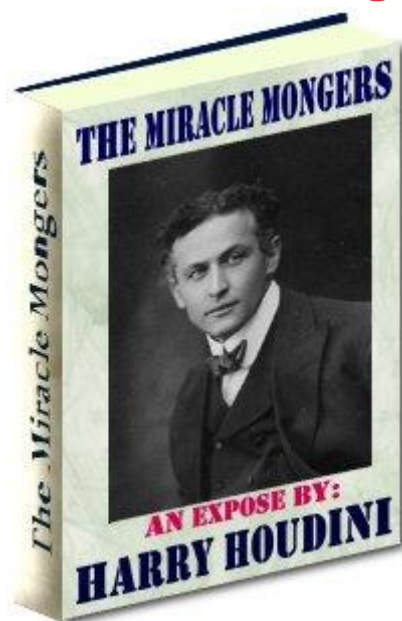


The Miracle Mongers



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The Miracle Mongers Harry Houdini exposes the tricks that astonish folks in this book that he himself authored - This is a book on how common psychology, special effects and trickery can create miracles for audiences. The author tries to explain that there may be nothing supernatural in magic but only science and illusion. He refers to miracle mongers are mere mortal men without any supernatural powers but have the knowledge of how to create illusions and wow audiences. Readers will find interesting tricks and objects used to create illusions. Definitely, a must-read book for magicians and anyone engaged in entertainment business! Contents LETTER I. EVERY MAN SHOULD HAVE A HOME II. A GRATEFUL CLIENT III. THE BEAUTY OF TRUTH AND UTILITY IV. PROFESSIONAL FOLLY V. BUILDING-SITES AND FOUNDATION-WALLS VI. GRAVEL-BANKS AND QUAGMIRES VII. NATURE'S BRICKS ARE BETTER THAN OURS VIII. THERE IS A SOFT SIDE EVEN TO A STONE WALL IX. A BROAD HOUSE IS BETTER THAN A HIGH ONE X. TROUT BROOKS ARE BETTER THAN STREET SEWERS XI. THE STRENGTH AND DURABILITY OF BRICK XII. THE WEAKNESS AND SHAM OF BRICKWORK XIII. SKILL DIGNIFIES THE MOST HUMBLE MATERIAL XIV. EVERY MAN TO HIS TRADE XV. THE COMING HOUSE WILL BE FAIR TO SEE AND MADE OF BRICK XVI. DOMESTIC DISCIPLINE XVII. GOOD TASTE IS NOT A FOE BUT A FRIEND TO ECONOMY XVIII. OUR PICTURESQUE ANCESTORS XIX. THE USE AND THE ABUSE OF WOOD XX. A SURRENDER AND CHANGE OF

BASE XXI. HOSPITALITY AND SUNLIGHT XXII. UNPROFESSIONAL SAGACITY XXIII. STAIRWAYS AND OUTLOOKS XXIV. IN A MULTITUDE OF COUNSELLORS IS SAFETY XXV. DOORS AND SLIDING-DOORS, WINDOWS AND BAY-WINDOWS XXVI. EXPERIENCE KEEPS A DEAR SCHOOL XXVII. FASHION AND ORNAMENT, HARD WOOD AND PAINT XXVIII. THOUGHT PROVOKES INQUIRY XXIX. CONSISTENCY, COMFORT, AND CARPETS XXX. AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND ARCHITECTURE, POTATOES AND POSTSCRIPTS XXXI. DOMESTIC-SERVICE REFORM XXXII. GO TO; LET US BUILD A TOWER XXXIII. BASEMENTS AND BALCONIES XXXIV. FOUR ROOMS ENOUGH XXXV. CONVENIENCES AND CONJECTURES XXXVI. THE LESSON OF THE ICE-HOUSE XXXVII. SHINGLES, SUNSHINE, AND FRESH AIR XXXVIII. WHERE THE DOCTORS DIFFER XXXIX. HOW TO DO IT XL. THE BREATH OF LIFE XLI. ETERNAL VIGILANCE LII. SAVED BY CONSCIENCE XLIII. FINAL AND PERSONAL BY WAY OF APPENDIX

Book Excerpts: My professional life has been a constant record of disillusion, and many things that seem wonderful to most men are the every-day commonplaces of my business. But I have never been without some seeming marvel to pique my curiosity and challenge my investigation. In this book I have set down some of the stories of strange folk and unusual performers that I have gathered in many years of such research. Much has been written about the feats of miracle-mongers, and not a little in the way of explaining them. Chaucer was by no means the first to turn shrewd eyes upon wonder-workers and show the clay feet of these popular idols. And since his time innumerable marvels, held to be supernatural, have been exposed for the tricks they were. Yet to-day, if a mystifier lack the ingenuity to invent a new and startling stunt, he can safely fall back upon a trick that has been the favorite of pressagents the world over in all ages. He can imitate the Hindoo fakir who, having thrown a rope high into the air, has a boy climb it until he is lost to view. He can even have the feat photographed. The camera will click; nothing will appear on the developed film; and this, the performer will glibly explain, proves' that the whole company of onlookers was hypnotized! And he can be certain of a very profitable following to defend and advertise him. So I do not feel that I need to apologize for adding another volume to the shelves of works dealing with the marvels of the miracle-mongers. My business has given me an intimate knowledge of stage illusions, together with many years of experience among show people of all types. My familiarity with the former, and what I have learned of the psychology of the latter, has placed me at a certain advantage in uncovering the natural explanation of feats that to the ignorant have seemed supernatural. And even if my readers are too well informed to

be interested in my descriptions of the methods of the various performers who have seemed to me worthy of attention in these pages, I hope they will find some amusement in following the fortunes and misfortunes of all manner of strange folk who once bewildered the wise men of their day. If I have accomplished that much, I shall feel amply repaid for my labor.

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