

MENTAL MARVEL

ALMOST anybody can do two things at once, such as dictating while twisting a paper clip, or talking over the telephone but really thinking about next weekend.

Here is a man who can do ten things at once and not one of the ten things is chewing gum, or smoking, or playing a one-man band. He is Fred Craig, Jr.

Craig is now twenty-nine; he took up the study of being a mental marvel when he was fourteen. He had gone to a county fair near the town where he lived in Ohio, and had seen a pen demonstrator ("three pen points twenty-five cents, pen holder thrown in free") write upside down and backwards.

He went home and began practising himself. After working three months four or five hours a day, including all study periods at school, he found he could write the alphabet perfectly upside down and backwards.

By the time he was in Denison college, he was reading newspapers upside down and backwards while writing upside down and backwards.

Now in his professional appearances he does ten things at once. He reads three different newspapers upside down and backwards, one headline from the front, one from the back, one from the center outwards. He asks his audiences for two numbers totaling millions, writes them upside down and backwards and adds them at the same time that he is compiling a list of six other figures upside down and backwards which when added, will give the same total as the numbers given by the audience. He carries on a running conversation and lets the audience call out cities in any English-speaking country, and tells the main streets of those cities.

He misses on his additions only once in twenty times. His biggest problem is not the possibility of error but the audience factor. The whole point to his writing upside down and backwards is that when he has finished the audience can read the words right side up and forwards from where they sit.

While he is writing, however, most audiences insist upon squinching about, turning their

heads upside down and consequently can't read the writing after all. It's sometimes tough being a mental marvel.

Craig has been tested by all the experts, including the psychologists at Columbia and Johns Hopkins. At Columbia a professor told him he shouldn't try to do too much at once, that mental marvels eventually go wacky because they add one trick too many to their repertoire. He was doing four things at a time then, and has since increased the number to ten, but still feels he is on the safe side.

He finds the psychological tests difficult sometimes, because the professors try to mix him up. When Johns Hopkins wanted to test him, he went into training, studied all the mental tests, the Alpha, the Thorndike, etc., and worked out an-

swers to all the puzzles and problems he could dig up.

Sure enough, some of the questions and problems appeared in the test and he was able to answer quick as a wink. The psychologists were astonished and he didn't trouble to disillusion them of their opinion.

He reads and writes upside down and backwards only when he is appearing in public. In his daily living, he uses the plain, old-fashioned system of holding a paper right side up. He writes his letters forwards, too, and wait—we'll answer before you get a chance to ask—he has never yet signed a hotel register writing up side down and backwards, but we'd certainly like to see the clerk's face if he ever did sign that way.—
Excerpt from Rockefeller Center Weekly.

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Dead Silence

Freshman: "Say, have you noticed the smell in the library lately?"

Sophomore: "Oh, that's nothing, just the dead silence they keep in three."—*Kablegram.*

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Fifty-fifty

Mother: Now, Brother, you must not be selfish with your new wagon. You should let your little brother have it half the time.

Brother: I do, Mother. I have it going down the hill, and he has it going up.—*Children's Play Mate Magazine.*