

GAMBLE'S TRICKS.

Means by Which Professionals Pluck Their Victims.
(From the Philadelphia Times.)

No one looks upon a professional gambler as a shining example of honesty, but only few people know what crooked sharpers most professional gamblers are, or the ingenious mechanical contrivances which they employ to aid them in "winning" the dollars of their victims. The man who makes gaming a profession rarely or never depends upon luck for his existence. In faro, roulette, monte, hazard, and in all other games known to the gentleman of the green cloth, there is a certain well-understood "percentage" in favor of the proprietors. This is understood by all who play, but it is so trifling that they are willing to pay it for the privilege of hazarding their money. There is another "percentage" in all of these games as played at many places that is only understood by the professional dealers, and is never suspected by the players.

In the game of faro the known percentage is very small. When two cards of the same denomination come out of the silver-plated "dealing-box" together, the dealer takes one-half of the bets which happen to be on that card on the "layout." Sometimes an entire deal is played without this occurring, and it rarely happens more than twice in a deal, so that the visible percentage is quite small; so trifling, in fact, that if a faro game is dealt fairly it must have an almost unlimited capital or eventually become bankrupt.

It is to guard against this mishap and to make the game a profitable one that the unknown percentage is introduced. To accomplish his purpose the gambler has both the cards and the dealing-box "fixed." This "fixing" process of the cards is done as follows: A new pack is used, and one in which every card is exactly of the same size to a hair's breadth. There is an almost imperceptible difference in the sizes of the cards in nearly all cheap packs; so that the gambler buys for his purpose expensive cards that have been "squared" especially for faro. The first step in "fixing" is to separate the low and high cards; that is, to put in separate piles all ranging from the ace to the six, and from the eight to the king. The seven being neither high nor low is equally divided, two sevens being put with the high and two with the low cards. Then with a pair of sharp shears, made especially for the purpose, the gambler clips a thin slip from the end of each card. The high cards are clipped in this way from the upper right-hand corner to a point on the lower edge, about the thirty-second part of an inch from the lower right-hand corner. The low cards are clipped in the same way, except that the gambler commences at the lower right-hand corner and clips to a point on the upper edge near the right corner. The cards now are wider at one end than at the other, but the difference in which is so slight as to be almost imperceptible except to the touch. The cards are then shuffled, care being taken to keep the wide ends of the high cards and the wide ends of the low cards at opposite ends of the pack. It is an easy matter now for an expert manipulator to catch the wide ends of the cards between his thumbs and forefingers, and so draw all of the high cards into one hand and the low ones into the other. When the game is in progress the dealer shuffles the cards thoroughly, and then in this way separates the high from the low. Next he shuffles them as to "sandwich" each low and high card, and when the pack is in the dealing-box they should come out alternately.

This wouldn't suit the dealer at all, as he must not only know just how the cards are arranged, but at the same time have perfect control over them. In order that he may have this power a specially arranged dealing-box is procured. The ordinary dealing-boxes have a slit in the side just wide enough to admit of one card passing through it at a time; the special boxes have a slit wide enough to allow two cards to pass through them. Armed with these simple contrivances, all the dealer has to do is to watch where the bets are and win every time by either shoving out one card or two, as occasion requires. If a player bets that a high card will win, the dealer can very easily make it lose or vice versa. Of course the game-keeper is a confederate, and at a sign from the dealer can tell how to arrange the "cases" so that they will tally with the cards that are out. This is what is called a "brace game," probably because it can only be successfully worked by a "brace" of rogues. Thousands of faro-players who think that luck is always against them are simply victims of the "brace game."

Dealing-boxes and cards prepared in this way can be procured from a Chicago firm, which issues private catalogues to gamblers containing samples of marked cards, with directions for reading the backs. The firm also sells roulette wheels so arranged as to make the red invariably win if the wheel is turned in one direction and the black win if turned in the other. These are known among gamblers as "right and left" wheels, and are used with great success in many places.

In this day and age of our Lord the majority only make a living anyhow, and many there are who are not so fortunate. 'Tis only now and then that any one person amasses great wealth. Don't make up your mind to become opulent without hard work, and you may be gratified if you can then keep your head above the high-water mark, amid the tribulations that for reason of are to be met with in every and all branches of business.

TRICKS ON THE TRACKS!

Dangers from Which Engineers Save the Public and Themselves.
(From the Railway Review.)

One who is accustomed to railway traveling can scarcely realize how much he is dependent for safety upon the engineer. Added to the responsibility of their station, engineers are also in constant danger of accidents caused by the tricks of jealous rivals. This rivalry, it is said, sometimes prompts to the doing of utterly mean tricks. A Nickel Plate engineer, after his very first trip, was laid off because he had "cut out" all the bearings of his engine. He was reinstated, however, after he proved that some rival had filled his oiling can with emery. Another new engineer was suspended for burning out the fuses of his boiler. Through grief at the loss of his position he died, and then a conscience-stricken rival confessed that he had put oil in the tank so that it foamed and showed water at the top gauge, when in reality there was scarcely a quart in the boiler!

These intense jealousies, together with the terrible anxiety incident to their work, have a terribly straining effect on the nerves, and statistics tell us that, though Locomotive Engineers may look strong and vigorous, they are not all a hearty class. Ex-Chief Engineer A. S. Hampton, Indianapolis, Ind. (Div. 143), was one of those apparently hearty men, but he says: "The anxiety, strain, and jolting came near finishing me." His sufferings localized in catarrh of the bladder, but he used Warner's safe cure faithfully for twenty weeks and now exclaims, "I am a well man." T. S. Ingraham, of Cleveland, Ohio, Assistant Chief Engineer, and other prominent members are also emphatic in his praise.

The Locomotive Engineers' Brotherhood has 17,000 members and 240 divisions. Its headquarters is in Cleveland, Ohio, where Chief Engineer Arthur for twenty years has exercised almost dictatorial sway. It was organized in August, 1863, by the employees of the Michigan Central. It has given nearly two million dollars to the widows and orphans of deceased members.

He Was Left in the Lurch.

"How did you come to give way to the tempter, my good brother?" said a well-meaning minister who was trying to do a little missionary work among Uncle Sam's colony in Canada, as he addressed an Indiana Trustee who had lately joined the gang. "From what you have told me, my dear sir, I infer that you were piously brought up."

"Yes," said the Hoosier, "I was raised all right, and I was always a good average church member, too."

"But there was certainly a cause for your falling from grace, my good friend. Do you know what it was?"

"Yes, indeed, sir?"

"Ah, you do? And what was it, my dear sir?"

"Divine neglect."

"Ah! But I am at a loss to understand your meaning, my good friend. I fear you did not seek help from on high to sustain you in the hour of weakness."

"Well, that's just what I did do, but I was left in the lurch."

"Left in the lurch?"

"Yes, sir."

"In what way, my dear sir?"

"Well, you see, when Pollard pointed out to me how weak the law was, and how easy it would be for me to scoop in a big pile without much risk, I felt myself slipping from the rock on which I had been standing so long, and I knew at once I was a goner unless—"

"Unless what, my dear sir?"

"Unless I got help from above."

"Very good—very good, my dear brother. You should have prayed for it."

"That's just exactly what I did do."

"Indeed?"

"Yes; I got right down on my knees and I prayed to the Lord to give me strength to resist the temptation."

"Very good. Go on—go on, my good sir."

"Well, sir, the Lord went right square back on me and down I went. He didn't hold me up worth a cent after I'd looked into the law for myself, and found out that Pollard was right about it."—Chicago Ledger.

The Secret of Exercising.

The secret of muscular recuperation is in stopping when fatigue begins. He or she who is not the fresher in body and mind for the exercise taken has had an overdose of what in proper measure would have been a benefit. The gain in strength is shown and felt in the increasing ability to do more and more without exhaustion. The measure of success is not in the greatness of the feat accomplished but in the ease with which the exercise is indulged in, in the absence of exhaustion after it. There are occasions frequent enough in which people in the struggle of life are forced beyond their power of endurance, and there is no need to carry into the pursuit of recreation the fatigue which exacting work imposes. —Philadelphia Ledger.

In most cases failures are not hopeless misfortunes, and, though often bitter, nevertheless profitable experiences, even if the lesson be severe. But few people learn so effectually what their capabilities are, or what "making one's way" means as by experience, and of these ninety-nine out of every hundred will be benefited in a greater or less degree for the reproach—depending very much upon how well the knowledge gained is applied.

"Sweet Maud Miller."

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The Reason.

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Friend—Indeed.

T.—Yes, sir, you can see for yourself.

F.—I see and understand the reason.

T.—You do?

F.—Certainly, my friend, certainly. You may say you have been good friends with liquor, but at the same time you have been in the habit of running it down, and that's why it is casting reflections on your nose.—Boston Courier.

When young I was too ambitious to get plenty of the "root," and, following out my inclinations, often overworked, and then put in a season of grunting, aided by "salts." But age is often accompanied by wisdom. Now I let others do the heavy work, while I do the grunting over the light work. Half the wisdom of life, I have found out, lies in not working all the time, unless you have to, without now and then a season of enjoyment.

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Artistic ability may not be hereditary, but oftentimes drawing is sketching.—Texas Siftings.

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When the mercury falls we may anticipate the dude drop if it's an ice day.—Texas Siftings.

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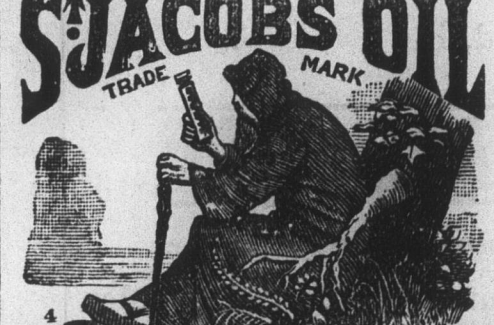
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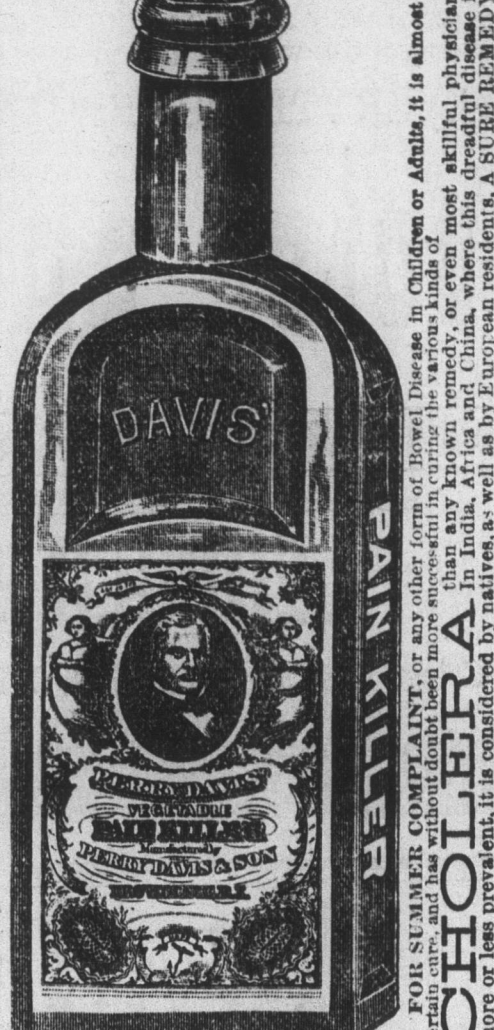
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