

ORIGIN OF THE SHELL GAME.

An Unlucky Crafty Healer Once Received the Credit for Its Invention.

"It is a curious thing," said a professor of the ethnological department of a western college the other night, "to trace the origin of some of our gambling games. I was much surprised a few summers ago, while tramping through the forests in the northwest on a shooting and fishing trip, to find the real home of the shell and pea game. We stayed a few days with the Indians of the Sac and Fox tribe, and were invited one evening to enter a little game of real cards. Some of our party had scooped money in the white man's proverbially better play, when one of the tribe thought to redeem the honor of his people by calling our attention to what he called the moccasin and ball game. It was a curious modification of the old shell and pea game, and was played by shuffling some baked clay balls about the size of hickory nuts under overturned moccasins.

"The natural clumsiness of the moccasin made us inclined to bite at the game, but really it resulted in the same disastrous results as with the neat little shells in the land of the merry-go-round and race tracks. I was rather astonished to hear the Indians say that the game had been known in their tribe for over 200 years, and had originated with them. One of our party improvised some little wooden cups that did good service for the trim shells and with some borrowed peas showed the Indians how his pale-faced brothers did practically the same trick, which, of course, was new to them. I am quite convinced that the shell and pea game is a Yankee improvement on the Sac and Foxes' moccasin and clay ball game.

"That explanation will be well for the pioneer west," said an eastern professor, "but the explanation won't suit the effete east. It might be that in my work in archaeology in Rome last winter I had this very matter of gambling games thrust persistently under my very nose, and I found the 'games of the golden cups,' played in ancient Rome, was the modern shell and pea game. It was described by them from the Greeks and was almost identical with the many of our painful experiences with the shell and pea games of degenerate days. Probably in the light of your ethnological Indian discoveries the French Jesuits, carrying French and Roman ends of vice in the folds of their garments, in the forms of pastimes of recreation and skill, showed your Sac and Foxes this little game some time in the sixteenth century, and the subtle but imprudent Indian used his moccasin and the little balls of earth, which could always be obtained wherever he might camp. I suppose the Jesuit game of recreation in time ceased to be known as harmless, as an Indian after Indian was fleeced of his few belongings.

"Even your explanation does not cover the ground, in fact, does not go back far enough," said a well-known retired East Indian importer. "The little shell and pea game is really Indian in origin, but it is East Indian. Several years ago, when I was in north India, I saw the shell and pea game in the street. I thought, as the first speaker said, that the game was American in origin, but came from the clever wits of the shrewd Yankee at the race track instead of among Indians. It seems the Indians never realized the trick's value as a means of gambling. It is a very old form of amusement among the East Indian nation and is really of Chinese origin.

A MAN OF LETTERS.

How a Historian Found That Not All Who Are Designated as Such Were Literary.

"Down at one of the river resorts near the bay," said the man with the sun-peeled nose, according to the Washington Post, "I met a neighbor of mine on the hotel veranda. He was in conversation with an elderly, dignified-looking man, whose face was somewhat familiar to me, although vaguely.

"Shake hands with Mr. So-and-So, a Washington man of letters," said my friend to me, nodding towards his companion, and I shook with the man whose countenance was somewhat familiar to me.

"Man of letters, eh? I thought as I looked him over. 'Well, here's where I've got to get on my mettle. I suppose, and talk about Carthaginian history and Corian ceramics and the passing of the feudal period, and stunts like that, just to show this man of letters what a dickens of a bright cuss I am myself when I get my sleeves rolled up. It's about ten to one that he'll collar me and make me look like a Patagonian plaster if I make the littlest kind of a break.'

"So I began to put 'em over for the benefit of this man of letters. He smiled indulgently at me as I went along, but he didn't have many remarks himself to speak of, except 'I guess that's so, or 'Yes, you're right there, I think, or 'It's a matter that I haven't investigated as carefully as I should.' It looked pretty easy, then and I went right along and let him have all I knew without any further fear of a call-down. My neighbor seemed to be greatly entertained over the wealth of information I was unfolding, and I was meditating upon what a sin and a shame it was that I hadn't been picked out as the head of a college several years ago.

"I was back in Washington two days later. I didn't go to the office on the morning after I got back, but sat dawdling at my breakfast. As I sat at the table in our basement dining-room there was a ring at our basement bell and I went to the door. There stood my man of letters in a gray uniform. He wore a broad grin as he headed me my morning mail, and then I remembered how it was that this man of letters' face was so familiar to me.

"Come on, the bunch of you," concluded the man with the sun-peeled nose, "I'm going the buying."

HOW JELLYFISH EMIGRATE.

One Investigator Says They Climb Mountains and Cross Deserts.

The problem of how the apple got into the dumpling sinks into insignificance beside that of the jellyfish, the crustaceans and Lake Tanganyika, but J. E. S. Moore, who has just come back from central Africa, believes he has discovered how the fish from the sea got into the lake in the middle of the continent, says a foreign exchange.

Mr. Moore is one of the young men at the Royal College of Science, South Kensington, England. He was leader of an expedition largely subsidized by the Royal Geographical Society, and after a year's march of over 2,000 miles from Zambesi to Uganda he has come back with hundreds of specimens and several important additions to the knowledge of central Africa.

NOT VERSED IN ROMANCE.

Manuscript of Scott's 'Ivanhoe' Was Rejected by Many London Publishers.

By way of practical joke a typewritten copy of Scott's 'Ivanhoe' was recently sent the rounds of the London publishers, under the title, 'When John Was England's King.' It was returned in every case. The London Academy amuses itself by imagining the form taken by the letters of rejection. It thinks Messrs. Macmillan might have written somewhat like this:

"Messrs. Macmillan & Co. regret to have to return 'When John Was England's King,' but they fear that interest in historical fiction is diminishing. Their reader's report of the story is in the main favorable, but he points out that the charge of imitating 'The Forest Lovers,' one of Messrs. Macmillan's recent publications, might perhaps be difficult to rebut. In his opinion the author of 'When John Was England's King' would perhaps have made a better and more readable book had he studied Mr. Hewlett more carefully."

Here is another burlesque letter: "Mr. John Murry begs to return the MS. of 'When John Was England's King,' and to quote a passage from his reader's report thereon: 'I do not recommend this novel, although it is painstaking and thorough. The author would, I think, have been wiser had he chosen another name for his hero. Ivanhoe has already been used by Sir Walter Scott.'"

DEATH IN CUPS AND GLASSES.

Americans Warned Against Using Silver-Mounted Drinking Vessels from Abroad.

Walter Schumann, United States consul at Mainz, has called the attention of the state department to the danger to the health of persons using silver-mounted glasses and porcelain wares. He says a Frankfurt newspaper some time ago called attention to the fact that certain kinds of silver-mounted and porcelain wares, such as cups, glasses, jars, vases, etc., had been placed upon the market.

"The silver on these articles," he says, "is applied by means of a galvanoplastic process in baths which contain large quantities of potassium cyanide. As glazed wares have innumerable hair-like cracks, this deadly poison enters these cracks, and the articles, beautiful to look at, become a severe menace to the health of anybody using or handling them, and especially as it is impossible in the course of manufacture to remove this poisonous residuum.

"Only a short time ago a very severe case of poisoning resulted from the use of such ware. I am told that these goods are chiefly exported to the United States from Frankfurt, Berlin and Stuttgart. It might be well for the public to be informed of the danger in these goods, and steps might be taken to prohibit their sale."

SPIDER TIME IN MANILA.

There Is Great Sport for the Filipino Boys in Making the Insects Fight.

"When 'spider time' arrives the Filipino boy is happy. He does not know much about marbles, but when spider time arrives, and that is just after the rainy season begins, he knows that he is to have great sport. There are two harmless varieties of spiders that are green and yellow in color that mature in June. They are as large as the common black spider so plentiful in California. The Filipino boy catches these and keeps them secure in a box. A small rod the size and length of a knitting needle is procured. A spider is then placed on the rod. Another boy comes along and he bets a cent that his spider will whip, says the San Jose (Cal.) Mercury. Then the sport begins.

The boy who is challenged produces his spider, places it on the rod with the challenger's. Each spider makes a rush for the other and a fierce battle ensues. Sometimes the stronger of the two will wind a web around the other, fastening him to the rod and completely 'putting him out of business.' The spiders sometimes fight for ten minutes. Nearly every boy has from eight to ten spiders, and they bet on the Filipino pennies they can get on the result of the fight.

MORAL SUASION ON A DOG.

How a Minister Easily Overcame the Animosity of a Bellicose Canine.

A clergyman who went up into the country to preach and lived there a considerable time had occasion in his ministrations to drive regularly over a certain road. At a house on that road lived a big bulldog which always came out and attacked him viciously. The minister stood this for a good while, until finally, as he drove past one winter night in a low sleigh, a means of correcting the dog by moral suasion occurred to him. He stopped his horse in the road before the house. The dog rushed out madly, barking and threatening to jump into the sleigh. The minister sat in his sleigh and paid no attention. The dog retired, returned to the assault, retired again, and a third time rushed out to the attack, but did not touch the man. Then he returned to the doorstep and laid down, apparently utterly crestfallen and dispirited with such a man; and, as he paid no further attention, the minister drove off. After this the minister drove many times past the house, but the dog paid no attention to him, and never seemed to see him at all. He was cured.

IT SHOWED ITS QUALITY.

Mr. Huntington's Switch Engine Did Not Disappoint Him in Its Power.

Some 17 years ago, when Collis P. Huntington was president of the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad company, J. K. Murray, of the vice president's staff, with Capt. Rogers, a California railroad official, was with him on his private car. Capt. Rogers had been offered the general management of the road by Mr. Huntington, and he was going over the line. The train stopped and a switching engine was attached to the end of Mr. Huntington's car to pull it out.

At that moment, relates a Chicago exchange, the party on the car was breakfasting, and Mr. Huntington was seated at the table near the door, calmly carving a steak. The switching engine had been coupled to the other end of the car and started off, and it happened that the brakeman forgot to uncouple the bell rope between the car and the rest of the train, so, as the switching engine pulled the private car away from the train, the rope stood the strain until it became taut and then broke with a rebound that sent one end with terrific force into Mr. Huntington's car.

The flying rope with its metal end grazed Mr. Huntington's head and shattered the meat platter in front of him. He quietly began to pick up the fragments, and Capt. Rogers remarked: "That was a narrow escape, Mr. Huntington."

MANY RETIRING M. P.'S.

Several Scottish Members of Parliament Will Not Return to Their Seats.

Scotland will send more new faces to parliament when Lord Salisbury addresses her majesty to issue her election list than any other portion of the kingdom, says a London paper. Those two eminent authorities on matters of marine, Sir Thomas Sutherland and Sir Donald Currie, have signified their intention to retire from public office. The latter has urged considerably of age, but Sir Thomas is the same keen-eyed, healthy looking time-defying, rubicund complexioned Caedonian that he has been any time these 20 years past. The career of Sir Thomas Sutherland is one of the romances of the contemporary commercial world. From the representation of the P. and O. in faraway Hong-Kong he has worked his way up to the presidency and supreme direction of one of the biggest shipping businesses in the world.

Another Scottish member who will be missed in the next house is Sir William Wedderburn, the leader of the little band of earnest Indian reformers, and a retired Indian official of many years' experience, whose knowledge of all the problems connected with the administration of our great Asiatic dependency is quite cyclopaedic. Sir Charles Cameron, who has for many years been a conspicuous figure in Scottish science and journalism; Sir T. Gibson Carmichael, for whom five years of the weary round at Westminster have sufficed, and W. McEwan, the Edinburgh brewer and benefactor, are also going on the retired list.

RHODE ISLAND'S HOMING HEN.

The Faithful Fowl Takes Food Elsewhere, But Will Lay Only in Her Native Nest.

About a year and a half ago Mr. N., who lives on the Riverpoint side of Gough avenue, in Providence, R. I., says the Journal of that city, built a henhouse and embarked on the keeping of fowls—not the web-footed, white Waudotte variety, but just plain, ordinary hens. A neighbor, Mrs. K., who lives on the Jericho side, in order to help the young man start hen-keeping, as it were, gave him a pullet, which he fed and cared for until it reached maturity and an age when it could be expected, in the natural order of things, to pay its board by contributing an egg occasionally to the family larder. It wasn't that kind of a bird, however. Like some other birds, it preferred the coop of its birth to the henhouse of its adoption, and, after feeding on the substance provided in the latter, the hen would lie her across the avenue to Mrs. K.'s coop and deposit her egg in her native nest.

She had been feeding on 'X' corn and laying in Mrs. K.'s coop a long time before the fact was discovered. Then she was watched, and day after day she was seen to run over into Jericho, lay an egg, announce the fact in the hen vernacular, and then run back to where she found food and shelter in the Riverpoint henhouse of her owner. This Riverpoint hen will lay for no one but the lady that owned the hen—that sat on the egg from which this toming hen was hatched.

Messure of Coin.

Money is measured by Troy weight, in which 24 grains make a pennyweight, 20 pennyweights one ounce and 12 ounces one pound. The silver dollar weighs 412 1/2 grains, and \$1,000, is near as it can be expressed intelligently in print, weighs 71,614 pounds, or a fraction over 7 1/2 tons. In avoirdupois the same would weigh 58,928, or nearly 59 tons.

Didn't Want Nursing.

A nurse visiting her patients in a Cape Town hospital ward found her favorite soldier fast asleep. Pinned to his coverlet was a scrap of paper in which he had scribbled: "To it to be nursed today, respectfully J. M." Only One Big Fortress in Denmark. The only fortress of consequence in Denmark is the capital, Copenhagen.

TOBACCO GROWS IN TENTS.

Attempts Are Being Made to Grow Havana and Sumatra Tobacco in Connecticut.

An experiment in growing Havana seed and Sumatra tobacco in Connecticut soil, under a tent, is being conducted by Prof. E. H. Jenkins, of the state agricultural station of New Haven, and Marcus A. Floyd, tobacco expert of the United States department of agriculture, says a recent report. The covering is made of cheese cloth, is nine feet high and contains 3,100 feet of cloth. Prof. Jenkins told a Sun reporter that the covering offered many advantages, retaining the moisture in the ground longer than where it was exposed to a temperature of from five to ten degrees hotter, and protecting the plants from heavy rainstorms or hail. Excessively heavy hail may penetrate through the cloth, but the fall will be sufficiently broken to prevent the plants from being broken. Mr. Floyd, in speaking of the experiment, said: "The Sumatra is progressing finely. The leaves are smaller of a brighter green and finer shade, and are silkier than that raised in the open. We are gathering the crop by leaves, picking them as they become fully matured and leaving the stalk. This produces a much better result than to dry them on the stalk. The Havana seed is not doing so well, and the outcome is in doubt."

Prof. Jenkins said that Connecticut tobacco no longer answered the demand of the trade, and if the attempt to grow Sumatra here was successful it would result in great prosperity for Connecticut growers.

WATER AFTER THE SODA.

Desire for a Drink Is Proof That the Sweet Stuff Does Not Quench Thirst.

"Will you have a glass of water after your ice cream soda, lady?" said the clerk at the soda fountain, according to the Chicago Tribune.

"If you please," answered the customer. "The water takes the sweet taste out of my mouth."

DOGS SUFFER FROM WORRY.

Many Cases of Nervous Prostration Reported as Result of Grand Army Reunion.

The grand army reunion and the Labor day parade have left some sad remembrances along Michigan avenue in the form of a regular epidemic of canine nervous prostration, says the Chicago Tribune. The pet and toy dogs which have been lording it over the common kind along the Lake Front park are now many of them under the care of veterinary surgeons for most aggravated cases of shyness and nerves. Following upon the excitement and crowds of the reunion and parade came the lot spell, and then the dogs betrayed symptoms which were feared by many to be hydrophobia. Their usually kind and placid dispositions were decidedly soured and they became really dangerous.

At one time three pet dogs from one block were under the care of the doctor, with their feminine owners weeping nearby and begging their lives be spared. Had they been ordinary, plain dogs their deaths would have been decreed forthwith.

IS THE GIRAFFE GOING?

The Long-Necked Animal Seems to Be Following the North American Bison.

Cosmopolitan sportsmen who have hunted in the different countries of the world agree that the giraffe is one of the most highly prized game animals of the world. It is generally believed, though, that this animal is almost extinct. Once it was quite abundant in South Africa, but it was ruthlessly slaughtered by the native hunters until it has become a rare animal there.

A writer to the Field, of London, asserts that giraffe are still to be found in considerable numbers in Angola, Portuguese West Africa, and that it is likely to be many years before these splendid animals are exterminated. The giraffe is known to the Angolans natives as ondo. Its range does not extend in this region beyond the fiftieth degree of south latitude. It is hoped that these animals may be preserved in their native lair. It would be a grand work for the international organization for the preservation of African big game which was recently formed to exert itself for the preservation of this animal.

SOME POST OFFICE FIGURES.

Interesting Facts from the Report of the London Postmaster General.

The annual report of the postmaster general, although not due till parliament reassembles, has been made public by Lord Londonderry. He recalls the colossal blunders of the public with great gusto. It is really astonishing that 268,067 packets should be posted unaddressed and still more that 2,767 contained cash, notes postal orders and other paper money. There is another record of carelessness against the public in the fact that the articles found loose in the post have increased by nearly 80 per cent. in the last four years. The craze for cheapness affects even postal covers, to our loss, it would seem. For the fact that undelivered correspondence for the army in South Africa is being returned in large quantities, there is ample explanation in the melancholy list of losses in the war. The postmaster general appears to be surprised that 35,448 letters addressed to the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, which were stopped at Cape Town at the outbreak of the war, were not claimed there by the persons for whom they were intended. There was, no doubt, a difficulty in the way of either doors or billiardiers sending down to Cape Town for their mail after war had been declared. There is a healthy surplus on the working of the department of £3,710,631, which will please the chancellor of the exchequer. But the deficit on telegraphs has increased from £66,269 to £254,438.

MISSIONARIES WELL PAID.

Married Men Receive One Thousand Dollars a Year and Traveling Expenses.

The foreign missionary does not work for love of humanity alone. He is a well-paid person, and instead of having the usual holidays and holidays of rest like other folks he is given a year's vacation with salary every once in from four to ten years, says the Philadelphia Call. The married men missionaries in China receive \$1,000 a year and traveling expenses.

When missionaries who are married have children old enough to require to be kept in school away from home they are allowed \$150 additional. If young children are with their parents and to be supported \$100 additional is allowed for each child. Of course these salaries include house rental and traveling expenses to and from the stations.

When missionaries take a vacation of a year their traveling expenses to and from their stations are paid at this time and almost their full salary likewise allowed them. More than the salary must of course, be the compelling motive when missionaries go to such fields as China.

RANG THE WRONG BELL.

Aggravating Experience of a Pittsburgh Girl Who Was Unaccommodated to Hotel.

"I never felt so mortified in my life," said the South side girl to her friend on her return to Chicago. "I'm not used to those big hotels, you know, and we had rooms at the Palmer house. We got in at night, four of us, three women that I didn't know very well myself. They are married to members of papa's post, and that is why we were together. One of them wanted to send a postal card home to tell of her safe arrival," quotes the Pittsburgh News. "She said she would go downstairs for it. To show them that I had often stopped at big hotels, which I didn't, I said we would call a boy and have a postal card brought to our room. I rang the bell, and in a little while a knock came. I went to the door, and the boy gave me a pitcher of ice water and hurried away. I thought that wasn't the boy answering the bell. So I waited and rang again. Another pitcher of ice water came. The boy got away again. I was determined to have the postal card and rang the third time. This time I waited at the door for the boy. He came, and before I could open my mouth he handed me a pitcher of ice water and scouted away. I got angry and I just made that old bell ring the fourth time. The boy came up and looked mad. He had another pitcher of ice water.

"Lads," he said, "if you want any more ice water you'll have to send back some of those pitchers; we're running short of them."

Too Much to Expect. An excellent story is told of the weakness in spelling of an old Indian colonel. One day a brigade major, approached him with the remark: "Very sorry to hear that you've been suffering from gout, colonel." "Gout, sir? What do you mean, sir?" roared the colonel. "Why on earth should I have gout? Never had gout in my life, confound you!" "Well, I'm sorry to have offended you, colonel, but only this morning I received in the brigade office your application for leave, and you distinctly asked for it on the ground that you had been suffering from gout." "I dare say I did," answered the colonel, "but what of that? You couldn't expect me to spell a word like rheumatism?"

A Belle of Shakespeare. In the British museum is a carved box made from a mulberry tree that Shakespeare planted with his own hands.