the block), although it is obvious that reds and blacks are alternated.

**DAI VERNON'S CLIMAX.** When the cards have been squared, it will appear as if the trick is over, especially if the cards are dropped face down on top of the face down pack. This effectively disposes of the two extra cards, for when the performer apparently has second
thoughts and offers to repeat the effect, only four red and four black cards are taken from the top of the pack.

Have the four red cards on top of the face up packet, and say, "I have four red cards ....". Start to count the cards from the left hand into the right (turning the right side of the body to the audience). Count the first two cards in the normal manner, then lower the first three fingers of the right hand, holding the cards already counted with the right little finger underneath and the right thumb above and a little lower on the cards than usual. The third card counted now goes above the three fingers but under the little finger, while the fourth card goes below the packet. As you continue with “...and four black cards”, the counting continues, the first two black cards going into the V break and the last two under the packet. Square the cards and turn the packet face down in the left hand.

Fan off the top four cards, take them into the right hand and square them. Starting with either hand, push off the top card, face down, onto the table, then push off the top card of the other packet on top of it. Continue in this manner, alternating the cards until all are dealt. Pick up the packet, turn it face up and count the cards from the left hand to the right to show that the four red cards are together and the four black cards are together. As you start the count, turn the left side of the body to the audience and make the same secret actions as before, when you are ready again to alternate the cards and repeat the effect.

As the cards are shown for the second time, make the count as before, but this time count off three cards before lowering the right first three fingers, taking the fourth card below the packet, then the next three into the break and finally the last card below the packet. Turn the packet face down in the left hand, fan off the top four cards into the right hand and place them face down on the table.

Say, "I'll tell you what I'll do—I'll vary the procedure and show you how they can be mixed instead of separated". Count onto the table the first three cards from the left hand into a separate pile, reversing the order by the count, then scoop them up with the last card so that this card goes to the bottom. Drop the squared packet on the table to the left of the other packet.

Pick up the packet on the right and holding it face down in the left hand say, "I want you to be thoroughly convinced that the cards are separated into colours". Turn over the top card book fashion, turn it face down again in the same manner and push it off onto the table. Buckle the bottom card and turn over the next two cards as
one (book fashion), turn them face down again and push off the top card on top of the first card. Fan the remaining two cards in the left hand, then reach to the outer index corners with the right hand and covering the index corners with the fingers, turn the two cards to show the faces (Figure 5), then turn them face down again and place them on top of the other two cards.

Pick up the same packet again and count the cards face down on top of the other packet (reversing the order), then pick up the whole packet and place it in the left hand, fan the top five cards between the hands as you say, "Now we have black on top of red, and with one simple movement like this . . . . ". As this is said, draw the fourth card of the fan onto the left packet with the left thumb and the fifth card under the right hand packet with the right second finger (underneath the cards). This action is simultaneous with moving the right hand slightly to the right and lifting it quickly to slap the left hand packet. Immediately place the cards in the right hand on top of those in the left hand, then deal the cards face up as you conclude the sentence “. . . . we have black and red alternated”,
‘MAC’ McDONALD, the American magician, who performs such fine close-up magic, has one of the greatest handicaps possible for a magician—he has only one arm. However, by determination and clever thinking he has devised some remarkable routines suitable for his own use. The following routine with four Aces, which has become known as "The $100 Routine” (because that is the price known to have been paid for the secret), is a fine example of his work.

Obviously other magicians will not have to resort to the same moves as "Mac" McDonald, as with the use of both hands the trick becomes delightfully simple to perform, especially now it has been given the Vernon treatment.

**EFFECT.** Four Aces are placed in a row on the table and three indifferent cards are placed on each Ace. Three Aces vanish from their packets and assemble in the fourth packet.

Although similar in effect to the usual form of Four Ace trick, this version is so clean in operation that there appears to be no possibility of trickery. The patter and presentation make it particularly entertaining.

**REQUIREMENTS.** Three double faced cards—the Aces of Hearts, Diamonds and Clubs on one side and indifferent cards on the other.

The trick is very effective when performed with Jumbo cards.

**SET-UP.** The four ordinary Aces are spread throughout the pack.

On the face of the pack are the three double faced cards with the indifferent faces showing.

Make sure that the ordinary cards which correspond to the indifferent faces of the double faced cards, are nowhere near the face of the pack.

**PERFORMANCE.** The starting patter can be on the following lines:

"Gamblers have recently discovered a new way of controlling cards
without having to resort to sleight of hand. Obviously, this could spell ruin to those people who run gambling establishments, and in their own interests they are prepared to pay a good price to know what to guard against. (Indicate a spectator who is a most unlikely looking gambler.) "You Sir, . . . if you were the proprietor of a flourishing gambling establishment, I have no doubt you would pay me at least a hundred dollars (or pounds) to know what to watch for." (If he says he would, ask for the money! If he says he wouldn't then you can still go ahead.)

"As no one will put up the cash I can only show what might happen, then if you want the secret it will still cost you a hundred dollars (or pounds)."

1. "I'll demonstrate with four Aces"—Spread the face up cards between your hands and remove the Ace of Spades, then remove the other three ordinary Aces, placing them overlapping each other to the front of the table. The Ace of Spades is at the bottom.

2. "I will also need some other cards and will place three here, three here, another three here and three more here."

Still holding the pack face up and in accordance with the patter, take off the first three cards (the double faced cards with the indifferent faces showing), and place them overlapping each other to your right. The next three face up cards are placed to the left of the first three, another three to their left and finally, another three on the extreme left.

3. "Five packets of cards which I propose to mix up a little by placing these two packets face to face, this one face up, then the four Aces face down and finally the last packet face up."

The actions which accompany the patter are:—

Pick up the packet on the extreme left and hold it face up in the left hand. Pick up the next packet, turn it face down and place it on top of the cards in the left hand. Pick up the next packet and place it face up on the left hand cards. Pick up the four Aces, turn them face down (emphasise this) and place them on the cards in the left hand. Finally place the packet on the extreme right, face up on the four Aces. Spread the cards and say, "Remember the Aces are FACE DOWN . . ."

Square the cards.

4. " . . . but if I turn the cards over (slowly and deliberately turn the whole packet of cards over) the Aces will be face up."
With the right thumb, riffle the cards upwards at the inner end until you see the face up Ace of Spades (fourth card from the bottom). Make no secret of this riffling and sighting. Cut the cards at this point and complete the cut. This will bring the Ace of Spades to the face of the packet with the three double faced cards (Ace faces upwards) underneath it.

5. "So that you can see each Ace clearly, I will place them face up on the table" . . .

Place the Aces (?) in a row from right to left on the table, the Ace of Spades to the extreme right.

and three cards face down on each Ace".

Now comes some subtle business which makes the spectators think they see the faces of all the cards.

Push off the next three (face down) cards with the left thumb and take them into the right hand. Just allow a glimpse to be seen of the faces as they are placed face down on, but overlapping, the bottom of the Ace (?) on the extreme left. Push off the next three face up cards with the left thumb, take them into the right hand, turn them face down and place them on but overlapping the bottom of the next Ace (?).

You now have six cards in your left hand, the three ordinary Aces face up covered by the face down indifferent cards. Turn the whole packet over with the left thumb, and as if being a little careless, let the cards spread a little so that a flash is given of the three face up cards. Square the cards then reach to the front of the packet with the right hand and turn the packet over end for end, tap the packet with the right forefinger, turn it over sideways, thumb off the top three face down cards (Aces), take them into the right hand and immediately place them on (overlapping at the bottom) the Ace of Spades. At the same time turn the cards in the left hand face down and place them onto (overlapping at the bottom) the Ace to the left of the Ace of Spades.

These actions, performed casually and without being given importance, create no suspicion.

6. Pick up the packet on the extreme left and holding the Ace still, reverse the other three cards to the back of the packet so that the Ace becomes the face card of the face up packet. Spread the cards to show the faces and say, "One Ace and three indifferent cards". Square
the packet, turn it face down in the left hand then turn the left hand over so that it is back upwards when part of the face of the Ace will show. With the left thumb push off the back indifferent card, face up, onto the table, then push off the next one in the same manner. Bring the right hand over to the two remaining cards and grasp them at the visible end between the first and second fingers on the face of the Ace at the corner and the thumb at the rear of the second card (Figure 1). Move the right hand forward to display the visible Ace but keep the left hand still and in exactly the same position as when it was holding the cards (Fig. 2). Say, "The Ace of Diamonds" (or whatever it is), then immediately place both cards back into the left hand but with the Ace downwards (Figure 3). Without pausing, thumb off the Ace which will now show as an indifferent card. Take the last card (back up) into the right hand, then turn it over slowly, and dramatically to show it as an indifferent card—the Ace has vanished.
Repeat the same procedure with the second packet.

For the vanish of the Ace from the third packet, make exactly the same actions as before, but show the Ace by taking the cards into the right hand (as explained above), after the first indifferent card has been thumbed off onto the table placing the packet back into the left hand again with the Ace upwards for the second indifferent card to be thumbed off. Now take the packet into the right hand again, show the Ace and complete the vanish as before.

All that remains is to turn over the three face down cards on the Ace of Spades, one at a time, with as much dramatic effect as you can, and show that all the Aces have arrived in the end packet.

Conclude by saying, "And that's how cards are controlled without sleight of hand—I'll show you the secret for a hundred dollars (or pounds)".

NOTE — By the way, if anyone offers to pay, do the same as we have no doubt our good friend Mac would advise — take the money!
CHAPTER FIVE

THE NOTIS CASCADE

DURING ONE OF Dai Vernon's visits to Senor Notis, the Argen-
tinian card expert, Dai demonstrated Howard de Courcey's one handed
shuffle. On the next visit Senor Notis performed a variation which
he had evolved, in which the pack was cut and the corners of the cards
interwoven while held in one hand, then the cards were allowed to
cascade down from one hand to the other, the cards intermingling as
they fell.

The first part of the flourish is exactly the same as Howard de
Courcey's, but so that the explanation is complete the whole procedure
will be described.

Hold the pack at the fingertips in the left hand, the position being
that the first, second and third fingertips hold one side, the ball of the
thumb is about a third of the way along the other side (from the right
upper corner), and the little finger is at the centre of the right end.
With the tip of the forefinger, make a break in the outer side of the
pack, pulling open half of the pack. The bottom packet is held by the
forefinger and thumb. Dip the forefinger into the wide break (Figure
1), then extend the second and third fingers so that the two packets
separate sideways, the top packet further supported by the little finger
at the centre of the right end. Additionally, the bottom packet is car-
ried in the opposite direction by the thumb and forefinger, until a
position is reached when the forefinger comes between the two packets

which are lined up side by side (Figure 2). By exerting pressure
with the thumb, bring the inner corners of the two packets together,
then move the little finger to the bottom right corner of the packet held
by the fingers. Pressure by the thumb and little finger will cause the corners of the cards to interweave as in Figure 3. Continue the pressure after all the corners are interwoven, swivelling the packets until they are almost at right angles to each other, the forefinger sliding down into the "V" now formed by the inner sides of the packets. The second finger curls momentarily behind the packets.

Turn the left hand so that the interwoven corners point downwards, then bring the right hand to these bottom corners. Grasp the bottom of the packets with the right hand, the thumb in front and the fingers behind. This allows the position of the left hand to be altered, to bring the left thumb crotch to the centre of the outer side of one packet and the left second finger to the centre of the outer side of the other packet. The left forefinger goes behind the packets and exerts slight pressure from the back.

To begin the cascade, pull the top front card (it can be on either packet according to the weave) downwards with the right thumb (Figure 4) and simultaneously move the right hand downwards. The cards will fall in streams from both packets, the streams joining as they fall, to be caught by the right hand (Figure 5).

With practice the right hand can be moved to about two feet below the left hand, the cards cascading down between them in a very pretty flourish.

A somewhat less spectacular cascade can be made without letting the cards fall into the right hand. To do this extend the left little finger
as far as possible below the interwoven corners as the right hand momentarily holds the packets for the left hand to alter its grip. Now remove the right hand and display the cards in the left hand. The cards will stream together against the left little finger. This is quite a pretty effect even though the cards only fall a few inches.

Fanning powder applied to the cards will assist in making the cards cascade evenly.
CHAPTER SIX
MAINLY MANIPULATION

IN THIS CHAPTER we deal with three excellent items which require manipulative dexterity. The first two are methods for producing cards from the seemingly empty hands, while the third is a complete routine.

1. — ALLEN SHAW’S CARD PRODUCTION

As a boy Dai Vernon saw Allen Shaw perform on many occasions and was particularly intrigued by the manner in which he made coins and cards appear at his fingertips. One evening, plucking up his courage, Dai Vernon went back-stage to visit the great man and offered to purchase the secret of the card production. Obviously thinking it was merely curiosity which prompted this offer, Allen Shaw stated that the price would be twenty dollars; a sum which Dai did not possess. However, he went away, saved up his pocket money and some months later when Allen Shaw was playing in the vicinity again, Dai presented himself, put down his money and requested the secret. Shaw kept his word and taught Dai his method.

The production is made with the back of the hands towards the audience, the striking feature being that each card seems to jump to the fingertips as the hand moves up and down in a graceful manner.

Start with five or six cards in the regular palming position in the right hand—the number of cards can be increased when proficiency has been attained. Stand with the right side of the body towards the audience, and move the right hand upwards, simultaneously bringing the cards to the position more usually associated with the back and front palm; that is clip the top outer corner between the first and second fingers and the bottom outer corner between the third and little fingers. In this manner the back of the hand and fingers are seen to be straight as the hand moves up almost to shoulder height. Move the hand down about two feet, bringing the cards to the regular palming position by pushing on them with the right thumb. As the hand begins to move up again, push the face card slightly upwards with the ball of the right thumb and clip the outer top corner with the side of the forefinger. Pressing outwards with the tip of the forefinger causes the card to leave the packet and curve away (the opposite top corner of the card is against the heel of the hand). Press the side of the thumb-nail against the upper side of the card, about half an inch from the tip of the forefinger (Figure
1—exposed view). This puts an acute bend into the card at this point. Slide the thumb-nail sharply off the top side of the card and exert continued pressure with the tip of the forefinger. This causes the card to spring up into view above the hand held at the front of the extreme corner by the tip of the forefinger and the tip of the thumb which has now moved to the back of the card.

The actions should be timed so that the card springs into view as the hand reaches the top of its upward movement. After the slightest of pauses, release the card (it falls to the stage), then move the hand down and proceed as before to produce the next card.
The Prince of Magicians, Cardini, evolved the following method in which cards can be produced singly while the fingers are open.

In this version, the packet of cards are held well back in the palm, the centre of the top side of the packet at the base of the thumb, which exerts a strong downward pressure on the edge of the cards. The opposite side of the packet is against the fleshy part of the palm, extending from just below the root of the third finger to the heel of the hand. The downward pressure of the thumb causes the cards to curve away from the palm. When the cards are in this position and the back of the hand is towards the audience, the fingers can be opened without the cards being seen.

To produce a card, bend the second and third fingers inwards, the second finger dipping between the palm and the cards and the pad of the third finger resting on the face of the outer card of the packet (Figure 1 — exposed view). By pulling with the third finger, the face card can be made to project past the packet, where its short edge can be clipped by the third finger in front and the second finger behind, and pulled free from the thumb hold. In this position the card can be seized by the tips of the thumb and forefinger at the upper outer corner (Figure 2 — exposed view). By removing the tip of the third finger and pushing with the tip of the second finger, the card can be brought into view, held by the thumb and forefinger at the extreme outer corner. The card is dropped into a receptacle and the next card produced.

Dai Vernon has made the following subtle addition. When the first card is produced, take it into the left hand and continue with the production. At any time when three or more cards are held in a fan in
the left hand, they can be placed back into the right hand and held with the forefinger across their faces and the thumb behind. The side of the card on the right of the fan should come well into the crotch of the thumb (Figure 3—exposed view), when the fan of cards will completely hide the remaining cards yet to be produced.
Card manipulation is usually regarded as one of the more serious branches of magic, but Dai Vernon completely alters this theory in his entertaining and humorous routine, Mosquito Parade. Performed to the music from which it takes its title, it provides a series of surprises and introduces novelty and comedy. The entertainment value is so good that Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer asked Dai Vernon to feature it in a short film.

Eleven cards are needed, the three top cards of which are identical.

As the music begins (in exaggerated slow time), the cards are in the back-palm position in the right hand, the performer standing with the left side of his body towards the audience. In time with the music, two cards are produced singly, then the remaining block is produced as one card, the block of cards being held squared by the thumb at the inner end, the second finger at the outer end, the first finger at the centre of the upper side and the little finger at the centre of the lower side. As the cards are produced they are taken by the left hand which eventually holds what appears to be three cards, the block being placed on the face of the fan as in Figure 1. The fan is turned to show both sides and, of course, the hands are also seen to be otherwise empty.

Still in time with the music the first card of the fan is taken by the right hand, turned to show the back (Figure 2), then allowed to drop to the stage. Notice the position of the right hand in Figure 2—it is the position needed for back-palming cards later. The second card is treated in the same manner as the first, but as the third card (actually the block) is taken, the right hand back-palms all but the face card of the block, which is allowed to fall to the stage. After a slight pause, the whole procedure is repeated twice more, then on the third occasion
the first two cards are dropped as previously but the block is retained as one card. This card(s) is taken into the left hand, one end going into the crotch of the left thumb. The music stops at this point and seemingly the action is at an end, the position being that the performer is assumed to be holding one card; actually it is the three identical cards held squared.

By bringing the left hand to the right, the back is brought towards the audience, obscuring the action of the left thumb which swivels the face card down for it to be gripped in the palm position as the other two are taken as one, into the right hand.

The right hand card(s) is now back-palmed and seemingly appears at the left fingertips. This production is accomplished by first causing the card palmed in the left hand to buckle away from the palm by pulling down and back on the outer end with the fingers, then placing the second finger behind the card. By quickly straightening the fingers the card appears, the corner clipped between the tips of the first and second fingers.

The performer faces front and brings both hands to his sides, the empty right palm being visible at mid-thigh level. The left hand card is now back-palmed, then the cards in the right hand are produced as one.

Now the performer remarks: “TWO! that's right—one here (as he secretly back-palms one of the right hand cards and drops the other to the stage) .... and one here!”.

In time with the conclusion of the sentence he produces the card in his left hand. Next he back-palms the card in his left hand and produces the one in his right, then makes the card vanish from one hand and appear in the other two or three times.

When one card is back-palmed in the left hand and the other visible in his right hand, he makes a throwing motion with his right hand towards the left as his body inclines to the left. During the throwing action the right hand card is brought to the Tenkai Palm position; that is one end is gripped by extending the thumb along the edge, one corner of the card being against the top joint of the thumb and the opposite corner against the flesh at the base of the thumb. In time with the right hand throwing action, the left hand card is produced, then without actually turning the body, the right hand continues to move to the left to take the visible card. As the hands come together the right hand seizes the left outer corner of the left hand card (Figure 3) and squares up the two cards. Facing front, the performer holds
the card(s) by its top corners, turns it, then displays it by taking the centre of the left end with the left fingers. He now first flicks it with the right fingers, then drops it flat to the stage. The curvature in the two cards, and the fact that they are dropped flat, keeps the cards together as they fall from a height. If they part when they reach the stage, there are other cards scattered around to disguise the separation.

NOTE — Another tune which fits the actions quite well is Pop Goes the Weasel.
CHAPTER SEVEN
MAGIC WITH THE RIFFLE SHUFFLE

In his book *Expert at the Card Table*, S. W. Erdnase described some uses of the Riffle Shuffle in card artifice, but wrote, "the possibilities of the riffle, for all practical purposes at the card table, are limited to retaining the top or bottom stock". However, he does mention the possibilities of "riffling the two packets truly together, and squaring up in a slightly diagonal position, then withdrawing the packets, throwing the original top on top again; or pushing the two packets completely through in the diagonal position, leaving the order of the whole deck the same". He gives no details of these methods, his reason being "there is seldom a desire and never a necessity of preserving the complete order at a card table". As he was referring to gambling methods in this instance we might expect to find further reference to this subject in the section of the book on Legerdemain, but there is only a description of a simulated riffle shuffle with the cards held in the hands. This is given with the observation, "it is an excellent one for conjuring, as these performers never riffle on the table".

Dai Vernon saw no reason why a conjurer should not riffle on the table, especially when he saw the possibilities of the riffle for card magic after a gambler had shown him a certain method of shuffling. Known in his youth as The Mysterious Kid, this gambler was an expert in retaining the complete order of the pack by the riffle shuffle. Dai Vernon met him later in life, was shown his method, and realised that here was flawless work, which could be of considerable value to a magician.

There is no doubt that Dai Vernon is the pioneer of this branch of card magic. He has evolved many uses for the riffle shuffle, disclosing his findings to the late Dr. Jacob Daley who also experimented with excellent results.

In this chapter we will deal with the methods Dai Vernon employs, but as we will be constantly referring to a step in the pack, we will commence by explaining how this step is formed.

**BASIC FORMATION OF A STEP**

It is often desirable to cut the pack before commencing a riffle shuffle on the table. Additionally, it may be desirable to cut the pack after the shuffle. It is therefore necessary to be able to restore the position before proceeding, and Dai Vernon uses a step break to enable this to be done.
With the pack on the table, grasp the cards with one hand at each end, undercut the pack and rapidly slap the right (original bottom) packet on top of the left packet, so that the inner side forms a step at the left inner corner. Immediately square the pack (apparently) by bringing both hands to the pack and seizing it at the ends. Actually, the left thumb tip goes over the step (Figure 1), and the pack is squared by pinching (in a "milking" action) the right inner corner with the right thumb and second finger (Figure 2). This causes the pack to ride up at the left inner corner for the left thumb to hold an open break. To cut the upper packet at the break without hazard, contact the left thumb tip with the right thumb tip, when the cut can be made with certainty.

When a step has been formed in a pack as described, many variations are possible and the following examples will illustrate its use.

(a) The pack can be moved and handled without disturbing the step if the right end is taken between the right thumb and second finger as in Figure 3.

(b) The pack can be cut anywhere either above or below the step, by cutting with the grip shown in Figure 3, then the cut can be completed without destroying the step.
(c) The pack can be cut into, say, three piles and the step retained (Figure 4). Each packet can be cut (packet with step cut at step) and the cuts completed, then the pack reassembled to bring the important card or cards to the top.

(d) By reaching over the pack with the left hand, it can be picked up at the front side and the step retained. If the left hand turns as the right hand advances to take the pack, it can be grasped between the right thumb at the centre of one end and the right fingers at the opposite end. The left fingers can now go under the pack for the left little finger to pull down on the step to form a break as the pack is taken into the dealing position in the left hand,

(e) Alternatively the pack can be picked up in the right hand at the right end as in Figure 3, and placed directly into the dealing position in the left hand, the step being at the right inner corner and retained by the pack being pinched in the crotch of the left thumb. The right hand can come over the pack for the right thumb to pick up the slightly projecting step at the right inner corner. From this position it is now simple to transfer the open break to the tip of the left little finger.

NOTE. Although we have dealt with the formation of the step in connection with the riffle shuffle, it will be realised that the step can be formed directly as the result of the SPECTATOR'S PEEK, and the pack placed down on the table when the foregoing ruses will apply equally well.

THE PULL THROUGH SHUFFLE

This shuffle retains the complete order of the pack, even though the cards are seen to be fairly mixed by a method of shuffling accepted by the most experienced card players.

To enable the reader to clearly understand the instructions, we will first explain what actually happens.
The pack is cut into two halves which are then riffled together at the corners. The two packets are pushed together, and if there were no trickery, then the cards would be truly mixed. However, when the packets are still about an inch from being squared, the packets swing diagonally, enabling what was the right hand packet to be grasped by the left thumb and third finger and what was the left hand packet to be grasped by the right thumb and third finger. At this point it seems that the cards are squared, as the shifting of direction of the packets has been amply covered by the fingers. Now the cards are cut, then the cut is completed, and it is this which brings the cards back to their original order, for due to one packet having passed completely through the other, the original top half goes on top again. Exactly how this is done will now be described.

The starting position is with the pack on the table, a side of the pack being towards the performer.

Grasp both ends of the pack, one in each hand, the second and third finger tips at the outer corners, thumbs at the inner corners, and forefingers curled on top. Actually the left hand grip is on the bottom half of the cards and the right hand grip on the top half. By moving the hands sideways apart, cut the pack into two halves (as near equal as possible), and allow both halves to rest on the table, butting together as they are placed down. Shift the position of both hands to bring the second, third and little fingers to the centre of the sides of each packet, the pads of the thumbs at the two adjacent inner corners and the forefingers curled on top of the packets. Figure 1 shows this holding position and in performance it will be found that the sides of the little fingers press down on the outer corners of the packets.

Lift the adjacent inner corners with the thumbs until the top of the "V" shaped opening that appears between the corners is approximately half an inch from the table. The thumbs do not bend the cards—they lift them at the corners, then commencing with the right thumb, the cards of each packet are caused to fall alternately by an upward riffling action of both thumbs. The riffling finishes with
the left thumb action so that a card (or cards) from the left hand packet is on top.

Again shift the position of the hands, to grasp the end of each packet (Figure 2) in almost the same holding position as when the cards were cut. Push the packets together, in line, until they jam (about an inch before the pack would be squared). When pushing the packets together, the tips of the third fingers are at the outer ends, just around the outer corners of the packets, which keeps the cards squared. It is these third fingers which now exert an outward pressure on the outer corners of the packets, causing the interlocked ends of the cards to swing diagonally inwards until the third fingers fit between the “V’s” formed by the corners of the packets (Figure 3). In the photograph the inward diagonally shifting of the packets has been exaggerated for clarity. In addition the first and second fingers of each hand have been lifted to give a clear view—in performance they would cover the projecting corners of the cards. It will be found that the thumbs have to relax or to move away a little from the cards to allow the inner projecting corners of the packets to come into position, then they move back to touch the projecting corners at the rear of the pack.

Now the left hand does most of the work of aligning the packets. Squeeze with the left thumb (on the inner projecting corner) and second finger (on the outer projecting corner), while the third finger
remains in position. Also squeeze with the right thumb and second finger, but this action should only commence after the left thumb and second finger have begun to squeeze, and it is not so pronounced. This process lines up the packets and prevents an unnatural double movement of the top card of the former left packet. What has actually happened is that the packets have begun to pass through each other, and the shifting of the fingers and thumbs has altered the grip, the left hand now holding what was the right hand packet and the right hand holding what was the left hand packet.

Holding the left thumb and third finger firmly in position, push the new right hand packet forward with the right third finger and thumb, until the right thumb (held as near the corner as possible) clears the inner corner of the new left hand packet, (Figure 4), then continuing the forward movement until the right hand packet clears the left hand packet and is placed on the table. Bring back the right hand, pick up the left hand packet and place it on top of the right hand packet to complete the manoeuvre.

When it is desired to make, say, three riffles before completing the cut, the forward movement of the right hand packet is omitted from the first two riffles, the hands pulling the packets apart until the ends clear each other. They are then butted and another riffle made.

To keep the cards in the original order, the riffle must be made once or three times, but if an even number of riffles are desired (say two), the sliding cut at the commencement of the operation must be an under-cut; that is the right hand will hold the bottom half of the pack as the cut is made.

The Mysterious Kid demonstrated that before stripping out the cards, they could be first given a genuine cut, then followed by a strip-out of the former top fifteen or twenty cards only. This could be done under the closest scrutiny.
A variation which Dai Vernon has evolved for preserving the entire order of the cards is:—

Begin the shuffle as before up to the position shown in Figure 1, but when commencing to release the cards, release about half of the right hand packet before the left hand starts to release any cards. Continue the shuffle, but this time there will be an unshuffled block of about a quarter of the pack on the right hand side. Push the cards together and through as before, until the position shown in Figure 3 is reached. It will be found that by lifting the right thumb slightly, a break can be formed above the unshuffled block. With the right hand, cut this block to the top and place it square with the top card, then complete the pull through as before.

The fact that a genuine cut immediately follows the riffling, disarms any suspicion of a strip-out and is a decided improvement.

THE PULL OUT SHUFFLE

The advantage of this shuffle is the lack of cover and the open manner in which the pack is handled. It allows the complete order of the pack to be retained; the action being that the two halves are riffled together, but although it appears that the cards are squared, actually the same halves are pulled out again (no pull-through of the packets) in a cutting action, and replaced in their original positions.

Proceed exactly as in the previous shuffle, up to the point where the packets are pushed together until the cards jam, but now a different method is adopted to apparently square the pack.

Place the sides of the second finger tips at the outer corners of the ends of the packets. Press inwards with both second fingers and relax the left thumb, when the right hand packet is pushed in diagonally, exactly as shown in Figure 1. Slide the right second finger along the right end of the pack, from front to back, and simultaneously slide the
right thumb to meet it at the inner right corner of the pack. This is a squaring action which should be repeated two or three times. Now bring both hands over the pack, place the balls of the thumbs against the inner corners of the pack and the second and third fingers of each hand, almost touching, at the centre of the front side. The photograph at Figure 2 shows this position but the hands have been lowered to permit a view of the thumbs.

With the right hand pull in a diagonally outwards direction and after the right hand packet clears the left hand packet, slap the former on top of the latter.

The same continuous riffle shuffling can be carried out with this false shuffle as with the Pull Through Shuffle, but unlike that shuffle, the pack will always end up in the same order, no matter if an odd or even number of shuffles are made. In both shuffles the feel of pulling the cards apart is very much like using a pack of strippers.

Note that the position of the right fingers, being held well in from the ends, is very disarming and helps considerably to conceal the stripping out.

Owing to the fact that the cards are left in a slightly diagonal position enables them to be separated with the same feel and action used with strippers.
RETAINING THE TOP STOCK

This method of shuffling was shown to Dai Vernon by a gambler in Reno, who used it in his work. It gives a perfect illusion of shuffling fairly, but the top stock of about twenty cards can be retained in order.

A form of shuffling adopted by many players is to cut the pack and riffle the two packets together at their sides. This position for riffling is shown in Figure 1.

To retain the top stock, riffle the left hand packet much faster than the right hand packet, so that the left hand cards are quickly exhausted, then release all the remaining right hand cards together. The riffle should be a loose one, the packets springing together as the hands move towards each other. Figure 2 shows the position when the riffle is completed. Note that the top (right hand) stock has slid over from right to left in an uneven spread, giving the appearance of being mixed.

ZARROW FULL DECK CONTROL.

Herb Zarrow is the originator of many fine stratagems in card magic, and his Full Deck Control is certainly a valuable contribution. In America, Charlie Miller, the West Coast card expert, is most enthusiastic about this shuffle, while on this side of the Atlantic one of Britain's leading card experts, Gus Southall, employs it in some of his excellent tricks.
As the title indicates, this false shuffle allows the complete order of the pack to be retained. It is much easier to acquire than most of the false ruffle shuffles; the actions appear natural and very little cover with the hands is necessary.

Dai Vernon’s handling of this shuffle is a little different to that originally described in The New Phoenix (No. 346), one feature being that there is now no stripping out of a centre block of cards at the commencement of the shuffle.

Starting with the pack on the table, undercut half the pack with the right hand and place it on top of the other half, but keep a break with the left thumb. Cut off the upper packet at the break with the right hand. Riffle the two packets together with a regular corner riffle at a wide angle, but in the following order: first drop a few cards from the left hand, then riffle in the regular manner but hold back about eight cards with the right hand until the left hand has three cards remaining. Now drop the remaining cards from the right hand, but simultaneously slide them to the left; finally drop the three cards from the left hand, and in doing so fan them forward. Study Figure 1 which shows about eight cards from the right hand which have slid towards the left hand packet, and above them the three cards fanned forward from the left hand packet. In the photograph the right hand has been moved slightly to show the end of the packet.

Shift the hands slightly towards the ends of the packets, curling the forefingers onto the tops of the packets. Begin to push the packets together, the left going clockwise and the right counter clockwise. This action causes the packets to first straighten out, then go into a reverse angle, which makes the interlaced cards separate, when by a tilting action of the right thumb first, then the right fingers, the entire right hand packet goes into the break under the three fanned cards of the left hand packet. The top left hand portion, which is at an angle as in Figure 2, covers the action from the front, especially if the left hand packet is pushed slightly forwards and the right hand packet drawn back a little. In the photograph the right hand has been tilted back to show
the position of the cards. In actual practice the end of the right hand packet would be covered more by the right hand.

As the packets go together retain a break between them with the left thumb. Cut out the under packet with the right hand and repeat the whole shuffle as before, when the pack will be in its original order.

The action should be simulated to a regular corner riffle shuffle.

SIDE RIFFLE CUT.

This riffle cut retains the bottom stock of cards.

The starting position is with the pack on the table, a side of the pack being towards the performer.

With the right hand cut off a generous half from the top of the pack. The cut should be made in a forward direction, the left hand retaining a hold on the under packet. Do not release the grip of the right hand on the packet, but set the packet on the table about three inches in front of the left hand packet.

With the right thumb the inner side of the front packet (Figure 1) and at the same time quickly
move both hands together. The timing should be such that when three quarters of the right hand packet has been riffled, the left hand packet comes to the opening in the side of the right hand packet, and is pushed in by the left thumb (Figure 2). Simultaneously the left fingers leave the side of the pack and jump to the front. Do not relinquish the pressure of the left thumb, but lift its packet upwards to meet the top section of the pack. Dip the right thumb down at the rear to the lower packet, pick it up and cut it to the top.

**TRANSFERRING A BOTTOM STOCK TO THE TOP.**

We will assume that it is necessary to bring the three bottom cards of the pack to the top.

With the pack on the table, a side towards you, slide-cut the pack into two halves in the regular manner for riffle shuffling on the table. The original bottom half of the pack is on the left.

Begin the riffle but thumb off the bottom three cards of the left hand packet, then continue from the right hand packet, making a normal riffle with the entire pack. Push in the two packets until they jam. Place the second finger of each hand at the ends of the packets and push in and square up by running the second fingers from front to back of the edges to meet the thumbs (Figure 1).
By sloping the right second finger to the left, the right end of the pack is bevelled slightly. In Figure 2 the pack has been picked up by the right hand to show the under portion of the pack—this is not done in performance, of course.

With the right hand, under-cut a packet of cards from the bottom of the pack and place them on top, so that the left ends of the bottom cards of the packet are perfectly even with those on the table. Place the tip of the right third finger on the outer corner of the jogged packet (Figure 3) and cut the packet to the bottom, leaving the three cards on top. If preferred, cut the packet to the right and give the packets a second riffle to leave the three cards from the top of the left hand packet, on top of all.

In Figure 3 the right first and second fingers have been curled back to show how the right third finger contacts the jogged packet.

**REVERSAL OF BOTTOM CARDS.**

With the pack on the table, grip the ends between the second fingers and thumbs. Lift the pack slightly and cut it into two halves, the bottom half to the left. As the packets part, curl the tips of the third fingers under each end.

Assume the four bottom cards need to be reversed. Start by riffling off the four bottom cards of the left hand packet with the left thumb, then continue the riffle with the right hand, riffling alternately until the riffling is complete. In Figure 1 the hands have been turned up to show the position of the cards. Notice how the riffling is being
done at the sides of the packets instead of at the corners.

**Push the packets straight together until the cards jam.** Keep the left hand still and tilt up the pack with the right hand, but miss the bottom four cards with the right thumb so that these cards remain in the horizontal position until the pack is almost on edge. Move the left thumb to the centre of the end of the four cards and pinch them between the thumb and third finger. Tilt up the four cards, face to face with the cards of the pack, covered from the front by the wall of cards and from the sides by the cupped hands (Figure 2—rear view), which push the cards together and squares them. This method of squaring up cards is one in common use and excites no suspicion.

**TO KEEP THE COLOURS SEPARATED.**

This shuffle is invaluable for such tricks as Out of this World in which it is necessary to keep the colours separated.

Assume that the pack has been previously arranged, the black cards having been separated from the red cards, and that it is required to shuffle the pack, yet retain the colour separation.

With the pack on the table pull out about three quarters of the pack from the bottom with the right hand. Slap these cards on top of the others, but with about half an inch of their length projecting over
the left end. Retain the position of both hands, one at each end, and with the right thumb feel for about twenty-six cards and slide these cards to the right. As these cards come level with the bottom packet of cards, grip these also and slide both packs to the right. The left hand has retained the centre packet and drops it on the table. The right thumb has held separated the resulting space between the two packets, so it is a simple matter to bring the right hand over the left hand packet and place its lower packet on top, at the same time allowing the front edges to close but retaining a thumb break. The left thumb also holds a break between its two packets. Slide off the right packet to the right to commence a riffle shuffle.

Commence a fair riffle shuffle but more rapidly with the left thumb. When you reach the break, hesitate with the left thumb and rapidly riffle a few cards with the right thumb, then continue an even riffle. Push the packets together convincingly and square the pack.

TO BRING CARDS TO THE TOP.

If only one card is above the important card, then the slip-cut would be the more convenient method to use, but the stratagem to be described will be found ideal for when a small number of cards (say three) are above the cards which it is necessary to bring to the top of the pack. This situation could be brought about when riffle shuffling on the table, as to defeat the keen observer, it is important that cards be added to the top of the packet which originally formed the top of the pack.

Let us assume that during a riffle shuffle three cards have been added above the important cards for the reason stated. When the pack is cut for the shuffle to be continued, these three cards will be above the important cards at the top of the right hand packet.

Commence an even riffle and when approaching the stock, quickly release the stock, but hold back the surplus cards with the right thumb. From the left thumb release a single card, then release all the cards with the right thumb, and finally release all the cards with the left thumb.

It will now appear that the top half of the right packet has been shuffled down into the left packet. Push the packets straight in together until the cards jam. Place the second fingers against the ends of the packets and press the tip of the left forefinger on the top card of the right packet. Retaining the pressure with the left forefinger, push the packets completely together. This squaring action and the pressure of the left
forefinger, causes the single card dropped by the left thumb to pivot out and project at the right end of the inner side of the pack (Figure 1). The photograph shows the pack with the card projecting, and as this card is near the top of the pack it is advisable to cut the pack to bring the projecting card near the centre. Another cut at the projecting card will give the desired result.

NOTE:

It may be preferred to drop the card that will eventually project, deeper in the pack during the shuffle. This will obviate the necessity of an additional cut, as only one cut will be required to bring the important cards to the top.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CRIMPS

THERE CAN BE no clearer designation of a crimp than that given by S. W. Erdnase in Expert at the Card Table—"A crimp is a bend in one or more cards to locate or distinguish them".

In this chapter we deal with the crimps used by Dai Vernon, starting with some of the more orthodox methods, then continuing with the eccentric crimps with which he produces such astounding effects.

Top Card Crimp.

Hold the pack in position for an overhand shuffle when by a downward pressure of the left thumb, a crimp can be put into the top card. Figure 1 shows the pack held for the shuffle, the left thumb across the top card, and exerting downward pressure. The bottom side of the card presses against the left forefinger.

Immediately the crimp is in the top card, the pack is shuffled in the normal manner, which takes the crimped card down into the pack. The crimping of the card and the start of the shuffle blend into one movement.

By cutting the pack from the sides, the cut can be made immediately above the crimped card, which acts as a key for eventually locating any selected card which is returned to the pack at the point where it has been cut.

This crimp will remain for a considerable time unless removed.

Corner Crimp.

With the pack in the dealing position in the left hand, the right hand is brought over the pack, the first finger curled on top and the second, third and little fingers at the outer end. Under cover of the
right fingers, the left forefinger pulls down the right outer corner of the
bottom card (Figure 2—exposed view). Now the pack is reversed by turning the
right hand outwards, and without showing the face card of the pack. This is
a revolving action, the left hand changing position to take the pack so that the
original inner end is to the front. This revolving or spinning movement is
pleasing to the eye and can be used, without reason, as a mannerism. The
crimped corner of the bottom card is now at the left inner corner of the
pack.

Whole Pack Crimp.

The pack is held well forward in the left hand for the inner end to be squeezed as in Figure 3, then the pack is cut. When required the pack can be cut immediately above the original top card for, say, a selected card to be replaced at this point, when it can be found again as desired. The location is surer if the pack is cut at the ends but it will work by cutting at the sides.

Owing to the mode of pressure employed, the curvature is more acute at the bottom, and more important, the appearance after the cut is as it might be if the cut was a fair one. The cards are bent the same way below the cut as the top of the pack.

Cut Crimp.

This crimp allows the cards to be retained in their original order after cutting. The cards are cut in the same manner as for commencing a riffle shuffle, but no shuffle is made.

With the pack on the table a packet of about twelve cards is pulled out from the bottom with the thumb and second finger of the
right hand, and this packet is crimped downwards lengthways along the middle by bending it over the right third finger. The packet is thrown on top and immediately another larger packet is pulled out from the bottom (without crimping) and slapped on top. This throws the small crimped packet to the centre as shown in Figure 4.

By cutting the pack at the ends, the crimped packet and all the cards above it are removed, when by completing the cut, the pack is restored to its original order.

In this cut the special feature is that the top and portion below the bridge are both seen to be perfectly flat or straight.

Spring Crimp.

Dai Vernon uses this crimp to produce a startling effect. He hands the pack to a spectator and asks him to go to the other side of the room, cut the pack, remember the card he cuts to, then replace the cut-off portion. Without touching the pack, Dai tells him which card he cut to!

First note the bottom card, then spring the cards from hand to hand, but sharply bend the pack for the springing action. Cut the pack, complete the cut, then spring the cards from hand to hand again; this time with just the normal amount of bending. When a cut is made the original bottom card will show up. This works when the pack is cut either from the ends or sides.

Having been the victim on several occasions before being given the secret, I can assure readers that this is a particularly strong effect. With a casual cut it is almost impossible for the victim to miss, as the top portion of the pack seems to lift into the hand, even though the whole pack appears to be square. A trial will convince the reader that this type of crimp is as certain in operation as any can be. Obviously a chance is taken as the pack is in the hands of the spectator, but providing he does what he is told then he will almost certainly cut to the original bottom card.

We almost titled this crimp ‘the breather’ as in practice the pack feels as if it ‘breathes in’ as the cut is made.
Mexican Joe’s Crimp.

This method of crimping was the well kept secret of a Mexican gambler who used it for many years. It depends upon some simple preparation to the whole pack, which needs to be done before performance.

The pack is held in a firm grip, with the right thumb on top of the outer right corner and the side of the curled forefinger below. The inner left corner is held in the same manner by the left hand. The outer corner is bent up and the inner corner down. For clarity Figure 5 shows a small packet of cards being bent in the required manner. The bending must be firm and it is suggested that a quarter of the pack be treated at a time, then the cards reassembled.

The pack can now be used in several ways. For example, the cards can be spread and one taken, then the pack squared, reversed and the card replaced. The pack can be handed out to be shuffled and when returned the card can be found by looking at one of the corners which was bent. If a crimp is not seen, then look at the diagonally opposite corner. By an ordinary cut at the inner corner the card can be brought to the top; cutting at the outer corner brings it to the bottom. By reversing the card, the pack is again ready for use.

Francis Carlyle uses this method of crimping a great deal and makes no secrecy of looking at the corner. He holds the pack in position for the Charlier Pass, looks at the corner nearest to him, finds the crimp and holds it with his thumb. He then completes the Pass to bring the card to the bottom and slowly turns over the pack to reveal the card.

Snap Crimp.

On a certain occasion Dai Vernon watched a gambler demonstrate his ability to cut to each Ace after the pack has been shuffled. Feeling
that his secret was well hidden, the gambler made no attempt to dispose of the cards and they remained on the table. He even remarked, "They call that 'snap crimp work'—it hasn't been tipped". A little later Dai was able to examine the cards at his leisure and with the gambler's remarks as a clue, was able to discover the method by which the Aces had been made into key cards.

By bending a single card sharply downwards at the ends (Figure 6) then upwards at the sides (Figure 7), an excellent key card is made, providing the rest of the pack (as a whole) is bent upwards at the sides. This card can always be found in the shuffled pack by means of the Charlier Pass if the pack is first given a downward bend to cause the key card to "snap" to its natural sharp bent position. The Charlier Pass brings the card to the bottom. By glancing down, the inner end of the card can be seen bent down.

Obviously any card placed next to the key card can be located when required.

A valuable and interesting feature of this method of crimping is that the crimp can be taken out by bending the whole pack upwards at the sides, but can be reformed by springing the pack from hand to hand.

Note: When Dai Vernon returned the corrected manuscript he added the following.

"An interesting effect is obtained if all the red cards, for example, are bent at once (concave width and convex length), but more strongly the convex way (as they are bent when springing the cards from hand to hand). The black cards are bent only concave."
The cards may now be shuffled together and if the entire pack is bent upwards at the sides, everything appears in order, but if the cards are sprung from hand to hand (to give the cards a downward bend at the ends), the pack can be placed behind the back and by a Charlier Shift with the cards in the left hand, the right hand can go behind and without a second's hesitation, bring forth red cards at request, the shift being made before the right hand retires behind."
CHAPTER NINE

CARDS TO POCKET

MANY OF THE finest card tricks of the past originated from France, where perhaps Robert Houdin influenced their conception. It seems likely therefore, that the first version of the Cards to Pocket came from that source.

Charles Bertram featured the trick in his act. Using twelve cards he caused them to leave his hand, one at a time, and travel to his trousers pocket. It seems to have been the generally accepted rule that twelve cards were needed, but Dai Vernon saw J. Warren Keane perform with only ten, and felt that this was a more acceptable number.

Those readers who have seen Dai Vernon perform his own version of this great trick will know the excellent effect it creates. Every action is natural, and the trickery is perfectly covered at every stage.

PREPARATION: This is simple and can be done in a few seconds, as all that is needed is to have three cards secreted in the top of the right trousers pocket, and to arrange the top seven cards of the pack alternately red, black, red, black, etc. See that the seventh card is not a picture.

PERFORMANCE: The first trickery is apparently to take ten cards from the top of the pack but actually to remove only seven. To do this say, "I'm going to use ten cards"; fan off ten cards, but take only seven, the other three being squared on top of the pack as the right hand provides cover when lifting off the cards. Place the pack on the table, then take the seven squared cards into the left hand to make the first false count.

First False Count: Hold the cards face down in the left hand at waist level, just as if the cards are about to be dealt. As the right hand is brought to the pack, push the top card to the right with the left thumb, for the right hand to take the card at the inner right corner and lift it straight up to about chin level, the face of the card now being towards the audience. Count "one", then take the second card below the first; lift them as before and keeping the two cards fairly squared, count "two". Count the third card in the same manner and say "three". As you count the fourth card leave it jogged to the left for about three quarters of an inch. When the fifth card is taken and counted, line it up with the fourth card. Push the sixth card to the right with the left thumb then bring the right hand down and as the hands come together, lift the left thumb, push off the two jogged cards from the right hand packet with the right first and second fingers, and clip them with
the left thumb so that they are held on top of the left hand cards. The right hand moves to chin level again, having merely added two cards to the left hand packet without having taken any, but as the face card of the right hand packet has changed, the illusion is maintained. Now continue the count, when it will appear that ten cards are counted.

It is essential that the count is made naturally, without destroying the rhythm as the two jogged cards are added back on top of the left hand cards.

The first two cards. After the false count, take the squared cards into the left hand, holding them on end and face on to the audience, the left thumb at one side of the cards and the fingers at the other. Bring the second finger behind the packet and click the cards with the third finger (Figure 1). Reach into the right trousers pocket with the right hand, pushing the hand down to the bottom of the pocket, then remove the hand, but take one card on the way out. Toss this card onto the table then make another click, remove another card from the pocket in the same manner as before, and toss it onto the table.

Start to click the cards again, but stop and say, "Some of you may think that this is very easy—that I have some extra cards in my pocket and that I just reach in and take them out. If that was the case I would still have ten cards in my hand. (Point to the two cards on the table.) Two cards have been passed; I should have eight left".

Here another false count is made to count the seven cards as eight. This false count is different to the first and is performed as follows:—

Second False Count. With the cards face down in the left hand, which is held at waist level, take the top card into the right hand by the outer right corner with the right thumb on the corner, second and third fingers extended underneath, and the first finger along the outer end. Push the second card to the right with the left thumb, then bring the right hand to the left, as if snapping the second card above the first (Figure 2). As the hands are together, pull back the second card with the left thumb onto the left hand cards,
the edge of this second card sliding across the back of the first card and
making a scrapping sound as the right hand moves away. Continue
counting fairly, but simulating exactly the same actions as previously,
so that the scrapping sound is heard each time a card is counted. This
scrapping sound is caused by each card scrapping across the back of the
one below it as the right hand moves away. Obviously, the count is
also made verbally.

The third card. Hold the packet on end in the left hand, make
the click as before (Figure 1), then remove the third card from the
pocket and toss it onto the table.

The fourth, fifth and sixth cards. With their faces towards the
audience spread the cards between the hands and say, "Some of you
card players can remember some of the cards and see that I use the same
cards throughout". As the spread is closed, jog the two back cards
slightly downwards so that when the packet is placed back in the left
hand in the position for making the click, the left little finger can get a
break between the two jogged cards and the rest of the packet—
second and third fingers are curled behind the packet.

Bring the right hand diagonally across the face card of the packet,
then with the left little finger, push the two back cards, causing them to
swivel to the right where the right thumb crotch clips them at the corner.
Carry the two cards away in the palm position in the right hand, holding
the hand stiffly (but without allowing a glimpse of the cards) and place
the hand in the pocket. Leave the cards in the pocket, remove the
hand, smile and say, "What's that Sir?—you think that when I did this
(pass the right hand diagonally across the face card of the left hand
packet again, then casually turn the packet to bring it face up with the
left corner in the left thumb crotch and the cards projecting over the
forefinger) I deliberately placed a card in my pocket . . . ". Point to
the right pocket with the right forefinger. As the right hand makes
the gesture, the left thumb pivots the face card down in line with the
left fingers (see note), then the thumb returns to the side of the cards.
Prior to the pivoting action the left hand has turned to bring the back
towards the spectators. The right hand can now take the projecting
cards, by pinching them at the top, in a perfectly natural manner, leaving
the original face card in the left palm. As the right hand takes the
packet, immediately place the left hand into the left trousers pocket as
you continue the sentence " . . . sometimes it's hard to tell—sometimes
they go into the other pocket!". Push the card to the fingertips, then
remove the card from the pocket and toss it onto the table.

Take back the packet into the left hand in position for making the
click then say, "Every time you hear this click (click the cards) a card
never fails to arrive in my pocket". Take out a card from the right pocket and toss it onto the table. Click the cards again, place the right hand in the pocket, look perplexed and remove the empty hand from the pocket. Hitch up the left sleeve saying, "That one got stuck at the elbow", then reach into the pocket again, remove the card and toss it onto the table.

By emphasising the words "never fails" in the patter, it produces laughter when the empty hand is removed from the pocket.

The seventh card. Say, "Six cards on the table (point to them) — I should have four left". Fan the four cards wide, with their faces towards the audience, then continue, "To prove to the sceptics that these cards do pass up the sleeve . . . ". Take the squared packet into the right hand, the corner in the thumb crotch as in Figure 3, with the face card on the fingers and the ends of the cards projecting over the first finger. Open the left side of the jacket with the left hand and make an indicating gesture towards the armpit with the right hand. Under cover of the jacket, move the right thumb down on the back card, which swivels down to the palm position (Figure 3). Continue the sentence, . . . I shall try and stop one at the shoulder on its way across". Take the packet into the left hand in position for the click (leaving the original back card palmed in the right hand), make the click, then reach into the left side of the jacket to the shoulder with the right hand and bring the card into view. Toss it onto the table.

The eighth and ninth cards. Fan the three cards in the left hand and say, "As the number of cards grows less the problem becomes more difficult. It is essential to keep the cards perfectly squared up". Turn the left hand and close the fan with the right second finger and thumb. Make a meticulous gesture of squaring the cards by holding the packet horizontally, gripped at the left end of the packet, the left thumb behind and the first and second fingers in front. Turn the left hand so that the packet is pointing downwards from the hand, then stroke down
the right side of the packet with the right fingers (Figure 4). Turn the packet to the horizontal position in the left hand, gripping the centre of the top side as shown in Figure 5, then stroke down the right end with the right fingers. Hold the right end of the packet with the right hand, move the left hand to the left end, and as the left hand takes this end (at the extreme edge), push the back two cards a little to the right with the tip of the left thumb. Bring the right hand up to the right end of the packet, fingers in front and thumb behind, so that the heel of the hand contacts the right ends of the two jogged cards. Without arresting the movement of righthand, which is moving upwards in an arc, swivel the two cards upwards as in Figure 6 (rear view), and take them in the palm position in the right hand. Without a pause, turn the left hand, to have the single card pointing downwards (Figure 4), and stroke down the right side with the right hand which then relaxes and drops to the side, then bring up the right hand, reach
into the left side of the jacket to the shoulder, leave one card on the shoulder and bring the other into view. Toss it onto the table.

Shake the left hand card, and again reach into the left side of the jacket with the right hand and remove the other card from the shoulder. Toss it onto the table.

The last card. With the right fingers snap the left hand card, then immediately take the card into the right hand, holding it at one end, as you turn to bring the right side of the body towards the audience.

Say, "Now I'll show you how it looks in slow motion". Here a few vanishes and recoveries can be made with the single card (back and front palm)—Dai Vernon performs this way but stresses that it is optional. Say, "Some magicians cheat when they do this—they hide the card in the hand". Take the card at the outer end between the right thumb and forefinger at the corner. Hold the left hand palm upwards and lay the card flat on the palm (Figure 7). Raise both hands together, turning the left hand to bring the back towards the audience. This time the card is really in the left palm and the right forefinger points to the back of the hand. Re-marking, "Be sure to remember the name of the card", turn the left hand and take the card back into the right hand as before. Show the face of the card by turning the right hand, then make the same movements as before for placing the card flat on the left palm. This time, as both hands turn, clip the end of the card by curl-ing the second, third and little fingers, which brings the card against the right palm (Figure 8—rear view). Point to the back of the left hand with the
right forefinger; slowly turn the left hand to show the empty palm, then reach quickly into the left side of the jacket with the right hand and bring the card into view. Hold it aloft with a finishing gesture and you will receive abundant applause.

**Note:** This is the same action as shown in Figure 3, but performed with the left hand.
FOR A CARD to be forced efficiently the selector must not be aware of any preparation made before the cards are offered to him, and must have no doubt about the freedom of his choice. This may seem an obvious statement, but the facts are that many performers are unsuccessful with forcing because their actions make the selection seem important instead of casual. Even if their "pass", "peek" or other preliminary preparation is technically beyond reproach, their handling of the pack and concentration on what is taking place, telegraphs that the selection of the card is important to them. Performers like Johnny Paul, Al Flosso and Francis Carlyle, who force really well, appear completely indifferent to what happens before and during the selection.

An excellent example of this "indifference" is the method Johnny Paul often uses to force a card. He says, "Take a card" and simply tosses the pack onto a table, the forward tossing action causing the cards to spread towards the victim. Johnny Paul then turns his head and carries on a conversation with someone else while the card is selected. Actually he has held a break above the card to be forced and when the pack is tossed onto the table, the break causes the cards to spread a little more at that point. Because Johnny Paul seems to ignore the proceedings, the victim is completely off-guard and removes the easiest card to take, especially as it is near the centre of the spread. This is an ancient principle but few do it well.

The Classic Force. In this force the cards are spread between the hands and a spectator is asked to remove any card.

Here again it is most important for the performer to appear indifferent to what is happening. Any apprehension or interest displayed will give importance to the selection. Additionally, there must be no apparent preparation before the cards are offered. The pass is not a good method for bringing the card to position prior to forcing, as no matter how well the pass is made, the pack is handled importantly. It is far better to make one or two careless cuts, or any form of natural (not skilful) shuffle to bring the card to position.

For general use, the best position for the force card to be is about two thirds of the way down from the top of the pack. A break can
be held by the left little finger until the time for forcing the card arrives. This time should be delayed by patter so that there is no connection between the selection and any previous action, such as the casual cutting or natural shuffling.

Spreading the cards between the hands should be commenced without the performer looking at his hands. The cards should be held loosely, the spread made casually and commenced out of reach of the spectator to establish the tempo of the spreading, which should be even. Then the spectator is asked to take a card and here it is important to note that the request should be made in a quiet voice, without any trace of urgency or importance. To continue an even spread, yet arrive at the force card at the correct moment, control the number of cards spread by pushing across either small or large bunches of cards, according to the speed the spectator's hand reaches to the pack. After the card is taken, continue to spread the cards at the same tempo, as if not realising that a card has been taken.

The actions must be timed to have the card arrive naturally at the spectator's hand at the right moment, and the only way to become proficient is by practice and experience. One way to practice is to force a card whenever one has to be taken, even though a force is not necessary. Simply form a break with the little finger about two thirds down in the pack and go ahead. Though the card itself has not been seen you will know if the force has been successful, and in this instance no harm is done if another card is taken.

Actually it is preferable for the force card to be above the break as the tips of the left fingers feel the card and know when it has been taken. Additionally, the card can be made less "important" than the one below the break, as the cards can be spread evenly up to the break, but then a slight adjustment has to be made with the left thumb to spread past this point. One further advantage is that when the card has to be sighted, a little finger break allows a glimpse of the card above the break.

T. Nelson Downs, often preferred to make the classic force by holding the cards behind his back, his excuse being, "I don't want to catch sight of any card".

The Malini Force. Max Malini, an expert at misdirection, gave no clue when he was ready for trickery. His preparation for forcing a card took place before his performance began. The pack was on the table with a "step" in it at the force card. Figure 1 shows the
step at the left end of the pack—by bringing the right hand to the other end of the pack it can be lifted or moved without disturbing the step.

Malini would wait until the time came to force the card, then simply pick up the pack, get a break at the step from underneath with his left little finger, and spread the cards evenly (but only a little) between his hands, the fan showing mainly all white borders. When the spectator advanced his hand to take a card, Malini would turn the fan to bring the section containing the force card opposite his hand. Due to the cards being so close together, no card could be taken until Malini opened the fan a little at the force card by a spreading movement (the break made this simple). The force card was the only one which could be taken conveniently (Figure 2).

The indifference with which Malini picked up the pack and spread the cards, made the selection seem unimportant and no suspicion was aroused. Having made his preparation (by forming a step) before his performance, there was no preliminary action to create suspicion and give prominence to the proceedings.

Because the spectator's hand was actually at the fan before the extra spread was made, it seemed that it was the spectator who spread the fan a little to take the card.

**Riffle Force—Dai Vernon.**

Hold a break with the left little finger above the card to be forced. Figure 1 shows how the pack is held in the left hand with the cards across the fingers, enabling the right hand to come over the top of the pack for the second and third fingers to riffle the outer end.
As the cards are riffled, ask a spectator to say "stop", then stop riffling anywhere he says. Make a wide opening at the outer end by bending the cards up as in the photograph. The upward bend and a slight upward turn of the left hand allows the face card of the bent up packet to be seen. Say, "As this card has been seen, we will take the one below". Close the outer end and lift the inner end at the break with a sort of see-saw movement, then pull back the top packet a little to allow the tips of the two right middle fingers to push the force card forward for it to be taken (Figure 2).

To force three or more cards by this method, have the force cards in the top third of the pack and hold a break above them. The first card is forced exactly as described, then as the top packet is returned to the pack, hold the break again. Under-cut about a dozen cards from the bottom of the pack to the top. Perform the same force as before for the second card to be taken. Again undercut about a dozen cards from the bottom to the top and repeat the force, but riffle slowly from the bottom.

A keen observer will see that the cards do not all come from the same part of the pack.

When making a riffle, contrive to have "stop" called at about the middle twenty or thirty cards.

**Fan Force—Dai Vernon.**

Have the card to be forced on the face of the pack. Make a pressure fan in the left hand, and as the right hand is still at the pack after the fanning action, extend the right fingers under the fan, the outer edges of the cards on the right side of the fan going into the fork.
of the right thumb. Figure 1 shows a view from underneath. With the right fingers pull the force card from left to right over the face of the fan.

Remove the right hand and ask a spectator to touch any card in the face down fan. Insert the right forefinger in the edge of the fan at the point touched, and swivel the cards to the right, when all the cards to the right of the point touched will be squared above the force card (Figure 2). Lift the squared packet and show the bottom card which appears to be the one touched by the spectator.

**Back to Back Force—Dai Vernon**

We will assume that the card to be forced is the Nine of Spades. Place this card face up on top of the face down pack, place another card, also face up, above it and top all with a face down card to hide the preparation.

When it is necessary to force the Nine of Spades, hold a break beneath it with the left little finger. Riffle the outer end of the pack with the right second finger, asking a spectator to call "stop" anywhere he wishes. When told to stop, curl all four right fingers around the outer end of the cards into the wide opening. As this happens, the right thumb (which is at the inner end of the pack) pushes forward the three cards above the break for about the width of the usual white border. Now move the right thumb to the outer edge of the cards (Figure 1), grip the whole packet of cards and turn it face up on top of the lower packet, but stepped back about one inch (Figure 2). When the right hand grip is released, the narrow margin of the three jogged cards will be visible at the inner end. By bringing the right hand over the pack, the tip of the right thumb can press down slightly on the jogged cards to form a break. This action can be seen in Figure 2.
Move the right hand forward, release the three cards so they come square with the bottom portion of the pack, and continue moving the right end forward and away from the outer end of the bottom packet of cards, carrying the top packet with it, then placing it on the table.

The Nine of Spades is now the top card of the packet in the left hand, the appearance having been that this is the card stopped at when requested.
CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE TRICK THAT CANNOT BE EXPLAINED

THERE IS AN interesting story concerning this trick which should be told, even if the only excuse for telling it, is to give a reason for producing an explanation of the method which cannot be complete.

Dai Vernon has been performing a certain trick for many years. It produces the type of effect which other magicians dream about because the result is so staggering. I had heard about it from many sources and had been told that Dai only performs it on those occasions when he feels it is necessary to produce something exceptional. When it was agreed that this book should be written I naturally assumed that the trick in question would be featured. However, when I suggested that we should write down the explanation, Dai was evasive. Thinking that here perhaps was one secret he wished to keep, I probed no further and had not fate intervened, this chapter would never have been written. It happened this way—

Dai and I were working on the book at my home when Al Koran and Fred Lowe arrived. A card session started and somewhere along the line Fred and I became interested spectators to a good natured battle of wits. The standard of performance from both magicians started as excellent and went up from there—then they openly decided to try tricks performed by methods which had elements of chance—there were successes and failures and the whole thing ended up in laughter and leg-pulling. As our guests were about to leave, Dai decided to show "just one more"—he did—and produced a really amazing effect

As we came back into the room after seeing our guests depart, Dai said, "That's it", and I knew I had witnessed the "miracle" trick. Perhaps it will be more interesting if I try to recall our conversation.

L. "Dai it's staggering, but I think I know why you don't want it in the book. The method must leave too much to chance."

D. "That's where you're wrong Lewis—the method is 'sure fire'."*

L. "Then surely Dai, the reason must be that you want to keep it as an exclusive?"

D. "No, it's not that. The reason is that I just couldn't begin to explain how I do it!"
L. "Look Dai, don't kid me; of course you know how you do it, and so there is no reason why we should not include it."

D. "But Lewis it would just be impossible to put it in the book. I've always thought of it as 'The trick that cannot be explained', because when I decide to perform it I never know what the effect is going to be!"

L. "Dai, I saw the effect. You wrote a prediction on a cigarette packet and placed this on the table. Al Koran shuffled the pack (and made a thorough job of it!). You told him to turn over the top card—which happened to be the Six of Hearts. You then told him to turn over the cigarette packet which had been out of your reach since you wrote the prediction. Al himself read out what you had written—'The Six of Hearts'. It was a knockout."

D. Well Lewis, that's what happened on that occasion but next time it might be different. I'll admit that a prediction in one form or other is made before the start, and that the card predicted is always produced . . . . but look, I'll run through it a few times and you'll see what I mean. It's a case of being on your mettle from the start—the more one knows about card magic the better the effect. Later I'll get you to do the performance and you will see that there's nothing really difficult to do—it's just quick thinking to decide how to obtain the greatest effect according to the circumstances."

We spent many hours with the trick, Dai first showing me, then making me do it over and over again. Every time, even I was able to bring about some sort of effect, then Dai would take the same set of circumstances and show me how he could turn it into a knockout.

This was an exciting experience and I trust that the reader will capture some of the thrill from the following attempt at an explanation.

Let me emphasise from the start that there is no sleight of hand involved; no "moves", no memorising, in fact nothing difficult at all. The method (?) is certainly sure-fire. Why then did I write in the first paragraph that the explanation had to be incomplete?

The answer is that you, the performer, after learning a certain pattern of actions, are then on your own because the whole thing depends upon the circumstances which arise—you use these circumstances to get the effect.

First we will deal with the question of the prediction. In the example given, Dai wrote the name of a card on a cigarette packet and placed it on the table. He could have taken a card from another pack and placed it face down on the table, or sent a prediction in a sealed
envelope, by post, to be opened at the performance. The form of prediction is up to the individual, as there is no trickery involved—you just write the name of any card that comes to mind.

Next we come to the pack of cards: ordinary and unprepared, which is given to the victim to shuffle to his heart’s content. Now we begin working to a pattern and according to what happens, so we vary the pattern.

Remember, we have made a secret prediction; the card is somewhere in the shuffled pack. The problem is to make the victim select that card himself, in such a way that he will feel sure that his choice was entirely free, then when he reads the prediction, we have produced our effect. The strength of this effect will depend to a great extent on how well the card is forced. Here we can make use of every scrap of knowledge of card magic. We also take advantage of any luck that might come our way—but we do not depend on chance.

The plot must be played as if we are quite certain what our actions are to be. Each action should be fairly slow and deliberate, as if to emphasise its fairness. Actually this also gives time for us to weigh up the circumstances. First we take back the shuffled pack and turn it over slowly. Maybe we have a miracle and the card facing us is the one predicted. If this is so we leave the pack face up, as if this is exactly what was intended, and play up the situation by saying that the victim could have shuffled any card to that position—then have him read out the prediction.

Certainly that is pure luck, but we have used it to advantage.

So it's not our turning action was slow and deliberate, so we also secretly sight the bottom card (of the face up pack) as the pack is turning and continue turning until the pack is face down again. The whole action has appeared as if we were displaying the pack and ensuring that it is perfectly squared. Maybe our luck is in and the card we sighted (now on top of the face down pack) is the card we want. Place the pack on the table, have the victim turn over the top card, then read the prediction etc.

If neither the top nor bottom cards are what we need, then we hold the pack on our upturned palm and ask the victim to cut the pack and complete the cut. This gives us two more chances, as when we turn the pack over once more we see the new card which comes face up and sight the new bottom card.

That's four chances, each of which could produce a near miracle-
It's surprising how often this can happen. However, we are not dependent on chance, and if luck is not with us our actions so far seem to have little importance, as we have merely displayed the pack, had it cut and displayed it again.

Next we spread the pack face up across the table and are meticulous in arranging the cards in the spread so that they are evenly spaced, with the index of every card showing. This is part of the deliberate actions; it all looks so fair, but it also gives us time to note the position of the card we predicted. It may be near one end of the spread so we can silently count the number of cards it is from the nearest end. We can also note the top and bottom cards. Perhaps the nearest end card is, say, a six spot and the predicted card is sixth from that card; maybe the total number of spots on the cards at either end add up to the position of the predicted card, or by subtracting the number of spots on the cards we can arrive at the number we want. These are possibilities which we can turn to our advantage, as when they occur, we know we can eventually reach a satisfactory conclusion by having the victim count from either the top or bottom of the pack as the case may be, and arrive at the predicted card.

When one of these situations occur, don't clutch at it right away, as it is possible that an even stronger effect can be produced. Ask the spectator to hold his hand over the spread cards, and with his forefinger pointing downwards, move his hand backwards and forwards along the row, stopping wherever he wishes. He may point to the predicted card—there's another near miracle. The reader may know the method for influencing the victim to stop at a certain card—use it by all means;—but forgive me for not going into details as whole books would have to be written on the subject to explain fully all the possibilities which may arise (the reason why Dai Vernon calls this "The trick that cannot be explained" will now be apparent).

However, if the victim misses, divide the spread at the point indicated by his finger. Perhaps he has pointed to a three spot and the predicted card is three cards away; maybe the spots on the cards at each side of the divided spread, when added or subtracted, give the position of the card in the spread. We now have various combinations of numbers which can be made up by adding or subtracting the two end cards or two parted cards, etc.

There is a strong possibility that the card can be spelled out from either end of the spread, and this chance is doubled when the spectator touches a card in the spread, for then it is logical to spell from either side of the parted spread. It might be possible to spell the victim's name and arrive at the card.
Obviously the two halves of the spread can be squared into two packets and either one put on top of the other to give other alternatives for spelling or counting with the pack either face up or face down.

We could go into the question of double lifts, and other trickeries known to magicians—there’s plenty of ways of arriving at the cards; in fact when performing one usually sees two or three methods for getting there—problem is to select the most effective.

Dai Vernon can always arrive at the card by spelling, if he wishes, and demonstrated this at least a dozen times. To prove the certainty of his methods and to illustrate the endless possibilities, he repeatedly nominated which type of location he would use to arrive at the card.

By taking a pack, thinking of any card, then going through the actions explained, the reader will see the situations which arise. With practice, solutions are quickly found and all that remains is to produce the strongest effect possible. Points to remember are that, in performance, the victim does not know the name of the predicted card. He shuffles a pack of cards (which can be his own, of course), then hands it to the performer. It seems that the shuffling has caused a card to come to a certain position in the pack as, of course, there is no previous knowledge of just how the card will be determined. It will be assumed that the performer's actions are according to a set plan—that he intended to do exactly what he is seen to do on any one occasion. When the card is selected the victim is certain he caused it to be selected. The climax comes when he reads the prediction which was written before the trick commenced.

Notes. Since this chapter was written Dai has referred to the trick many times in correspondence. The following extracts are of particular interest.

1. "At times I've had wonderful results by doubling the chances with the prediction. I merely write, *A red deuce* or *A black Jack* etc."

2. "It is most essential that the trick is never repeated unless handled very shrewdly. For example you could say, *Some people do not like counting tricks*—I'll repeat it in a more entertaining and convincing manner."

3. "The more knowledge, experience and background the performer possesses the easier the trick becomes."
4. "Assume we have come to the point where the cards have been spread, face up, across the table. If they touch a card near the face, when the card that was predicted is near the other end of the spread—I have them remove the card touched and place it near the opposite end, but insert it face down, then proceed thus.

For example, suppose they touch a five spot and the card written down happens to be six away from it after it has been re-inserted. I do not reveal it at once by counting. I have them gather up the cards, hold the pack face down and deal off the cards, one by one, until they have the reversed five staring them in the face. Then I tell them to remove five from those on the table and place aside the card (face down) left on top of the heap—then read the prediction etc."

5. "I endeavour to 'size up' the person assisting and write the name of the card he might point out in the spread. For instance, very shrewd card players who try to outwit a card worker, nearly always point out a small card; very often a deuce, six or eight. Easy going people take conspicuous cards; Aces, Queens, Jacks, etc. Obviously I do not rely on my judgment for the success of the trick, but by introducing this aspect an extra chance is provided for bringing about a very strong effect."
CHAPTER TWELVE
VERNON TOUCHES

WHEN DAI VERNON is teaching card magic, one of the main features he stresses is that every action the performer makes should appear natural. This is exemplified in his own performances as he has devised new sleights which excite no suspicion because the cards are handled in a natural manner.

The three examples which follow illustrate this point.

THE VERNON GLIDE.

In the standard version of this sleight the position in which the pack is held in the hand is not an artistic one. Usually the glide has to be performed after picking up the pack from the table, then to bring it into position for the bottom card to be pulled back secretly, the grip has to be altered in a suspicious looking action.

Dai Vernon has completely altered the mechanics of the sleight to enable it to be performed with the pack held at the fingertips; that is in the same grip in which it is lifted from the table.

To perform, pick up the pack with the left thumb at the centre of one side and the second and third fingers at the opposite side; the little finger is free. Turn the left hand to show the bottom card then bring the right hand to the pack as the left hand starts to turn the pack face down again. Holding the right first and second fingers together, place them about one inch from the right inner corner of the bottom card as in Figure 1. Because the second finger is longer than the first finger, the tip of the second finger touches the face of the bottom card. Move the little finger to the centre of the left end of the pack. Figure 1
shows a view as the pack is being turned face down. The rotating action of turning the pack, combined with a pushing action of the right second finger, causes the bottom card to be pushed backwards. The grip with the left first, second and third fingers on the side of the pack ensures that only the bottom card moves just sufficiently for the tip of the right forefinger to contact the face of the second card (Figure 2). The pressure of the left little finger is relaxed, causing this finger to act as a sort of spring, to permit the bottom card to move.

Now pull on the second card with the right forefinger, then by pushing with the left little finger and pulling with the right first and second fingers, move both bottom and second cards to the right, but stop moving the bottom card immediately it is in alignment with the pack, by releasing the pressure of the tip of the right second finger. Note that the right thumb should be placed at the right end of the pack, which aids taking the second card cleanly, and prevents a step or steps appearing. It is also a natural action to place the thumb in this position when actually taking the bottom card.

The fact that both the bottom and second cards are moved to the right, in the action of taking, minimises the amount of friction between the left fingers and the cards, permitting a clean removal.

This method of performing the Glide will defeat even the most knowledgeable layman—it also defeats fellow magicians who are unacquainted with the secret.
This method of false counting was devised by Dai Vernon to permit a more careless and casual looking handling than is possible with other methods.

Assuming that the cards in a packet have to be counted as less than the actual number, hold the packet face down in the left hand, at a somewhat different angle to the regular dealing position, in that the packet is more diagonally across the fingers. This holding position allows the tip of the left thumb to be placed naturally at the left outer corner of the packet—a necessary position for the move. The left inner corner of the packet is against the flesh at the base of the thumb and the fingers are curled under the packet to bring the tips against the edge of the right side of the cards.

To make the count, move the pad of the left thumb to the left outer corner of the top card and push it to the right when it will pass over the tips of the left fingers, which hold the rest of the cards squared. Take the card into the right hand as you count "one", then continue counting the next cards in the same manner. When it is desired to push off the block (whether it be just two or several cards above the bottom card), move the pad of the thumb to the very edge of the cards as in Figure 1. A simultaneous action of the thumb and forefinger now takes place; the thumb pushes all the cards above the bottom card to the right and the lower joint of the forefinger pulls the bottom card to the left (Figure 2), for the block to be taken into the right hand.

This leaves the last card reposing on the left palm and fingers, to be picked up under the other cards, no movement of the thumb being required.
A point to remember is that when holding the cards in a packet in the left hand, the grip should not be tight or the hand will have an unnaturally strained appearance—aim to keep the whole hand relaxed.

When the count is being used in tricks performed on a platform or stage, such as for Tommy Tucker's Six Card Repeat, then the count can be made with the hands held at chest height, in front of the body, which will bring the faces of the cards towards the audience. For this the count is ideal. Each time before a card is counted the left thumb makes an exaggerated movement to the left before the actual push off of the card or cards as the case may be.

When the backs of the cards are to be shown in close-up, such as in tricks like George Sand's Rainbow Cards and Oliver McKenzie's My Drink Trick, the grip is exactly the same, but more care must be taken in keeping the cards squared. This is quite a simple matter as the tips of the left fingers on the right edges of the cards hold them in perfect alignment. When the block is pushed off, the left fingers relax to allow the whole block to move and in addition full cover is provided by immediately bringing the cards already counted off into the right hand over the top of the block, which is concealed under the cards as it is counted into the right hand.

When making this, or any other false count, do not snap the last card triumphantly—it is not a natural thing to do and telegraphs that you are trying to prove that it is one only, the inference being that it is possible to count more than one card as one.
THE BUCKLE COUNT.

The Buckle was devised by Dai Vernon over thirty years ago, after he watched Malini move two cards as one (held together by saliva). Malini used this method to false count cards onto a table, the two cards (as one) being allowed to slide off his fingers onto the table. Dai Vernon realised that there must be a way of moving more than one card as one, without the use of saliva, and matching the natural action of counting.

To count cards onto the table.

Assume it is necessary for five cards to be counted as four.

Hold the cards face down in the left hand, the packet well forward in the hand. Bring the right hand to the packet, grasping the right outer corner with the thumb above and the side of the top joint of the forefinger against the edge. Not until the grasp is taken do you push the top card to the right with the left thumb. The card is now carried to the right and down, so that the edge of the card slides off the edge of the packet with a click, and onto the table. Count the second card in the same manner. When the right hand is at the packet to take the third card, buckle the bottom card with the tips of the left third and little fingers as the side of the right curled forefinger comes against the edge of the two squared cards. The slight movement of the bottom card (by the buckle) allows the two cards to be taken together and carried to the right and down, sliding off the edge of the last card and onto the table with the same action (and sound) as before. Now the last card is counted down onto the table.

Figure 1 shows an exposed view of the buckle, the right hand having been removed from the packet for clarity. Notice how the left third and little fingers are making the buckle which should be very, very slight. A strong buckle is neither necessary nor desirable. Magicians who use this move almost always use a deep buckle—the whole essence of the move is that the buckle is so slight as to be imperceptible from the front edge. It is only necessary to move the side of the bottom card a fraction of an inch so that the side of the right
forefinger, combined with the thumb, can take the two cards and keep them in perfect alignment.

To count cards into the other hand.

When cards are counted from the left hand into the right, so that the right hand takes them one below the other, the method of taking the two cards as one is the same as above. However, when it is desired to take the cards one above the other (which reverses the order), the side of the right forefinger comes under the first card taken and therefore cannot be used as a guide, or for helping in taking the cards. In this case it is the ball of the right thumb which goes to the edge of the two cards to keep them in alignment and also to help in taking them against the back of the card just counted.

In our example we have counted five cards as four. Obviously more cards can be used and the count varied as required, according to the number of cards in the block.