To Palm the Bottom Card of the Pack.—The usual method, as we have seen, is to hold the pack in the left hand and palm the top card with the right. Robert-Houdin describes a method of palming the bottom card. To effect this, the pack being held as in Fig. 11, the performer first separates this card from the rest by the introduction of the little finger of the left hand, and then taking the pack by its upper nd between the middle finger and thumb of the right hand, draws it forward out of the hand, leaving the bottom card behind. This method is, however, subject to the drawback that the card remains *across* the hand ; a rather unmanageable position, though, in the case of French conjurers, the small size of the cards they are accustomed to use no doubt tends to reduce this inconvenience.
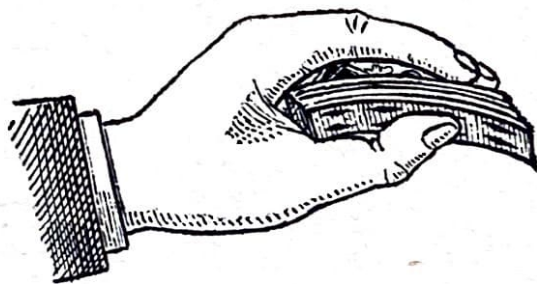
FIG. 13.   FIG. 14.

A better plan, in the comparatively rare case of requiring to palm the bottom card, is to take the pack lengthwise in the hand, the outer ends of the cards lying just against the first joints of the second and third fingers, and the opposite ends against the fork of the thumb, which presses lightly on the back of the uppermost card. By bending the fingers, and at the same time increasing this pressure of the thumb, the pack is forced forward beyond the finger-tips ; but the bottom card, being retained by the greater friction of the palm, does not share in the movement. By simultaneously turning over the hand, th pack may be placed in a person's hand without his having the smallest suspicion that one card remains behind.

A correspondent (Mr. W. J. Collins, of North Ipswich, Queensland) sends me a very useful adaptation of this principle in the shape of a single-handed palm of the *top* card,

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a decided novelty. A card having been drawn, replaced, and brought to the top by the Charlier pass, the performer forthwith turns over the pack (held in the left hand) by a movement of the thumb, works it into the position shown in Fig. 13, and then hands it, as in Fig. 14, to be shuffled, meanwhile palming the top card by the procedure above described.

This sleight is easily acquired, and will be found, on occasion, very valuable.

To get Sight of a Card.—As already mentioned, the performer may have failed in his endeavour to force the intended card, or not caring to force a card, may still desire to know what card it is that has been taken. There are various ways of ascertaining this. The simpl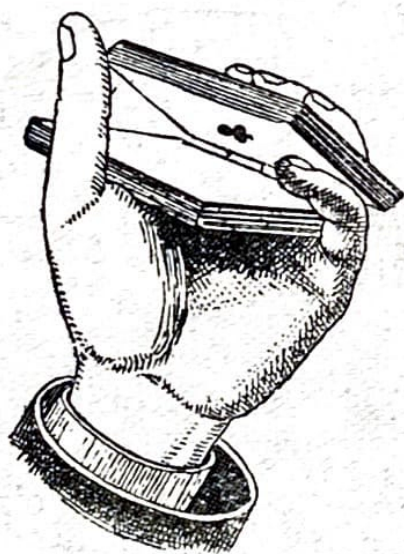est is to bring the card to the top by the "pass," palm it off as last described, and offer the pack, held in the same hand, to be shuffled, or simply transfer it from hand to hand; in the act of so doing it is easy to get sight of the one in the palm.

A second method is to slip the little finger of the left hand under the card when replaced in the pack, and under cover of some apparently careless gesture (talking the while in order to occupy the attention of the company), open the pack bookwise by an upward movement of the little finger, as shown in Fig. 15. The opening being towards yourself, and the backs of the cards to the company, it is impossible for them to detect the sleight, if neatly performed.

FIG. 15.

A third method is to bring the drawn card to the bottom (this is effected by slipping the little finger under, instead of over it before making the pass), and then carelessly transferring the pack from the one hand to the other, keeping the face turned towards yourself.