

A BAKER'S DOZEN OF IDEAS AND BITS OF BUSINESS WITH THE MISER'S DREAM

By WILLIAM W. LARSEN

A few bills, or pieces of stage money, lightly stuck with wax behind various articles of furniture, will permit you to vary the catching of coins by occasionally reaching out and getting a piece of paper currency and dropping it into the hat or champagne bucket. For club work, where it would be unfeasible to put the bills in position behind fixed objects prior to performance, have one folded and held with wax under the shoe, one under each lapel and a fourth folded and clipped, with an ordinary paper clip, just under the coat.

L. L. Ireland has a device which delivers forty five cents in change into the hand. Use it, and mid-way through the Miser's Dream catch a handful of pennies and a dime, allow them to dribble into the hat, remarking: "This one came broken."

After you've produced seven or eight silvered coins announce that you will next produce a twenty-dollar gold piece. Reach for it but, instead, produce a card from which you read: "Sorry, gone to Fort Knox."

Palm and produce, or otherwise discover, one of those cheap ten cent store imitation leather wallets. Open it and take therefrom one of those huge pieces of stage money, remarking as you get it fully opened "I'm in the big money now." If working a stage or platform the wallet may be concealed in the footlight trough.

Are you the fortunate possessor of a coinwand? One of the type wherein the split coin may be drawn back into the wand shaft? If so, call it a doodlebug—"useful in discovering the location of precious metals, especially silver"—and you have a nice patter plot.

Using the above idea, mid-way through the performance produce a small glass of water from a spectator's coat. Apologize, saying: "I'm sorry. I must have used the wrong end of the wand. That's the one that finds water." Then continue catching coins.

Another spectator idea while catching coins in the audience. Reach under his coat for a coin but remove a folded slip instead. Open it and read "I. O. U. Fifty Cents." Crumple the slip, tuck it in your pocket and thereby get natural possession of another stack of half dollars.

This is a variant of one which I used during the war. It still gets laughs. Have a roll of stage money planted, in the footlight trough if there is one, a big rubber band about it. Cease producing coins when you spot the roll, reach down, pick it up, take off the band, fan the bills and say, "This is my lucky day." Toss the bills away and carefully pocket the rubber band, saying as you do so, "I've been looking for a rubber band all day."

After catching coins in the audience, return to the stage and, without comment, take a bunch of those realistic looking ten-cent store watches, chains and bands from the pocket, look at them fondly, and place to one side. The audience will quickly catch on to the pickpocketing idea and will laugh resultingly.

As a finale catch a fan of currency in each hand. The fans, previously arranged and clipped under the suit coat, at the sides, may be easily stolen as you make a slight bow to acknowledge the applause which, I hope, has



greeted your coin catching endeavors.

This I saw done but I forget by whom. The magician had already caught a number of half dollars, then — a round cracker. After a surprised glance at it, he smiled, popped it into his mouth, ate it with obvious relish and proceeded with the business of producing money.

At the five and ten cent stores you can purchase small metal waste baskets which make excellent receptacles for the coins and flower stores now sell some small brass and copper pots and vases which are likewise very good. They make useful substitutes for the top hat and the champagne bucket.

Finally, when will some dealer make up a quality coin ladder, light in weight, which may be carried in a small suitcase? It should be capable of being set up at home and of being worked without further preparation. In my opinion there is no better climax for the Miser's Dream, but all available models are too large, require too much setting and are impractical for the casual or nite club conjuror. When the ready to work, suitcase model hits the market I'll buy the first one.

