

effect is an illusion, or the result of known or new principles, the subject merits a careful investigation."

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One of the most popular peices of Mechanism which we have seen is the magician, constructed by M. Maillardet, for the purpose of answering certain given questions. A figure dressed like a magician, appears seated at the bottom of a wall, holding a book in one hand and a wand in the other. A number of questions ready prepared are inscribed on oval medallions, and the spectator takes any of these which he chooses and to which he wishes an answer; and having placed it in a drawer ready to receive it, the drawer shuts with a spring till the answer is returned. The magician then rises from his seat, and bows his head, describes circles with his wand, and, consulting the book as if in deep thought, he lifts it towards his face. Having thus appeared to ponder over the proposed question, he raises his wand, and, striking with it the wall above his head, two folding doors fly open, and display an appropriate answer to the question. The doors again close. The magician resumes his original position, and the drawer opens to return the medallions, all containing different questions, to which the magician returns the most suitable and striking answers. The medallions are thin plates of brass of an elliptical form, exactly resembling each other. Some of the medallions have a question inscribed on each side, both of which the magician answers in succession. If the drawer is shut without the medallion being put into it, the magician rises, consults his book, shakes his head, and resumes his seat. The folding doors remain shut, and the drawer is returned empty. If two medallions are put under the drawer together, an answer is returned only to the lower one. When the machinery is wound up, the movements continue about an hour, during which time fifty questions may be answered. The inventor stated that the means by which the different medallions acted upon the machinery, to produce the proper answers to the questions which they contained were extremely simple.

Brewster's Letters on Natural Magic.