

The Gaming Table, Its Votaries and Victims Volume #2

Andrew Steinmetz

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by Andrew Steinmetz

May, 1996 [Etext #531]

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THE GAMING TABLE: ITS VOTARIES AND VICTIMS,

In all Times and Countries, especially in England and in France.

BY ANDREW STEINMETZ, ESQ.,

OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW; FIRST-CLASS EXTRA
CERTIFICATE SCHOOL OF MUSKETRY, HYTHE; late OFFICER INSTRUCTOR
MUSKETRY, THE QUEENS OWN LIGHT INFANTRY MILITIA. AUTHOR OF 'THE
HISTORY OF THE JESUITS,' 'JAPAN AND HER PEOPLE,' 'THE ROMANCE OF
DUELLING,' &c., &c.

'The sharp, the blackleg, and the knowing one,
Livery or lace, the self-same circle, run;
The same the passion, end and means the same--

Dick and his Lordship differ but in name.'

IN TWO VOLUMES.--VOL. II.

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THE GAMING TABLE.

CHAPTER I.

CHEVALIERS D'INDUSTRIE, OR POLITE SHARPERS.

Chevaliers d'industrie, or polite and accomplished sharpers, have always existed in every city, from the earliest times to the present. The ordinary progress of these interesting gentlemen is as follows. Their debut is often difficult, and many of them are stopped short in their career. They only succeed by means of great exertion and severe trials; but they endure everything in order to be tolerated or permitted to exercise their calling. To secure credit they ally themselves with men of respectability, or those who pass for such. When they have no titles they fabricate them; and few persons dispute their claims. They are found useful for the pleasures of society, the expenses of which they often pay--at the cost of the dupes they make in the world. The income of chevaliers d'industrie is at first derived from those inexperienced persons whom they get in their clutches by means of every kind of enticement, in order to ruin them some day--if they have any 'expectations' or are likely to be rich; or in order to make accomplices of them if they have only aptitudes for the purpose. After having led them from error to error, after suggesting to them all sorts of wants and vices, they make them gamble, if they are of age; they hold up play to them as an

inexhaustible source of wealth.

The 'protector' next hands over his 'young friends' to 'executioners,' who fleece them for the common benefit of the confederates. They do not always wait for the coming of age of their young dupes in order to strike the grand 'stroke.' When they find that the father of a family shudders at the idea of a public scandal, they immolate their victim at once--for fear lest he should escape from their hands. Of course they are always open to 'capitulate'--to come to terms; and if the aid of the law is invoked they give in discreetly.

About a century ago there flourished at Paris one of these adventurers, who made a great noise and did a vast amount of evil. This man of a thousand faces, this Proteus, as great a corrupter as he was corrupted, changed his name, his quarters, and field of operations, according to the exigences of business. Although a man of ardent temperament and inconceivable activity, his cold-blooded rascality was never in a hurry. He could wait; he could bide his time. Taking in, at a glance, all the requirements of a case, and seeing through all its difficulties, he worked out his scheme with the utmost patience and consummated his crime with absolute security.

Sometimes he gave a concert for amateurs, elegant suppers for gay ladies, and special soirees for the learned and the witty. He was not particular as to the means of doing business; thus he trafficked in everything,--for the sale of a living, or the procuration of a mistress--for he had associates in all ranks, among all professions of men.

He had twenty Faro tables in operation every night, whilst his emissaries were on the watch for new arrivals, and for those who had recently come into property.

In general, rogues soon betray themselves by some stupid bungle; but such was not the case with this man; he defended himself, as it were, on all sides, and always kept himself in position so as to oppose to each of his vices the proof positive of the contrary virtues. Thus, if accused of usury, he could prove that he had lent, without interest, considerable sums of money. Cowardly and base in a *tete-a-tete*, he was bold and redoubtable in public; those who had made him tremble in secret were then compelled to acknowledge him a man of courage. Even his more than suspected probity was defended by such as believed themselves his depositaries, whereas they were, in point of fact, only receivers of stolen property.

Affable, insinuating to a degree, he might be compared to those brigands of Egypt who embraced their victims in order to strangle them.[1] He never showed more devotedness than when he meditated some perfidy, nor more assurance than when convicted of the rascality. Playing fast and loose with honour and the laws, he was sure to find, when threatened by the arm of justice, the female relatives of the judges themselves taking his part and doing their best to 'get him off.' Such was this extraordinary *chevalier d'industrie*, who might have gone on with his diabolical perpetrations had he not, at last, attempted too much, failing in

the grandest stroke he had ever meditated--and yet a vulgar fraud--when he was convicted, branded, and sent to the galleys.[2]

[1] Senec., Epist. li.

[2] Dusaulx, De la Passion du Jeu.

The following narrative elucidates a still more modern phase of this elegant 'industry.' My authority is M. Robert-Houdin.

CAUGHT IN A TRAP.

M. Olivier de ---- was a dissipated young gentleman. His family was one of the oldest and most respectable of the country, and deservedly enjoyed the highest consideration. M. Olivier de ----, his father, was not rich, and therefore could not do much for his son; the consequence was that owing to his outrageous prodigality the son was sorely pinched for means to keep up his position; he exhausted his credit, and was soon overwhelmed with debt. Among the companions of his dissipation was a young man whose abundant means filled him with admiration and envy; he lived like a prince and had not a single creditor. One day he asked his friend to explain the mystery of the fact that, without possessing any fortune, he could gratify all his tastes and fancies, whilst he himself, with certain resources, was compelled to submit to privations, still getting into debt.

Chauvignac--such was the name of the friend thus addressed--was a card-sharper, and he instantly seized the opportunity to make something out of the happy disposition of this modern prodigal son, this scion of gentility. With the utmost frankness he explained to the young man his wonderful method of keeping his pockets full of money, and showed that nothing could be easier than for Olivier to go and do likewise in his terrible condition;--in short, on one hand there were within his grasp, riches, pleasure, all manner of enjoyment; on the other, pitiless creditors, ruin, misery, and contempt. The tempter, moreover, offered to initiate his listener in his infallible method of getting rich. In his frame of mind Olivier yielded to the temptation, with the full determination, if not to get money by cheating at cards, at any rate to learn the method which might serve as a means of self-defence should he not think proper to use it for attack--such was the final argument suggested by the human Mephistopheles to his pupil.

Taking Olivier to his house, he showed him a pack of cards. 'Now here is a pack of cards,' he said; 'there seems to be nothing remarkable about it, does there?' Olivier examined the pack and declared that the cards did not appear to differ in the least from all others. 'Well,' said Chauvignac, 'nevertheless they have been subjected to a preparation called biseutage, or having one end of the cards made narrower than the other. This disposition enables us to remove from the pack such and such cards and then to class them in the necessary order so that they may get into the hand of the operator.' Chauvignac then proceeded to apply his precepts by an example, and although the young man had no particular qualification for the art of legerdemain, he succeeded at once to admiration in a game at

Ecarte, for he had already mastered the first process of cheating. Having thus, as he thought, sufficiently compromised his victim, Chauvignac left him to his temptations, and took leave of him.

Two days afterwards the professor returned to his pupil and invited him to accompany him on a pleasure trip. Olivier excused himself on account of his desperate condition--one of his creditors being in pursuit of him for a debt of one thousand francs. 'Is that all?' said Chauvignac; and pulling out his pocket-book he added,--'Here's a bank-note; you can repay me to-morrow.' 'Why, man, you are mad!' exclaimed Olivier. 'Be it so,' said Chauvignac; 'and in my madness I give you credit for another thousand-franc bank-note to go and get thirty thousand francs which are waiting for you.' 'Now, do explain yourself, for you are driving ME mad.' 'Nothing more easy. Here is the fact,' said Chauvignac. 'M. le Comte de Vandermool, a wealthy Belgian capitalist, a desperate gamester if ever there was one, and who can lose a hundred thousand francs without much inconvenience, is now at Boulogne, where he will remain a week. This millionaire must be thinned a little. Nothing is easier. One of my friends and confreres, named Chaffard, is already with the count to prepare the way. We have only now to set to work. You are one of us--that's agreed--and in a few days you will return, to satisfy your creditors and buy your mistress a shawl.'

'Stop a bit. You are going too fast. Wait a little. I haven't as yet said Yes,' replied Olivier. 'I don't want your Yes now; you will say it at Boulogne. For the present go and pay your bill. We set out in two hours; the post-horses are already ordered; we shall start from my house: be punctual.'

The party reached Boulogne and put up at the Hotel de l'Univers. On their arrival they were informed that no time was to be lost, as the count talked of leaving next day. The two travellers took a hasty dinner, and at once proceeded to the apartment of the Belgian millionaire. Chaffard, who had preceded them, introduced them as two of his friends, whose property was situated in the vicinity of Boulogne.

M. le Comte de Vandermool was a man about fifty years of age, with an open, candid countenance. He wore several foreign decorations. He received the two gentlemen with charming affability; he did more; he invited them to spend the evening with him. Of course the invitation was accepted. When the conversation began to flag, the count proposed a game--which was also, of course, very readily agreed to by the three comperes.

While the table was prepared, Chauvignac gave his young friend two packs of cards, to be substituted for those which should be furnished by the count. Ecarte was to be the game, and Olivier was to play, the two other associates having pretended to know nothing about the game, and saying that they would content themselves by betting with each other. Of course Olivier was rather surprised at this declaration, but he soon understood by certain signs from Chauvignac that this reservation was intended to do away with the count's suspicions, in case of their success.

The count, enormously rich as he was, would only play for bank-notes. 'Metal smells bad in a room,' he said. The novice, at first confused at being a party to the intended roguery, followed the dictates of his conscience and, neglecting the advantages of his hands, trusted merely to chance. The result was that the only thousand-franc bank-note he had was speedily transferred to the count. At that moment Chauvignac gave him a significant look, and this, together with the desire to retrieve his loss, induced him to put into execution the culpable manoeuvres which his friend had taught him. His work was of the easiest; the count was so short-sighted that he had to keep his nose almost upon the cards to see them. Chance now turned, as might be expected, and thousand-franc bank-notes soon accumulated in the hands of Olivier, who, intoxicated by this possession, worked away with incredible ardour. Moreover, the count was not in the least out of humour at losing so immensely; on the contrary, he was quite jovial; indeed, from his looks he might have been supposed to be the winner. At length, however, he said with a smile, taking a pinch from his golden snuff-box--'I am evidently not in vein. I have lost eighty thousand francs. I see that I shall soon be in for one hundred thousand. But it is proper, my dear sir, that I should say I don't make a habit of losing more than this sum at a sitting; and if it must be so, I propose to sup before losing my last twenty thousand francs. Perhaps this will change my vein. I think you will grant me this indulgence.' The proposal was agreed to.

Olivier, almost out of his senses at the possession of eighty thousand francs, could not resist the desire of expressing his gratitude to Chauvignac, which he did, grasping his hand with emotion and leading him into a corner of the room.

Alas! the whole thing was only an infamous conspiracy to ruin the young man. The Belgian capitalist, this count apparently so respectable, was only an expert card-sharper whom Chauvignac had brought from Paris to play out the vile tragi-comedy, the denouement of which would be the ruin of the unfortunate Olivier.

At the moment when the latter left the card-table to go to Chauvignac, the pretended millionaire changed the pack of cards they had been using for two other packs.

Supper went off very pleasantly. They drank very moderately, for the head had to be kept cool for what had to follow. They soon sat down again at the card-table. 'Now,' said the Parisian card-shaper, on resuming his seat, 'I should like to end the matter quickly: I will stake the twenty thousand francs in a lump.'

Olivier, confident of success after his previous achievement, readily assented; but, alas, the twenty thousand francs of which he made sure was won by his adversary.

Forty thousand francs went in like manner. Olivier, breathless, utterly prostrate, knew not what to do. All his manoeuvres were practised in vain; he could give himself none but small cards. His opponent had his hands full of trumps, and HE dealt them to him! In his despair he consulted Chauvignac by a look, and the latter made a sign to him to go on. The wretched young man went

on, and lost again. Bewildered, beside himself, he staked fabulous sums to try and make up for his losses, and very soon found, in his turn, that he owed his adversary one hundred thousand francs(L4166)!

At this point the horrible denouement commenced. The pretended count stopped, and crossing his arms on his breast, said sternly--'Monsieur Olivier de ----, you must be very rich to stake so glibly such enormous sums. Of course you know your fortune and can square yourself with it; but, however rich you may be, you ought to know that it is not sufficient to lose a hundred thousand francs, but that you must pay it. Besides, I have given you the example. Begin, therefore, by putting down the sum I have won from you; after which we can go on.' . . .

'Nothing can be more proper, sir,' stammered out young Olivier, 'I am ready to satisfy you; but, after all, you know that

gaming debts my word'

'The d--! sir,' said the pretended count, giving the table a violent blow with his fist--'Why do you talk to me about your WORD. Gad! You are well entitled to appeal to the engagements of honour! Well! We have now to play another game on this table, and we must speak out plainly. Monsieur Olivier de ----, you are a rogue . . . Yes, a rogue! The cards we have been using are biseautees and YOU brought them hither.'

'Sir! . . You insult me!' said Olivier.

'Indeed? Well, sir, that astonishes me!' replied the false Belgian ironically.

'That is too much, sir. I demand satisfaction, and that on the very instant. Do you understand me? Let us go out at once.'

'No! no! We must end this quarrel here, sir. Look here--your two friends shall be your "seconds;" I am now going to send for MINE.'

The card-sharper, who had risen at these words, rang the bell violently. His own servant entered. 'Go,' said he, 'to the Procureur de Roi, and request him to come here on a very important matter. Be as quick as you can.'

'Oh, sir, be merciful! Don't ruin me!' exclaimed the wretched Olivier; 'I will do what you like.' At these words, the sharper told his servant to wait behind the door, and to execute his order if he should hear nothing to the contrary in ten minutes.

'And now, sir,' continued the sharper, turning to Olivier, 'and now, sir, for the business between you and me. These cards have been substituted by you in the place of those which I supplied . . . You must do them up, write your name upon the cover, and seal it with the coat of arms on your ring.'

Olivier looked first at Chauvignac and then at Chaffard, but both the fellows only made signs to him to resign himself to the

circumstances. He did what was ordered.

'That is not all, sir,' added the false Belgian; 'I have fairly won money from you and have a right to demand a guarantee for payment. You must draw me short bills for the sum of one hundred thousand francs.'

As the wretched young man hesitated to comply with this demand, his pitiless creditor rose to ring the bell.

'Don't ring, sir, don't ring,' said Olivier, 'I'll sign.'

He signed, and the villany was consummated. Olivier returned to his family and made an humble avowal of his fault and his engagements. His venerable father received the terrible blow with resignation, and paid the 100,000 francs, estimating his honour far above that amount of money.[3]

[3] This narrative is condensed from the account of the affair by Robert-Hondin, *Tricherics des Grecs dévoilees*.

AN ATTORNEY 'DONE' BY A GAMBLER.

A turfite and gambler, represented under the letters of Mr H--e, having lost all his money at Doncaster and the following York Meeting, devised a plan, with his coadjutor, to obtain the means for their departure from York, which, no doubt, will be considered exceedingly ingenious.

He had heard of an attorney in the town who was very fond of Backgammon; and on this simple piece of information an elaborate plan was concocted. Mr H--e feigned illness, went to bed, and sent for a large quantity of tartar emetic, which he took. After he had suffered the operation of the first dose he sent for a doctor, who pronounced him, of course, very languid and ill; and not knowing the cause, ordered him more medicine, which the patient took good care not to allow to stay on his stomach.

On the second day he asked the doctor, with great gravity, if he considered him in danger, adding, 'because he had never made a WILL to bequeath his property.' The doctor replied, 'No, not in absolute danger, but there was no harm in making a WILL.'

The attorney, accordingly, was sent for--of course the very man wished for--the lover of Backgammon before mentioned. The good man came; he took the 'instructions,' and drew up the last will and testament of the ruined turfite, who left (in the will) about £50,000, which no man ever heard of, living or dead.

The BUSINESS being done, the patient said that if he had a moment's relaxation he thought he should rally and overcome the malady. The poor lawyer said if he could in any way contribute to his comfort he should be happy. The offer was embraced by observing that if he could sit up in bed--but he was afraid he was not able--a hit at Backgammon would be a great source of amusement.

The lawyer, like all adepts in such matters, was only too willing to catch at the idea; the board was brought.

Of course the man who had L50,000 to leave behind could not be expected to play 'for love;' and so when Mr H--e proposed 'a pound a hit or treble a gammon,' the lawyer not only thought it reasonable, but, conscious of his power in the game, eagerly accepted the terms of playing. They played; but the lawyer was gammoned almost incessantly, till he lost L50. Then H--e proposed 'double or quits to L1000,'--thereupon the poor lawyer, believing that fortune could not always forsake him, said he had but L2000 in the world, but that he would set the L1000. He lost; and became almost frantic. In the midst of his excessive grief, H--e said, 'You have a HORSE, what is it worth?' L50 was the answer. 'Well, well, you may win all back now, and I'll set L50 on your horse.'

They began again. Lost! 'You have a COW in your paddock, haven't you? What's that worth?' asked Mr H--e. The attorney said L12. 'Well, I'll set that sum by way of giving you a chance.' The game proceeded, and the poor lawyer, equally unfortunate, raved and swore he had lost his last shilling. 'No, no!' said H--e, 'you have not: I saw a HAY-RICK in your ground. It is of no use now that the horse and cow are gone-- what is that worth?' L15, replied the attorney, with a sigh. 'I set L15 then,' said H--e.

This seemed to be 'rather too much' for the lawyer. The loss of the hay-rick--like the last straw laid on the overladen camel's back--staggered him. Besides, he thought he saw--as doubtless he did see--H--e twisting his fingers round one of the dice. Up he started at once, and declared that he was cheated!

Thereupon the sick man forgot his sickness, jumped out of bed, and gave the lawyer a regular drubbing, got the cheque for the L2000,--but the horse, cow, and hay he said he would leave 'until further orders.'

A VERY CURIOUS STORY.

An Archbishop of Canterbury was once on a tour, when a genteel man, apparently in earnest conversation, though alone in a wood, attracted his notice. His Grace made up to him, and, after a little previous conversation, asked him what he was about.

Stranger. 'I am at play.'

Archbishop. 'At play? With whom? I see nobody.'

Sir. 'I own, sir, my antagonist is not visible: I am playing with God.'

Abp. 'At what game, pray, sir?'

Str. 'At Chess.'

Abp. 'Do you play for anything?'

Str. 'Certainly.'

Abp. 'You cannot have any chance, as your adversary must be so superior to you.'

Str. 'He takes no advantage, but plays merely as a man.'

Abp. 'When you win or lose, how do you settle accounts?'

Str. 'Very exactly and punctually.'

Abp. 'Indeed! Pray, how stands your game now?'
Str. 'There! I have just lost!'
Abp. 'How much have you lost?'
Str. 'Fifty guineas.'
Abp. 'How do you manage to pay it? Does God take your money?'
Str. 'No! The poor are his treasurers. He always sends some worthy person to receive it, and you are at present his purse-bearer.'

Saying this, the stranger put fifty guineas into his Grace's hand, and retired, adding--'I shall play no more to-day.'

The prelate was delighted; though he could not tell what to make of this extraordinary man. The guineas were all good; and the archbishop applied them to the use of the poor, as he had been directed.

The archbishop, on his return, stopped at the same town, and could not help going in search of the chess-player, whom he found engaged as before, when the following dialogue ensued:--

Abp. 'How has the chance stood since we met before?'
Str. 'Sometimes for me--sometimes against me. I have lost and won.'
Abp. 'Are you at play now?'
Str. 'Yes, sir. We have played several games to-day.'
Abp. 'Who wins?'
Str. 'The advantage is on my side. The game is just over. I have a fine stroke--check-mate-- there it is.'
Abp. 'How much have you won?'
Str. 'Five hundred guineas.'
Abp. 'That is a large sum. How are you to be paid?'
Str. 'God always sends some good rich man when I win, and YOU are the person. He is remarkably punctual on these occasions.'

The archbishop had received a considerable sum on that day, as the stranger knew; and so, producing a pistol by way of receipt, he compelled the delivery of it. His Grace now discovered that he had been the dupe of a thief; and though he had greatly bruited his first adventure, he prudently kept his own counsel in regard to the last.

Such is the tale. Se non e vero e ben trovato.

SKITTLE SHARPERS.

'I know a respectable tradesman,' says a writer in Cassell's Magazine--'I know him now, for he lives in the house he occupied at the time of my tale--who was sent for to see a French gentleman at a tavern, on business connected with the removal of this gentleman's property from one of the London docks. The business, as explained by the messenger, promising to be profitable, he of course promptly obeyed the summons, and during his walk found that his conductor had once been in service in France. This delighted Mr Chase--the name by which I signify the tradesman--for he, too, had once so lived in France; and by the time he reached the tavern he had talked himself into a very good opinion of his new patron. The French gentleman was very urbane,

gave Mr Chase his instructions, let him understand expense was not to be studied, and, as he was at lunch, would not be satisfied unless the tradesman sat down with him. This was a great honour for the latter, as he found his employer was a baron. Well, the foreigner was disposed to praise everything English; he was glad he had come to live in London--Paris was nothing to it; they had nothing in France like the English beer, with which, in the exuberance of his hospitality, he filled and refilled Mr Chase's glass; but that which delighted him above all that he had seen "vos de leetle game vid de ball--vot you call--de--de--aha! de skittel." Mr Chase assented that it was a very nice game certainly; and the French gentleman seeming by this time to have had quite enough beer, insisted, before they went to the docks--which was essential--that they should see just one game played.

'As he insisted on paying Mr Chase for all the time consumed with him, and as his servant, of course, could not object, the party adjourned to the "Select Subscription Ground" at once. In the ground there was a quiet, insignificant-looking little man, smoking a cigar; and as they were so few, he was asked to assist, which, after considerable hesitation and many apologies for his bad play, he did. The end is of course guessed. The French gentleman was a foolish victim, with more money than wits, who backed himself to do almost impossible feats, when it was evident he could not play at all, and laid sovereigns against the best player, who was the little stranger, doing the easiest. What with the excitement, and what with the beer, which was probably spiced with some unknown relish a little stronger than nutmeg, Mr Chase could not help joining in winning the foreign gentleman's money; it seemed no harm, he had so much of it.

'By a strange concurrence of events, it so happened that by random throws the Frenchman sometimes knocked all the pins down at a single swoop, though he clearly could not play--Mr Chase was sure of that--while the skilful player made every now and then one of the blunders to which the best players are liable. That the tradesman lost forty sovereigns will be easily understood; and did his tale end here it would have differed so little from a hundred others as scarcely to deserve telling; but it will surprise many, as it did me, to learn that he then walked to and from his own house--a distance of precisely a mile each way--fetched a bill for thirty pounds, which a customer had recently paid him, got it discounted, went back to the skittle-ground, and, under the same malignant star, lost the whole.

'It was the only case in my experience of the work going on smoothly after such a break. I never could account for it, nor could Mr Chase. Great was the latter's disgust, on setting the police to work, to find that the French nobleman, his servant, and the quiet stranger, were all dwellers within half a mile or so of his own house, and slightly known to him--men who had trusted, and very successfully, to great audacity and well-arranged disguise.'

A vast deal of gambling still goes on with skittles all over the country. At a place not ten miles from London, I am told that as much as two thousand pounds has been seen upon the table in a

single 'alley,' or place of play. The bets were, accordingly, very high. The instances revealed by exposure at the police-courts give but a faint idea of the extent of skittle sharpening.

Amidst such abuses of the game, it can scarcely surprise us that the police have been recently directed to prohibit all playing at skittles and bowls. However much we may regret the interference with popular pastimes, in themselves unobjectionable, it is evident that their flagrant abuse warrants the most stringent measures in order to prevent their constantly repeated and dismal consequences. Even where money was not played for, pots of beer were the wager--leading, in many instances, to intoxication, or promoting this habit, which is the cause of so much misery among the lower orders.

CHAPTER II.

PROFESSIONAL GAMESTERS AND THEIR FRAUDS.

A gambling house at the end of the last century was conducted by the following officials:--

1. A Commissioner,--who was always a proprietor; who looked in of a night, and audited the week's account with two other proprietors.
2. A Director,--who superintended the room.
3. An Operator,--who dealt the cards at the cheating game called Faro.
4. Two Croupiers, or crow-pees, as they were vulgarly called, whose duty it was to watch the cards and gather or rake in the money for the bank.
5. Two Puffs,--who had money given to them to decoy others to play.
6. A Clerk,--who was a check on the Puffs, to see that they sank none of the money given to them to play with.
7. A Squib,--who was a puff of a lower rank, serving at half salary, whilst learning to deal.
8. A Flasher,--to swear how often the bank had been stripped by lucky players.
9. A Dunner,--who went about to recover money lost at play.
10. A Waiter,--to fill out wine, snuff candles, and attend the room.
11. An Attorney,--who was generally a Newgate solicitor.
12. A Captain,--who was to fight any gentleman who might be peevish at losing his money.

13. An Usher,--who lighted the gentlemen up and down stairs, and gave the word to the porter.

14. A Porter,--who was generally a soldier of the Foot Guards.

15. An Orderly-man,--who walked up and down the outside of the door, to give notice to the porter, and alarm the house at the approach of the constables.

16. A Runner,--who was to get intelligence of the Justices' meetings.

17. Link Boys, Coachmen, Chairmen, Drawers, and others, who brought the first intelligence of Justices' meetings, of constables going out, at half a guinea reward.

18. Common Bail, Affidavit Men, Ruffians, Bravos, Assassins, &c. &c.

It may be proper to remark that the above list of officials was only calculated for gambling houses of an inferior order. In these it is evident that the fear of interruption and the necessity for precaution presided over the arrangements. There were others, however, which seemed to defy law, to spurn at justice, and to remain secure, in every way, by the 'respectability' of their frequenters. These were houses supported at an amazing expense--within sight of the palace--which were open every night and all night--where men of the first rank were to be found gambling away immense sums of money, such as no man, whatever his fortune might be, could sustain. 'What, then,' says a writer at the time, 'are the consequences? Why, that the ~~UNDONE~~ part of them sell their VOTES for bread, and the successful give them for honours.

'He who has never seen the gamblers' apartments in some of the magnificent houses in the neighbourhood of St James's, has never seen the most horrid sight that the imagination of a thinking man can conceive.

'A new pack of cards is called for at every deal, and the "old" ones are then thrown upon the floor, and in such an immense quantity, that the writer of this letter has seen a very large room nearly ANKLE-DEEP, in the greatest part of it, by four o'clock in the morning! Judge, then, to what height they must have risen by daylight.'

It is a melancholy truth, but confirmed by the history of all nations, that the most polite and refined age of a kingdom is never the most virtuous; not, indeed, that any such compliment can be paid to that gross age, but still it was refined compared with the past. The distinctions of personal merit being but little regarded--in the low moral tone that prevailed--there needed but to support a certain 'figure' in life (managed by the fashionable tailor)[4], to be conversant with a few etiquettes of good breeding and sentiments of modern or current honour, in order to be received with affability and courteous attention in the highest circles. The vilest sharper, having once gained admission, was sure of constant entertainment, for nothing formed

a greater cement of union than the spirit of HIGH GAMING. There being so little cognizance taken of the good qualities of the heart in fashionable assemblies, no wonder that amid the medley of characters to be found in these places the 'sharper' of polite address should gain too easy an admission.

[4] 'How shalt THOU to Caesar's hall repair?
For, ah! no DAMAGED coat can enter there!'

BEATTIE'S Minstrel.

This fraternity of artists--whether they were to be denominated rooks,[5] sharps, sharpeners, black-legs, Greeks, or gripes--were exceedingly numerous, and were dispersed among all ranks of society.

[5] So called because rooks are famous for stealing materials out of other birds' nests to build their own.

The follies and vices of others--of open-hearted youth in particular--were the great game or pursuit of this odious crew. Though cool and dispassionate themselves, they did all in their power to throw others off their guard, that they might make their advantage of them.

In others they promoted excess of all kinds, whilst they themselves took care to maintain the utmost sobriety and temperance. 'Gamesters,' says Falconer, 'whose minds must be always on the watch to take advantages, and prepared to form calculations, and to employ the memory, constantly avoid a full meal of animal food, which they find incapacitates them for play nearly as much as a quantity of strong liquor would have done, for which reason they feed chiefly on milk and vegetables.'

As profit, not pleasure, was the aim of these knights of darkness, they lay concealed under all shapes and disguises, and followed up their game with all wariness and discretion. Like wise traders, they made it the business of their lives to excel in their calling.

For this end they studied the secret mysteries of their art by night and by day; they improved on the scientific schemes of their profound master, Hoyle, and on his deep doctrines and calculations of chances. They became skilful without a rival where skill was necessary, and fraudulent without conscience where fraud was safe and advantageous; and while fortune or chance appeared to direct everything, they practised numberless devices by which they insured her ultimate favours to themselves.

Of these none were more efficacious, because none are more ensnaring, than bribing their young and artless dupes to future play by suffering them to win at their first onsets. By rising a winner the dupe imbibed a confidence in his own gambling abilities, or deemed himself a favourite of fortune. He engaged again, and was again successful--which increased his exultation and confirmed his future confidence; and thus did the simple gudgeon swallow their bait, till it became at last fast hooked.

When rendered thus secure of their prey, they began to level their whole train of artillery against the boasted honours of his short-lived triumph. Then the extensive manors, the ancient forests, the paternal mansions, began to tremble for their future destiny. The pigeon was marked down, and the infernal crew began in good earnest to pluck his rich plumage. The wink was given on his appearance in the room, as a signal of commencing their covert attacks. The shrug, the nod, the hem--every motion of the eyes, hands, feet--every air and gesture, look and word--became an expressive, though disguised, language of fraud and cozenage, big with deceit and swollen with ruin. Besides this, the card was marked, or 'slipped,' or COVERED. The story is told of a noted sharper of distinction, a foreigner, whose hand was thrust through with a fork by his adversary, Captain Roche, and thus nailed to the table, with this cool expression of concern-- 'I ask your pardon, sir, if you have not the knave of clubs under your hand.' The cards were packed, or cut, or even SWALLOWED. A card has been eaten between two slices of bread and butter, for the purpose of concealment.

With wily craft the sharpeners substituted their deceitful 'doctors' or false dice; and thus 'crabs,' or 'a losing game,' became the portion of the 'flats,' or dupes.

There were different ways of throwing dice. There was the 'Stamp'--when the caster with an elastic spring of the wrist rapped the cornet or box with vehemence on the table, the dice as yet not appearing from under the box. The 'Dribble' was, when with an air of easy but ingenious motion, the caster poured, as it were, the dice on the board--when, if he happened to be an old practitioner, he might suddenly cog with his fore-finger one of the cubes. The 'Long Gallery' was when the dice were flung or hurled the whole length of the board. Sometimes the dice were thrown off the table, near a confederate, who, in picking them up, changed one of the fair for a false die with two sixes. This was generally done at the first throw, and at the last, when the fair die was replaced. The sixes were on the opposite squares, so that the fraud could only be detected by examination. Of course this trick could only be practised at raffles, where only three throws are required.

A pair of false dice was arranged as follows:--

	{Two fours
On one die,	{Two fives
	{Two sixes
	{Two fives
On the other,	{Two threes
	{Two aces

With these dice it was impossible to throw what is at Hazard denominated Crabs, or a losing game--that is, aces, or ace and deuce, twelve, or seven. Hence, the caster always called for his main; consequently, as he could neither throw one nor seven, let his chance be what it might, he was sure to win, and he and those who were in the secret of course always took the odds. The false

dice being concealed in the left hand, the caster took the box with the fair dice in it in his right hand, and in the act of shaking it caught the fair dice in his hand, and unperceived shifted the box empty to his left, from which he dropped the false dice into the box, which he began to rattle, called his main seven, and threw. Having won his stake he repeated it as often as he thought proper. He then caught the false dice in the same way, shifted the empty box again, and threw till he threw out, still calling the same main, by which artifice he escaped suspicion.

Two gambling adventurers would set out with a certain number of signs and signals. The use of the handkerchief during the game was the certain evidence of a good hand. The use of the snuff-box a sign equally indicative of a bad one. An affected cough, apparently as a natural one, once, twice, three, or four times repeated, was an assurance of so many honours in hand. Rubbing the left eye was an invitation to lead trumps,--the right eye the reverse,--the cards thrown down with one finger and the thumb was a sign of one trump; two fingers and the thumb, two trumps, and so on progressively, and in exact explanation of the whole hand, with a variety of manoeuvres by which chance was reduced to certainty, and certainty followed by ruin.[6]

[6] Bon Ton Magazine, 1791.

CHEATING AT WHIST.

In an old work on cards the following curious disclosures are made respecting cheating at whist:--

'He that can by craft overlook his adversary's game hath a great advantage; for by that means he may partly know what to play securely; or if he can have some petty glimpse of his partner's hand. There is a way by making some sign by the fingers, to discover to their partners what honours they have, or by the wink of one eye it signifies one honour, shutting both eyes two, placing three fingers or four on the table, three or four honours. FOR WHICH REASON ALL NICE GAMSTERS PLAY BEHIND CURTAINS.

'Dealing the cards out by one and one to each person is the best method of putting it out of the dealer's power to impose on you. But I shall demonstrate that, deal the cards which way you will, a confederacy of two sharpers will beat any two persons in the world, though ever so good players, that are not of the gang, or in the secret, and "THREE poll ONE" is as safe and secure as if the money was in their pockets. All which will appear presently.

The first necessary instructions to be observed at Whist, as principals of the secret, which may be likewise transferred to most other games at cards, are:--

Brief or short cards,

Corner-bend,

Middle-bend (or Kingston-bridge).

'Of brief cards there are two sorts: one is a card longer than the rest,--the other is a card broader than the rest. The long sort are such as three, four, five, six, seven, eight, and nine; the broad sort are such as aces, kings, queens, and knaves. The use and advantage of each are as follows:--

'Example:--When you cut the cards to your adversary, cut them long, or endways, and he will have a three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine at bottom. When your adversary cuts the cards to you, put them broadside to him, and he will naturally cut (without ever suspecting what you do) ace, king, queen, or knave, &c., which is sufficient advantage to secure any game.

'And in case you cannot get cards of proper sizes ready-made to mix with others, you may shave them with a razor or penknife from the threes to the nines each side, and from the aces to the knaves each end; then put them up in the same case or cover, and if they are done as they ought to be, they will pass upon anybody.

'As Whist is a tavern-game, the sharpers generally take care to put about the bottle before the game begins, so quick, that a BUBBLE cannot be said to see clearly even when he begins to play.

'The next is the corner-bend, which is four cards turned down finely at one corner--a signal to cut by.

'The other is vulgarly called Kingston-bridge, or the middle-bend. It is done by bending your own or adversary's TRICKS two different ways, which will cause an opening, or arch, in the middle, which is of the same use and service as the other two ways, and only practised in its turn to amuse you.

'The next thing to be considered is, who deals the cards, you or your adversary; because that is a main point, and from whence your advantage must arise. Suppose, for example,

 {Sharpers,
A and B {
 {Partners,

 {Bubbles, or Flats,
C and D {
 { Partners.

After a deal or two is formally played, A and B will begin to operate in the following manner:--

'When A or B is to deal, they observe the PRECEDING DEAL to take up the tricks thus:--

1. A bad card. 2. A good card.
3. A bad card. 4. A good card.

(Meaning the best and worst that fall in that list).

'When C or D deals, they must be taken up thus:--

1. A good card. 2. A bad card.

3. A good card. 4. A bad card.

'By this rule it is plain that the best cards fall to A and B every deal. How is it possible, therefore, that C and D should ever win a game without permission? But it would be deemed ill policy, and contrary to the true interest of A and B, to act thus every deal. I will, therefore, suppose it is practised just when they please, according as bets happen in company; though the rule with gamesters, in low life, is at the first setting out to stupify you with wine and the loss of your money, that you may never come to a perfect understanding of what you are doing. It may be truly said that many an honest gentleman has been kept a month in such a condition by the management and contrivance of a set of sharpers.

'Now you may imagine it not in the power of A and B to cause the tricks to be taken up after the manner aforesaid: there is nothing so easy nor so frequently practised, especially at Three poll One; for in playing the cards the confederates will not only take care of their own tricks, but also of yours, for the cards may be so played, and shoved together in such a manner, as will even cause you to take them right yourself; and if a trick should lie untowardly on the table, A or B will pay you the compliment of taking it up for you, and say--"Sir, that's yours." This operation will the more readily be apprehended by seeing it practised half a score times; when once you are aware of it, it will otherwise (I may say fairly) pass upon any person that has not been let into the secret. This being allowed, the next point and difficulty is to shuffle and cut.

'I say, that either A or B are such curious workmen, and can make a sham shuffle with a pack of cards so artfully, that you would believe they were splitting them, when at the time they will not displace a single card from its order! Such is the SHARPER'S shuffling.

'Now, to cut the cards, a BEND is prepared for you to cut to--the middle is the best; and it is odds but you unwarily cut to it; if not, SLIP is the word; but if you have no opportunity to do that neither, then deal away at all hazards, it is but an equal bet that they come in your favour; if right, proceed; if otherwise, miss a card in its course, and it brings the cards according to your first design; it is but giving two at last where you missed; and if that cannot be conveniently done, you only lose the deal, and there is an end of it.

'But when A or B is to cut, they make it all safe; for then they make the CORNER-BEND, which any one that knows may cut to, a hundred times together.

'Piping at Whist. By piping I mean, when one of the company that does not play, which frequently happens, sits down in a convenient place to smoke a pipe, and so look on, pretending to amuse himself that way. Now, the disposing of his fingers on the pipe whilst smoking discovers the principal cards that are in the person's hand he overlooks; which was always esteemed a sufficient advantage whereby to win a game. There is another method, namely, by uttering words. "Indeed" signifies diamonds;

"truly," hearts; "upon my word," clubs; "I assure you," spades. But as soon as these methods become known, new ones are invented; and it is most curious that two persons may discover to each other what sort of cards they have in hand, and which ought first to be played, many different ways, without speaking a word.'

There can be no doubt that the act of sorting the cards is capable of giving an acute observer a tolerably accurate idea of his partner's or either of his opponents' hands; so that where cheating is suspected it would be better to play the cards without sorting them. The number of times a sorter carries a card to a particular part indicates so many of a suit; your own hand and his play will readily indicate the nature of the cards in which he is either strong or weak.

I now quote Robert-Houdin's account of

CARD TELEGRAPHY.

Although there are 32 cards in the game of Piquet, all of them may be designated by twelve different signs, namely, eight for the nature of the cards, and four for the colours.

At Ecarte, the number of the signals is still less, as it is only the figures that require indication: but to make these indications it is necessary to execute a sort of pantomime, according to certain authors, such as blowing the nose, coughing, drumming on the table, sneezing, &c. Such evolutions, however, are totally unworthy of your modern Greek, and would soon be denounced as gross fraud. The signals which he employs are only appreciable by his confederate,--as follows:--

If he looks

1. At his confederate, he designates A king.
2. At the play of his adversary . . . A queen.
3. At the stake A knave.
4. At the opposite side An ace.

And whilst he indicates the nature of the cards he at the same time makes known the colour by the following signs:--

1. The mouth slightly open Hearts.
2. The mouth shut Diamonds.
3. The upper-lip slightly pouting
over the lower Clubs.
4. The lower-lip drawn over the
upper Spades.

Thus, if the Greek wishes to announce, for instance, the knave and ace of hearts, he successively directs his looks upon the play of his adversary, upon the stake, and to the opposite side,

whilst keeping his mouth slightly open.

It is evident that this telegraphy may be employed at all games where there is a gallery. In effect, nothing is easier at Piquet than to indicate, by the aid of these signals, the colour in which the player should discard and that in which he should keep what cards he has.

These are the simplest signs; but some of the Greeks have a great number of them, to designate everything; and even sometimes to communicate and receive intelligence, when necessary. This telegraphy is so imperceptible that it is difficult to describe it, and altogether impossible to detect it.[7]

[7] Tricheries des Grecs dévoilées.

Robert-Houdin has exhausted the subject of card-trickery, in connection with that prestidigitation which, it seems, all card-sharpers cultivate, the description of which, however, is by no means so entertaining as the visible performance. I find, nevertheless, in his book, under the title of 'Small Trickeries made innocent by Custom,' certain things alluded to which I can attest by experience.

I. At Whist, no communication whatever must be made by a player to his partner, excepting those authorized by the laws of the game; but some persons go further, and by the play of their features 'telegraph' to their partners the value of their hands.

II. Any one with a good memory and endowed with quick perception may form a very accurate estimate of the hands held by all the players by remembering THE TRICKS AS THEY ARE PLAYED AND TURNED DOWN--all of a suit, or trumped. Cards 'stick together' most lovingly, and the ordinary shuffling scarcely alters their sequence; and so, if a trick has been taken by an ace over a king, for instance, and in the next deal you get the same king, you may be sure that the ace is either on your right or your left, according to the deal; of course, if you get the ace, then the same probability, or rather necessity, exists as to the king; and so on. Knave, queen, king, ace, of the same name, are almost sure to be separated in the deal between the four players, or one player will have two of them. The observation is a tax upon the faculties; but I am sure, quite sure, that the thing can be done, and is, when done, of material service; although, of course, the knowledge can be turned to account only by an expert player, with a partner who can understand the game which he wishes to play.

Whist is, decidedly, one of the fairest of games; but for that very reason, it is open to the greatest over-reaching, or, if you like, cheating.

With regard to dice, of course, they were and, doubtless, are still loaded. Such were formerly called 'dispatches,' because they would 'in five minutes dispatch L500 out of the pocket of any young man when intoxicated with champagne.'

Roulette and Rouge et Noir tables were and are so arranged as

always to make the bank win at the will of the attendant, regulating them with a touch.

At Hazard, they used 'low or high dice,' that is, with only certain numbers on them, high or low,--a pair of which every sharper always had in his possession, changing them with great dexterity. They also used 'cramped' boxes, by which they 'cogged' or fastened the dice in the box as they dropped them IN, and so could drop them OUT with the required face upwards.

CHAPTER III.

ANECDOTES OF THE PASSIONS AND VICISSITUDES OF GAMESTERS.

Although all the motives of human action have long been known--although psychology, or the science of soul and sentiment, has ceased to present us with any new facts--it is quite certain that our edifice of Morals is not quite built up. We may rest assured that as long as intellectual man exists the problem will be considered unsolved, and the question will be agitated. Future generations will destroy what we establish, and will fashion a something according to their advancement, and so on; for if there be a term which, of all others, should be expunged from the dictionaries of all human beings, it seems to be Lord Russell's word FINALITY. Something NEW will always be wanted. 'Sensation' is the very life of humanity; it is motion--the reverse of 'death'--which we all abhor.

The gamester lives only for the 'sensation' of gaming. Menage tells us of a gamester who declared that he had never seen any luminary above the horizon but the moon. Saint Evremond, writing to the Count de Grammont, says--'You play from morning to night, or rather from night to morning. All the rays of the gamester's existence terminate in play; it is on this centre that his very existence depends. He enjoys not an hour of calm or serenity. During the day he longs for night, and during the night he dreads the return of day.'

Being always pre-occupied, gamesters are subject to a ridiculous absence of mind. Tacitus tells us that the Emperor Vitellius was so torpid that he would have forgotten he was a prince unless people had reminded him of it from time to time.[8] Many gamesters have forgotten that they were husbands and fathers. During play some one said that the government were about to levy a tax on bachelors. 'Then I shall be ruined!' exclaimed one of the players absorbed in the game. 'Why, man, you have a wife and five children,' said the speaker.

[8] Tanta torpedo invaserat animum Vitellii, ut si principem eum fuisse non meminissent, ipse oblivisceretur. Hist., lib. iii.

This infatuation may be simply ridiculous; but it has also a horrible aspect. A distracted wife has rushed to the gaming table, imploring her husband, who had for two entire days been engaged at play, to return to his home.

'Only let me stay one moment longer--only one moment. . . . I shall return perhaps the day after to-morrow,' he stammered out to the wretched woman, who retired. Alas! he returned sooner than he had promised. His wife was in bed, holding the last of her children to her breast.

'Get up, madam,' said the ruined gambler, 'the bed on which you lie belongs to us no longer!' . . .

When the gamester is fortunate, he enjoys his success elsewhere; to his home he brings only consternation.

A wife had received the most solemn promise from her husband that he would gamble no more. One night, however, he slunk out of bed, rushed to the gaming table, and lost all the money he had with him. He tried to borrow more, but was refused. He went home. His wife had taken the precaution to lock the drawer that contained their last money. Vain obstacle! The madman broke it open, carried off two thousand crowns--to take his revenge, as he said, but in reality to lose the whole as before.

But it is to the gaming room that we must go to behold the progress of the terrible drama--the ebb and flow of opposite movements--the shocks of alternate hope and fear, infinitely varied in the countenance, not only of the actors, but also of the spectators. What is visible, however, is nothing in comparison to the secret agony. It is in his heart that the tempest roars most fiercely.

Two players once exhibited their rage, the one by a mournful silence, the other by repeated imprecations. The latter, shocked at the sang-froid of his neighbour, reproached him for enduring, without complaint, such losses one after the other. 'Look here!' said the other, uncovering his breast and displaying it all bloody with lacerations.

It is only at play that we can observe, from moment to moment, all the phases of despair; from time to time there occur new ones--strange, eccentric, or terrible. After having lost quietly, and even with serenity, half his fortune, the father of a family staked the remainder, and lost it without a murmur. *Facere solent extrema securos mala.*[9] The bystanders looked at him; his features changed not; only it was perceived that they were fixed. It seemed that he was unconscious of life. Two streams of tears trickled from his eyes, and yet his features remained the same. He was literally a weeping statue. The spectators were seized with fright, and, although gamesters, they melted into pity.

[9] 'Great calamities render us CARELESS.'

At Bayonne, in 1725, a French officer, in a rage at billiards, jammed a billiard-ball in his mouth, where it stuck fast, arresting respiration, until it was, with difficulty, extracted by a surgeon. Dusaulx states that he was told the fact by a lieutenant-general, who was an eye-witness.

It is well known that gamblers, like dogs that bite a stone flung at them, have eaten up the cards, crushed up the dice, broken the tables, damaged the furniture, and finally 'pitched into' each other--as described by Lucian in his *Saturnalia*. Dusaulx assures us that he saw an enraged gambler put a burning candle into his mouth, chew it, and swallow it. A mad player at Naples bit the table with such violence that his teeth went deep into the wood; thus he remained, as it were, nailed to it, and suddenly expired.

The other players took to flight; the officers of justice visited the place; and the corpse was deprived of the usual ceremony of burial.[10]

[10] Gazette de Deux-Ponts, du 26 Novembre, 1772.

The following strange but apparently authentic fact, is related in the *Mercure Francois* (Tome I. Annee 1610).

'A man named Pennichon, being a prisoner in the Conciergerie during the month of September, 1610, died there of a wonderfully sudden death. He could not refrain from play. Having one day lost his money, he uttered frightful imprecations against his body and against his soul, swearing that he would never play at cards again. Nevertheless, a few days after, he began to play again with those in his apartment, and on a dispute respecting discarding, he repeated his execrable oaths. And when one of the company told him he should fear the Divine justice, he only swore the more, and made such confusion that there had to be another deal. But as soon as three other cards were given him, he placed them in his hat, which he held before him, and whilst looking at them, with his elbows on the table and his face in the hat, he so suddenly expired that one of the party said--"Come, now play," and pushed him with his elbow, thinking he was asleep, when he fell down dead upon the floor.'

In some cases the effect of losses at play is simply stupefaction. Some players, at the end of the sitting, neither know what they do nor what they say. M. de Crequi, afterwards Duc de Lesdigueres, leaving a gambling party with Henry IV., after losing a large sum, met M. de Guise in the court-yard of the castle. 'My friend,' said he to the latter, 'where are the quarters of the Guards now-a-days?' M. de Guise stepped back, saying, 'Excuse me, sir, I don't belong to this country,' and immediately went to the king, whom he greatly amused with the anecdote.

A dissipated buck, who had been sitting all night at Hazard, went to a church, not far from St James's, just before the second reading of the Lord's Prayer, on Sunday. He was scarcely seated before he dozed, and the clerk in a short time bawled out AMEN, which he pronounced A--main. The buck jumped up half asleep and roared out, 'I'll bet the caster 20 guineas!' The congregation was thrown into a titter, and the buck ran out, overwhelmed with shame. A similar anecdote is told of another 'dissipated buck' in a church. The grand masquerade given on the opening of the Union Club House, in Pall Mall, was not entirely over till a late hour on the following Sunday. A young man nearly

intoxicated--certainly not knowing what he was about-- reeled into St. James's church, in his masquerade dress, with his hat on. The late Rev. Thomas Bracken, attracted by the noise of his entrance, looked directly at him as he chanced to deliver the following words:--'Friend! how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?' It seemed so to strike the culprit that he instantly took off his hat and withdrew in confusion.

At play, a winner redoubles his caution and sang-froid just in proportion as his adversary gets bewildered by his losses, becoming desperate; he takes advantage of the weakness of the latter, giving him the law, and striving for greater success. When the luck changes, however, the case is reversed, and the former loser becomes, in his turn, ten times more pitiless--like that Roman prefect, mentioned by Tacitus, who was the more inexorable because he had been harshly treated in his youth, *co immittior quia toleraverat*. The joy at winning back his money only makes a gamester the more covetous of winning that of his adversary. A wealthy man once lost 100,000 crowns, and begged to be allowed to go and sell his property, which was worth double the amount he had lost. 'Why sell it?' said his adversary; 'let us play for the remainder.' They played; luck changed; and the late LOSER ruined the other.

Sometimes avidity makes terrible mistakes; many, in order to win more, have lost their all to persons who had not a shilling to lose. During the depth of a severe winter, a gamester beheld with terror the bottom of his purse. Unable to resolve on quitting the gaming table--for players in that condition are always the most stubborn--he shouted to his valet--'Go and fetch my great sack.' These words, uttered without design, stimulated the cupidity of those who no longer cared to play with him, and now they were eager for it. His luck changed, and he won thrice as much as he had lost. Then his 'great sack' was brought to him: it was a BEAR-SKIN SACK he used as a cloak!

In the madness of gaming the player stakes everything after losing his money--his watch, his rings, his clothing; and some have staked their EARS, and others their very LIVES-- instances of all which will be related in the sequel.

Not very long ago a publican, who lost all his money, staked his public-house, lost it, and had to 'clear out.' The man who won it is alive and flourishing.

'The debt of honour must be paid: 'these are the terrible words that haunt the gamester as he wakes (if he has slept) on the morning after the night of horrors: these are the furies that take him in hand, and drag him to torture, laughing the while. .

. .

What a 'sensation' it must be to lose one's ALL! A man, intoxicated with his gains, left one gaming house and entered another. As soon as he entered he exclaimed, 'Well, I am filled, my pockets are full of gold, and here goes, ODDS OR EVEN?' 'Odds,' cried a player. It was ODDS, and the fortunate winner pocketed the enormous sum just boasted of by the other.

On the other hand, sudden prosperity has deranged more heads and killed more people than reverses and grief; either because it takes a longer time to get convinced of utter ruin than great good fortune, or because the instinct of self-preservation compels us to seek, in adversity, for resources to mitigate despair; whereas, in the assault of excessive joy, the soul's spring is distended and broken when it is suddenly compressed by too many thoughts and too many sensations. Sophocles, Diagoras, Philpides, died of joy. Another Greek expired at the sight of the three crowns won by his three sons at the Olympic games.

Many fine intellects among players have been brutified by losses; others, in greater number, have been so by their winnings. Some in the course of their prosperity perish from idleness, get deranged, and ruin themselves after ruining others. An instance is mentioned of an officer who won so enormously that he actually lost his senses in counting his gains. Astonished at himself, he thought he was no longer an ordinary mortal; and required his valets to do him extraordinary honours, flinging handfuls of gold to them. The same night, however, he returned to the gaming house, and recovered from his madness when he had lost not only all his gains, but even the value of an appointment which he held.

UNFORTUNATE WINNING.

M. G--me was a most estimable man, combining in himself the best qualities of both heart and head. He was good-humoured, witty, and benevolent. With these qualifications, and one other which seldom operates to a man's disadvantage--a clear income of three thousand a year--the best society in Paris was open to him. He had been a visitor in that capital about a month, when he received an invitation to one of the splendid dinners given weekly at the salon. As he never played, he hesitated about the propriety of accepting it, but on the assurance that it would not be expected of him to play; and, moreover, as he might not again have so good an opportunity of visiting an establishment of the kind, he resolved to go--merely for the satisfaction of his curiosity. He had a few stray napoleons in his purse, to throw them--'just for the good of the house,' as he considered it--could hardly be called PLAY, so he threw them. Poor fellow! He left off a winner of fourteen hundred napoleons, or about as many pounds sterling--and so easily won! He went again, again, and again; but he was not always a winner; and within fifteen months of the moment when his hand first grasped the dice-box he was lying dead in a jail!

LORD WORTHALL'S DESPERATE WAGER.

At a gambling party Lord Worthall had lost all his money, and in a fit of excitement staked his whole estate against L1000, at cutting low with cards, and in cutting exclaimed,--

'Up now Deuce, or else a Trey,
Or Worthall's gone for ever and aye.'

He had the luck to cut the deuce of diamonds; and to commemorate the serious event, he got the deuce of diamonds cut in marble and

had it fixed on the parapet of his mansion.

THE CELEBRATED THADDEUS STEVENS.

He was an inveterate gamester on a small scale, and almost invariably, after a day's duty in the House, would drop in at a favourite casino, and win or lose fifty dollars--that being the average limit of his betting.

A PROVIDENT GAMBLER.

A Monsieur B--, well known in Parisian life, having recently lost every shilling at a certain sporting club where play is carried on in Paris, went to the country, where his sister lent him L150.

He won all back again, and got a considerable sum of money in hand. He then went to his hotel, to his bootmaker, and tailor, paid them, and made arrangements to be fed, clothed, and shod for ten years.

A MAGNIFICENT FORTUNE WASTED.

Lord Foley, who died in 1793, entered upon the turf with an estate of L18,000 per annum, and L100,000 ready money. He left with a ruined constitution, an encumbered estate, and not a shilling of ready money!

AN ENTERPRISING CLERK.

Lord Kenyon, in 1795, tried a clerk 'for misapplying his master's confidence,' and the facts were as follows. He went with a bank note of L1000 to a gaming house in Osendon Street, where he won a little. He also won two hundred guineas at another in Suffolk Street. He next accompanied some keepers of a third house to their tables, where he lost above nine hundred pounds. He played there almost every night; and finally lost about L2500!

GAMBLING FOR RECRUITS FOR THE ARMY.

An Irish officer struck out a mode of gambling, for recruits. He gave five guineas bounty, and one hundred to be raffled for by young recruits,--the winner to be paid immediately, and to purchase his discharge, if he pleased, for L20. The dice-box was constantly going at his recruiting office in Dublin.

DOUBLING THE STAKES.

A dashing young man of large fortune, about the year 1820, lost at a subscription house at the West End, L80,000. The winner was a person of high rank. The young man, however, by doubling the stakes, not only recovered his losses, but in his turn gained considerably of his antagonist.

AN ANNUITY FOR A GAMBLING DEBT.

A fashionable nobleman had won from a young and noble relative the sum of L40,000. The cash not being forthcoming, he accepted an annuity of L4000.

SIR WILLIAM COLEPEPPER.

It is told of Sir William Colepepper that, after he had been ruined himself at the gaming table, his whole delight was to sit there and see others ruined. Hardened wretch--'Who though he plays no more, overlooks the cards'--with this diabolical disposition!

THE BITER BITTEN.

A certain duchess, of a ci-devant lord-lieutenant, who expected to make a pigeon of Marshal Blucher, was fleeced of L200,000; to pay which her lord was obliged to sell a great part of his property, and reside on the continent.

HUNTED DOWN.

A stout-hearted and gallant military baronet lost an immense sum at a celebrated gaming house; but was so fortunate as to recover it, with L1200 more. This last sum HE PRESENTED TO THE WAITERS. He was pursued by two of the 'play-wrights' to a northern watering-place, where he was so plucked that all his possessions were brought to the hammer. A competency was, however, saved from the magnificent wreck.

COMING OF AGE.

When Sir C-- T--, a weak young man, with a large fortune, came of age, the Greeks, thinking him an excellent quarry, went to York Races, made him drunk and plundered him of a large sum. The next morning one of the party waited upon him to acquaint him of his loss--(L20,000 or L30,000), and brought bonds for his signature to that amount!

HEAVY LIABILITIES TO BEGIN WITH.

In the year 1799, when the Marquis of Donegal succeeded to the title on his father's death, his debts, principally to gamblers and money-lenders, amounted to two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling!

A GENTLEMAN TURNED BARBER.

In an old magazine I find the following curious statement:--

'There is now living in Barnaby Street, Carnaby Market, a man who, although exercising the menial office of penny barber, was in his younger days in possession of estates and personal property to a large amount, and is the only lineal descendant remaining of the very ancient family of the H--s of Bristol.

'His relations dying when he was young, he was placed under proper guardians, and received a liberal education, first at Westminster, and afterwards at Cambridge, suitable to his rank and fortune. When of age he converted his estates into money, and retired to Dublin, where he remained some time. He then made the tour of Europe, and returned to Ireland, where he went

through all the scenes of dissipation to which young men are so much addicted, till at last he was beset by those harpies the gamblers, and stripped of his immense fortune in one single night!

'He then subsisted for some little time on the bounty of his undoers, who intended to make him one of them; but, not having sufficient address for the profession, he was dismissed and "left in the lurch;" and most of his friends discarding him, he embarked with his last guinea for England. Here he has encountered many difficulties, often been in gaol for debt, and passed through various scenes of life, as valet, footman, thief-taker, and at length, a penny-barber! He has a wife and large family and lives in a very penurious manner, often lamenting his early folly.'

[11] 'The Western County Magazine, 1791. By a Society of Gentlemen.' This well-conducted old magazine was printed and published at Salisbury, and was decidedly a credit to the town and county.

PENSIONED OFF BY A GAMING HOUSE.

A visitor at Frascati's gaming house in Paris tells us:--

'I saw the Chevalier de la C--(a descendant of the once celebrated romance-writer) when he was nearly ninety. The mode of life of this old man was singular. He had lost a princely property at the play-table, and by a piece of good fortune of rare occurrence to gamblers, and unparalleled generosity, the proprietors of the salon allowed him a pension to support him in his miserable senility, just sufficient to supply him with a wretched lodging--bread, and a change of raiment once in every three or four years! In addition to this he was allowed a supper--which was, in fact, his dinner--at the gaming house, whither he went every night at about eleven o'clock. Till supper-time (two o'clock in the morning) he amused himself in watching the games and calculating the various chances, although incapable of playing a single coup. At four o'clock he returned to his lodging, retired to bed, and lay till between nine and ten o'clock on the following night. A cup of coffee was then brought to him, and, having dressed himself, at the usual hour he again proceeded to the salon. This had been his round of life for several years; and he told me that during all that time (excepting on a few mornings about Midsummer) he had never beheld the sun!'

A Mr R--y, son of a baronet, left Wattier's club one night with only L4 in his pocket, saying that he would look in at the hells.

He did so, and, returning after three o'clock in the morning, offered to bet L500 that he had above L4000. The result proved that he had L4300, all won at gaming tables, from the small beginning of L4. He then sat down to play games of skill at Wattier's, and went home at six o'clock without a single pound! The same man subsequently won L30,000, and afterwards lost it all, with L15,000 more, and then 'went to the Continent.'

A major of the Rifle Brigade, in consequence of gambling in London, by which he lost vast sums of money, went out of his senses and died a few years ago in an asylum. This occurred within the last ten or twelve years.

Says Mr Seymour Harcourt, in his 'Gaming Calendar,' 'I have myself seen hanging in chains a man whom, a short time before, I saw at a Hazard table!'

Hogarth lent his tremendous power to the portrayal of the ruined gamester, and shows it to the life in his print of the gaming house in the 'Rake's Progress.'

Three stages of that species of madness which attends gaming are there described. On the first shock all is inward dismay. The ruined gamester is represented leaning against a wall with his arms across, lost in an agony of horror. Shortly after this horrible gloom bursts into a storm and fury. He tears in pieces whatever comes near him, and, kneeling down, invokes curses on himself. His next attack is on others--on every one whom he imagines to have been instrumental in his ruin. The eager joy of the winning gamester, the attention of the usurer, and the profound reverie of the highwayman, are all strongly marked in this wonderful picture.

HOW MANY GAMESTERS LIVE BY PLAY?

It is an observation made by those who calculate on the gaming world, that above nine-tenths of the persons who play LIVE by it.

Now, as the ordinary establishment of a GENTEEL gamester, as he is commonly called, cannot be less than L1000 per annum, luck, which turns out EQUAL in the long run, will not support him; he must therefore LIVE by what they call among themselves the BEST OF THE GAME--or, in plain English, cheating.

So much for the inner and outer life of gamblers. And now I shall introduce Mr Ben. Disraeli, recounting, in the happiest vein of his younger days, a magnificent gambling scene, quite on a par with the legend of the Hindoo epic before quoted,[12] and which, I doubt not, will (to use the young Disraeli's own words) make the reader 'scud along and warm up into friskiness.'

[12] Chapter II.

A curious phrase occurs in the 9th chapter of 'The Young Duke,' in the paragraph at the beginning, after the words--'O ye immortal gods!'

Although the scene of the drama is part of a novel, yet there can be no doubt of its being 'founded on fact'--at any rate, I think there never was a narrative of greater verisimilitude.

'After dinner, with the exception of Cogit, who was busied in compounding some wonderful liquid for the future refreshment, they sat down to Ecarte. Without having exchanged a word upon the subject, there seemed a general understanding among all the

parties, that to-night was to be a pitched battle--and they began at once, very briskly. Yet, in spite of their universal determination, midnight arrived without anything very decisive. Another hour passed over, and then Tom Cogit kept touching the baron's elbow, and whispering in a voice which everybody could understand. All this meant that supper was ready. It was brought into the room.

'Gaming has one advantage--it gives you an appetite; that is to say, so long as you have a chance remaining. The duke had thousands,--for at present his resources were unimpaired, and he was exhausted by the constant attention and anxiety of five hours. He passed over the delicacies, and went to the side-table, and began cutting himself some cold roast beef. Tom Cogit ran up, not to his Grace, but to the baron, to announce the shocking fact, that the Duke of St James was enduring great trouble; and then the baron asked his Grace to permit Mr Cogit to serve him.

'Our hero devoured--we use the word advisedly, as fools say in the House of Commons--he devoured the roast beef, and rejecting the hermitage with disgust, asked for porter.

'They set to again, fresh as eagles. At six o'clock, accounts were so complicated, that they stopped to make up their books. Each played with his memorandums and pencil at his side. Nothing fatal had yet happened. The duke owed Lord Dice about L5000, and Temple Grace owed him as many hundreds. Lord Castlefort also was his debtor to the tune of 750, and the baron was in his books, but slightly.

'Every half-hour they had a new pack of cards, and threw the used ones on the floor. All this time Tom Cogit did nothing but snuff the candles, stir the fire, bring them a new pack, and occasionally made a tumbler for them.

'At eight o'clock the duke's situation was worsened. The run was greatly against him, and perhaps his losses were doubled. He pulled up again the next hour or two; but, nevertheless, at ten o'clock owed every one something. No one offered to give over; and every one, perhaps, felt that his object was not obtained. They made their toilets, and went down-stairs to breakfast. In the mean time the shutters were opened, the room aired; and in less than an hour they were at it again.

'They played till dinner-time without intermission; and though the duke made some desperate efforts, and some successful ones, his losses were, nevertheless, trebled. Yet he ate an excellent dinner, and was not at all depressed; because the more he lost the more his courage and his resources seemed to expand. At first, he had limited himself to 10,000; after breakfast, it was to have been 20,000; then 30,000 was the ultimatum; and now he dismissed all thoughts of limits from his mind, and was determined to risk or gain everything.

'At midnight he had lost L48,000.

'Affairs now began to be serious. His supper was not so hearty.

While the rest were eating, he walked about the room, and began to limit his ambition to recovery, and not to gain.

'When you play to win back, the fun is over: there is nothing to recompense you for your bodily tortures and your degraded feelings; and the very best result that can happen, while it has no charms, seems to your cowed mind impossible.

'On they played, and the duke lost more. His mind was jaded. He floundered--he made desperate efforts, but plunged deeper in the slough. Feeling that, to regain his ground, each card must tell, he acted on each as if it must win, and the consequences of this insanity (for a gamester at such a crisis is really insane) were, that his losses were prodigious.

'Another morning came, and there they sat, ankle-deep in cards. No attempt at breakfast now--no affectation of making a toilet, or airing the room. The atmosphere was hot, to be sure, but it well became such a hell. There they sat, in total, in positive forgetfulness of everything but the hot game they were hunting down. There was not a man in the room, except Tom Cogit, who could have told you the name of the town in which they were living. There they sat, almost breathless, watching every turn with the fell look in their cannibal eyes, which showed their total inability to sympathize with their fellow-beings. All the forms of society had been forgotten. There was no snuff-box handed about now, for courtesy, admiration, or a pinch; no affectation of occasionally making a remark upon any other topic but the all-engrossing one.

'Lord Castlefort rested with his arms on the table:--a false tooth had got unhinged. His Lordship, who, at any other time, would have been most annoyed, coolly put it in his pocket. His cheeks had fallen, and he looked twenty years older.

'Lord Dice had torn off his cravat, and his hair flung down over his callous, bloodless checks, straight as silk.

'Temple Grace looked as if he were blighted by lightning; and his deep-blue eyes gleamed like a hyaena.

'The baron was least changed.

'Tom Cogit, who smelt that the crisis was at hand, was as quiet as a bribed rat.

'On they played till six o'clock in the evening, and then they agreed to desist till after dinner. Lord Dice threw himself on a sofa. Lord Castlefort breathed with difficulty. The rest walked about. While they were resting on their oars, the young duke roughly made up his accounts. He found that he was minus about L100,000.

'Immense as this loss was, he was more struck--more appalled, let us say--at the strangeness of the surrounding scene, than even by his own ruin. As he looked upon his fellow-gamesters, he seemed, for the first time in his life, to gaze upon some of those hideous demons of whom he had read. He looked in the mirror at

himself. A blight seemed to have fallen over his beauty, and his presence seemed accursed. He had pursued a dissipated, even more than a dissipated, career. Many were the nights that had been spent by him not on his couch; great had been the exhaustion that he had often experienced; haggard had sometimes even been the lustre of his youth. But when had been marked upon his brow this harrowing care? When had his features before been stamped with this anxiety, this anguish, this baffled desire, this strange, unearthly scowl, which made him even tremble? What! was it possible?--it could not be--that in time he was to be like those awful, those unearthly, those unhallowed things that were around him. He felt as if he had fallen from his state, as if he had dishonoured his ancestry, as if he had betrayed his trust. He felt a criminal.

'In the darkness of his meditations a flash burst from his lurid mind, a celestial light appeared to dissipate this thickening gloom, and his soul felt, as it were, bathed with the softening radiancy. He thought of May Dacre, he thought of everything that was pure, and holy, and beautiful, and luminous, and calm. It was the innate virtue of the man that made this appeal to his corrupted nature. His losses seemed nothing; his dukedom would be too slight a ransom for freedom from these ghouls, and for the breath of the sweet air.

'He advanced to the baron, and expressed his desire to play no more. There was an immediate stir. All jumped up, and now the deed was done. Cant, in spite of their exhaustion, assumed her reign. They begged him to have his revenge,--were quite annoyed at the result,--had no doubt he would recover if he proceeded.

'Without noticing their remarks, he seated himself at the table, and wrote cheques for their respective amounts, Tom Cogit jumping up and bringing him the inkstand. Lord Castlefort, in the most affectionate manner, pocketed the draft; at the same time recommending the duke not to be in a hurry, but to send it when he was cool. Lord Dice received his with a bow, Temple Grace with a sigh, the baron with an avowal of his readiness always to give him his revenge.

'The duke, though sick at heart, would not leave the room with any evidence of a broken spirit; and when Lord Castlefort again repeated--"Pay us when we meet again," he said, "I think it very improbable that we shall meet again, my Lord. I wished to know what gaming was. I had heard a great deal about it. It is not so very disgusting; but I am a young man, and cannot play tricks with my complexion."

'He reached his house. The Bird was out. He gave orders for himself not to be disturbed, and he went to bed; but in vain he tried to sleep. What rack exceeds the torture of an excited brain and an exhausted body? His hands and feet were like ice, his brow like fire; his ears rung with supernatural roaring; a nausea had seized upon him, and death he would have welcomed. In vain, in vain he courted repose; in vain he had recourse to every expedient to wile himself to slumber. Each minute he started from his pillow with some phrase which reminded him of his late fearful society. Hour after hour moved on with its leaden pace;

each hour he heard strike, and each hour seemed an age. Each hour was only a signal to cast off some covering, or shift his position. It was, at length, morning. With a feeling that he should go mad if he remained any longer in bed, he rose, and paced his chamber. The air refreshed him. He threw himself on the floor, the cold crept over his senses, and he slept.[13]

[13] 'The Young Duke,' by B. Disraeli, chapter VIII. This gambling is the turning-point in the young duke's career; he proves himself at length not unworthy of his noble ancestry and his high hereditary position,--takes his place in the Senate, and weds the maiden of his love.

CHAPTER IV.

ATROCITIES, DUELS, SUICIDES, AND EXECUTION OF GAMBLERS.

The history of all nations is but the record of their cupidity; and when the fury of gaming appears on the scene, it has never failed to double the insolence and atrocities of tyranny.

The atrocious gambling of the Hindoo Rajas has been related;[14] and I have incidentally adverted to similar concomitants of the vice among all nations. I now propose to bring together a series of facts specially elucidative of the harrowing theme.

[14] Chapter II.

One of the Ptolemys, kings of Egypt, required all causes to be submitted to him whilst at play, and pronounced even sentence of death according to chance. On one occasion his wife, Berenice, pronounced thereanent those memorable words:--'There cannot be too much deliberation when the death of a man is concerned'--afterwards adopted by Juvenal--*Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa est*. [15]

[15] Aelian, *Var. Hist. lib. XLIV. c. xiii.*; Juvenal, *Sat. vi.*

Tolomnius, King of the Veii, happened to be playing at dice when the arrival of Roman ambassadors was announced. At the very instant he uttered the word KILL, a term of the game; the word was misinterpreted by the hearers, and they went forthwith and massacred the ambassadors. Livy suggests that this was an excuse alleged AFTER the commission of the deed; but gamesters are subject to such absence of mind that there is really nothing incredible or astonishing in the act. 'Sire,' exclaimed a messenger to the Caliph Alamin, 'it is no longer time for play--Babylon is besieged!' 'Silence!' said the caliph, 'don't you see I am on the point of giving checkmate?' The same story is told of a Duke of Normandy.

Wars have arisen from very trivial causes--among the rest gambling. Henry, the son of William the Conqueror, was playing at chess with Louis, the son of Philip, King of France. The latter, perceiving that he was losing the game got into a

passion, and calling Henry the son of a bastard, flung the chess-board into his face. Henry took the chess-board and struck Louis with it so violently that he drew blood, and would have killed him if his brother, who happened to come in, had not prevented him. The two brothers took to flight, but a great and lasting war was the consequence of the gambling fracas.

A gaming quarrel was the cause of the slap in the face given by the Duc Rene to Louis XII., then only Duc d'Orleans. This slap was the origin of a ligue which was termed 'the mad war.' The resentment of the outraged prince was not appeased until he mounted the throne, when he uttered these memorable words:--'A King of France does not avenge insults offered to a Duke of Orleans.'

Many narratives of suicide committed by desperate gamblers are on record, some of which I now adduce.

SIR JOHN BLAND, OF KIPPAX PARK.

Sir John Bland, of Kippax Park, flirted away his whole fortune at Hazard. 'He, t'other night,' says Walpole, 'exceeded what was lost by the late Duke of Bedford, having at one period of the night (though he recovered the greater part of it) lost two and thirty thousand pounds.' Sir John Kippax shot himself in 1705.

LORD MOUNTFORD.

Lord Mountford came to a tragic end through his gambling. He had lost money; feared to be reduced to distress; asked for a government appointment, and determined to throw the die of life or death on the answer received from court. The answer was unfavourable. He consulted several persons, indirectly at first, afterwards pretty directly, on the easiest mode of finishing life; invited a dinner-party for the day after; supped at White's, and played at Whist till one o'clock of the New Year's morning. Lord Robert Bertie drank to him 'a happy new year;' he clapped his hand strangely to his eyes. In the morning, he sent for a lawyer and three witnesses, executed his will, made them read it over twice, paragraph by paragraph, asked the lawyer if that will would stand good though a man were to shoot himself. Being assured it would, he said--'Pray stay, while I step into the next room;' went into the next room and shot himself, placing the muzzle of the pistol so close to his head that the report was not heard.

A SUICIDE ROBBING PETER TO PAY PAUL.

Gamblers have been known to set as coolly and deliberately about blowing out their brains as if they had only been going to light their cigars. Lord Orford, in his correspondence with Horace Walpole, mentions two curious instances.

One of the fashionable young men of Lord Orford's day had been unhappily decoyed into a gambling house, where his passion for play became so great that he spent nearly the whole of his time in throwing the dice. He continued to gamble until he had not only lost a princely fortune, but had incurred a large amount of

debt among his tradesmen. With the loss of his money, and the utter beggary which stared him in the face, the unfortunate victim of play lost all relish for life; and sought in death the only refuge he could fancy from the infamy and misery which he had brought upon himself. But whilst fully resolved on self-destruction, he thought, before carrying his fatal purpose into execution, he might as well do his tradesmen an act of justice, even if in so doing he should do injustice to others. He insured his life to the extent of his debts, amounting to several thousand pounds. Being acquainted with several of the directors of the company (he called them his life-and-death brokers) in which he insured, he invited them to dinner the following day, with the ostensible view of celebrating the completion of the insurance. The tradesmen also received strict orders to be present; and as the non-payment of their accounts for a long period to come was the penalty of not acceding to his wishes in this respect, it can scarcely be necessary to say that they were all 'punctual as lovers to the moment sworn.' The dinner over, and a liberal allowance of wine having been quaffed, the ruined gambler desired the servant to call up all who were in the hall below. In a few seconds the dining-room was filled with tradesmen, all eager to receive payment of their accounts. 'Now, gentlemen,' said the gambler, addressing his guests, and pointing to the little crowd of tradesmen,--'now, gentlemen, these are all my tradesmen; they are honest industrious men, to whom I am indebted, and as I see no other earthly means of being ever able to meet their just claims, you will be so kind as to pay them out of the sum for which I insured my life yesterday. Allow me, gentlemen, to bid you farewell.' And so saying, he pulled a pistol from his pocket, and placing it to his head, that instant blew out his brains. Of course his insurance office must have been one that undertook to pay insurances whatever might be the cause of death, not excepting suicide--which, like duelling, has usually been a bar to such claims.

REVELATIONS OF A GAMBLER ON THE POINT OF COMMITTING SELF-MURDER.

The following is 'A full and particular account of a person who threw himself into the Thames, from Blackfriars Bridge, on Wednesday, July 10, 1782; with the melancholy paper he left behind him, accounting to his wife and children for so rash an action.' It is said that several thousands of the papers were dispersed through London, and it is to be hoped that some of them might produce that good effect which seems to have been so anxiously desired by the person who wished them to be distributed.

'Midnight, July 10, 1782.

'Whoever thou art that readest this paper, listen to the voice of one from the DEAD. While thine eyes peruse the lines their writer may be suffering the most horrid punishments which an incensed Creator can inflict upon the greatest sinner.

'Reader, art thou of my own sex? Art thou a man? Oh, in whatever rank of life, whether high or low,--beware of gambling! Beware of so much as approaching an E O table! Had I ever met with such a dreadful warning as I now offer thee, I might perhaps

have been saved from death--have been snatched from damnation. Reader, art thou a woman? Oh, whether rich or poor, whether wife, mother, sister, or daughter,--if thou suspect that the late hours, the feverish body, the disturbed mind, the ruffled temper, the sudden extravagance of him whom thou lovest, are caused by frequenting the gaming table, oh, fail not to discover thy suspicions--fail not to remonstrate! Had but my dear wife remonstrated with me, when she saw me, in consequence of my winnings, indulge in expense, which she must have known I could not honestly afford, she would not now, within the next hour, be deprived of her husband--of the only support of herself and her three poor children in this world,--and deprived of him in a manner which effectually cuts off all hopes of our ever meeting in the happiness of another. * * * *

'Yes, in less than an hour, coward as I am, I shall have deserted my duty and my family in this world; and, wretch as I am, shall have rushed into all the horrors of hell in another world, by drowning myself.

'By curiosity I was first led to the E O table. Ashamed to stand idle I put upon E, it came E; upon O, it came O. Fortune favoured me (as I foolishly called it), and I came away a winner.

Something worse than curiosity, though hardly more dangerous, carried me to another table another night. My view in going was answered. My view was to WIN, and again I WON in the course of the evening. Again I went, and again I won. For some weeks this was the constant story. Oh, happy had I lost at first! Now I went every night. Everything I ought to have done, neglected. Up all night, I was forced to lie in bed all day. The strength of my mind, which at THIS moment might save me, was hourly wasting away. My wife was deceived with continual falsehoods, to which nothing but her fondness for me blinded her. Even my winnings, with the expense and extravagance in which I indulged myself and family, were every day more than half exhausted. But I felt that I was always to win. Fortune favoured me. Fortune was now my deity. * * * *

'But fortune, my new, my false deity, deserted me. My luck TURNED. I am undone! Ruined! A beggar! My wife and children will want a morsel of bread to eat. * * * * To destroy myself is the only way to preserve my family from want, and to keep myself from the GALLOWS. This morning I absolutely hesitated whether I should not procure a sum of money with which to try my luck by FORGERY. Gamesters, think of that-- FORGERY! O my dear wife, is not anything better than seeing me conveyed to Tyburn? Yes, it is better that before many hours you and your three helpless daughters should be hanging in tears (I little merit) over my lifeless, cold, and swollen body.

'Readers, farewell! From my sad and voluntary death, learn wisdom. In consequence of gaming I go to seek my destruction in the Thames. Oh, think in what manner he deserves to be punished who commits a crime which he is fully persuaded merits, and will not fail to meet, the severest punishment.'

The narrative proceeds to state that, 'between one and two

o'clock in the morning he took a sad farewell of this world, and leaped over Blackfriars Bridge. It pleased Providence, however, that he should be seen committing this desperate action by two watermen, who found his body after it had been a considerable time under water. In consequence of the methods used by the men of the Humane Society, he was at length almost miraculously restored to life and to his family. It is further stated that-- 'In consequence of the advice of a worthy clergyman he was restored to reason and to religion. He now wonders how he could think of committing so horrid a crime; and is not without hope that by a life of continual repentance and exemplary religion, he may obtain pardon hereafter. The paper which he wrote before he set forth to drown himself he still desires should be made as public as possible, and that this narrative should be added to it.

INCORRIGIBLE.

In the year 1799, Sir W. L--, Bart., finding his eldest son extremely distressed and embarrassed, told him that he would relieve him from all his difficulties, on condition that he would state to him, without reserve, their utmost extent, and give him his honour never to play again for any considerable sum. The debts--amounting to L22,000--were instantly discharged. Before a week had elapsed he fell into his old habits again, and lost L5000 more at a sitting; upon which he next morning shot himself!

SUICIDE IN 1816.

In 1816 a gentleman, the head of a first-rate concern in the city, put a period to his existence by blowing out his brains. He had gone to the Argyle Rooms a few nights before the act, and accompanied a female home in a coach, with two men, friends of the woman. When they got to her residence the two men proposed to the gentleman to play for a dozen champagne to treat the lady with, which the gentleman declined. They, however, after a great deal of persuasion, prevailed on him to play for small sums, and, according to the usual trick of gamblers, allowed him to win at first, till they began to play for double, when there is no doubt the fellows produced loaded dice, and the gentleman lost to the amount of L1800! This brought him to his senses--as well it might. He then invented an excuse for not paying that sum, by saying that he was under an agreement with his partner not to draw for a larger amount than L300 for his private account--and gave them a draft for that amount, promising the remainder at a future day. This promise, however, he did not attend to, not feeling himself bound by such a villainous transaction, especially after giving them so much. But the robbers found out who he was and his residence, and had the audacity to go, armed with bludgeons, and attack him publicly on his own premises, in the presence of those employed there, demanding payment of their nefarious 'debt of honour,' and threatening him, if he did not pay, that he should fight!

This exposure had such an effect on his feelings that he made an excuse to retire--did so--and blew out his brains with a pistol!

This rash act was the more to be lamented because it prevented

the bringing to condign punishment, the plundering villains who were the cause of it.[16]

[16] Annual Register, vol. lviii.

OTHER INSTANCES.

A gallant Dutch officer, after having lost a splendid fortune not long since (1823) in a gambling house at Aix-la-Chapelle, shot himself. A Russian general, also, of immense wealth, terminated his existence in the same manner and for the same cause. More recently, a young Englishman, who lost the whole of an immense fortune by gambling at Paris, quitted this world by stabbing himself in the neck with a fork. A short time previously another Englishman, whose birth was as high as his wealth had been considerable, blew his brains out in the Palais Royal, after having literally lost his last shilling. Finally, an unfortunate printer at Paris, who had a wife and five children, finished his earthly career for the same cause, by suffocating himself with the fumes of charcoal; he said, in his farewell note to his unhappy wife--'Behold the effect of gaming!'[17]

[17] Ubi supra.

'IF I LOSE I SHALL COMMIT SUICIDE.'

A young man having gambled away his last shilling, solicited the loan of a few pounds from one of the proprietors of the hell in which he had been plundered. 'What security will you give me?' asked the fellow. 'My word of honour,' was the reply. 'Your word of honour! That's poor security, and won't do,' rejoined the hellite; 'if you can pawn nothing better than that, you'll get no money out of me.' 'Then you won't lend me a couple of pounds?' 'Not without security,' was the reply. 'Why, surely, you won't refuse me a couple of sovereigns, after having lost so much?' 'I won't advance you a couple of shillings without security.'

Still bent upon play, and greedy for the means to gratify his passion, the unhappy man, as if struck by a sudden thought, exclaimed--'I'll give you security--the clothes on my back are quite new, and worth eight guineas; you shall have them as security. Lend me two sovereigns on them.'

'Suppose you lose,' doggedly rejoined the other, 'I cannot strip them off your back.' 'Don't trouble yourself on that head,' replied the desperate wretch; 'if I lose I shall commit suicide, which I have been meditating for some time, and you shall surely have my clothes. I shall return to my lodgings before daylight, in the most worn-out and worthless dressing-gown or great-coat you can procure for me, leaving my clothes with you.'

The two sovereigns were advanced, and in ten or twelve minutes were lost. The keeper of the table demanded the clothes, and the unfortunate man stripped himself with the utmost coolness of manner, and wrapping his body in a worn-out greatcoat, quitted

the place with the full purpose of committing self-murder. He did not direct his steps homeward, however, but resolved to accomplish the horrid deed by suspending himself from a lamp-post in a dark lane near the place. While making the necessary preparations he was observed by a constable, who at once took him into custody, and on the following morning he was carried before the magistrate, where all the circumstances of the affair came out.

SUICIDE AT VERDUN.

During the great French War, among other means resorted to in order to ease the English prisoners at Verdun of their loose cash, a gaming table was set up for their sole accommodation, and, as usual, led to scenes of great depravity and horror. For instance, a young man was enticed into this sink of iniquity, when he was tempted to throw on the table a five-franc piece; he won, and repeated the experiment several times successfully, until luck turned against him, and he lost everything he had. The manager immediately offered a rouleau of a thousand francs, which, in the heat of play, he thoughtlessly accepted, and also lost. He then drew a bill on his agent, which his captain (he was an officer in the English army) endorsed. The proceeds of this went the way of the rouleau. He drew two more bills, and lost again. The next morning he was found dead in his bed, with his limbs much distorted and his fingers dug into his sides. On his table was found an empty laudanum bottle, and some scraps of paper on which he had been practising the signature of Captain B----. On inquiry it was found that he had forged that officer's name to the two last bills.

'IN AT THE DEATH.'

In 1819 an inquest was held on the body of a gentleman found hanging from one of the trees in St James's Park. The evidence established the melancholy fact that the deceased was in the habit of frequenting gambling houses, and had sunk into a state of dejection on account of his losses; and it seemed probable that it was immediately after his departure from one of these receptacles of rogues and their dupes that he committed suicide. The son of the gate-keeper at St James's saw several persons round the body at four o'clock in the morning, one of whom, a noted gambler, said: 'Look at his face; why, have you forgotten last night? Don't you recollect him now?' They were, no doubt, all gamblers--in at the death.'

The three following stories, if not of actual suicide, relate crimes which bear a close resemblance to self-murder.

A GAMBLER PAWNING HIS EARS.

A clerk named Chambers, losing his monthly pay, which was his all, at a gaming table, begged to borrow of the manager's; but they knew his history too well to lend without security, and therefore demanded something in pawn. 'I have nothing to give but my ears,' he replied. 'Well,' said one of the witty demons, 'let us have them.' The youth immediately took a knife out of his pocket and actually cut off all the fleshy part of one of his

cars and threw it on the table, to the astonishment of the admiring gamesters. He received his two dollars, and gambled on.

A GAMBLER SUBMITTING TO BE HANGED.

The following incident is said to have occurred in London:--Two fellows were observed by a patrol sitting at a lamp-post in the New Road; and, on closely watching them, the latter discovered that one was tying up the other, who offered no resistance, by the neck. The patrol interfered to prevent such a strange kind of murder, and was assailed by both, and very considerably beaten for his good offices; the watchmen, however, poured in, and the parties were secured. On examination next morning, it appeared that the men had been gambling; that one had lost all his money to the other, and had at last proposed to stake his clothes. The winner demurred--observing that he could not strip his adversary naked in the event of his losing. 'Oh,' replied the other, 'do not give yourself any uneasiness about that; if I lose I shall be unable to live, and you shall hang me, and take my clothes after I am dead, for I shall then, you know, have no occasion for them.' The proposed arrangement was assented to; and the fellow having lost, was quietly submitting to the terms of the treaty when he was interrupted by the patrol, whose impertinent interference he so angrily resented.

TWO GAMBLERS TOSSING WHO SHOULD HANG THE OTHER.

In the year 1812 an extraordinary investigation took place at Bow Street. Croker, the officer, was passing along Hampstead Road; he observed at a short distance before him two men on a wall, and directly after saw the tallest of them, a stout man, about six feet high, hanging by his neck from a lamp-post attached to the wall, being that instant tied up and turned off by the short man.

This unexpected and extraordinary sight astonished the officer; he made up to the spot with all speed, and just after he arrived there the tall man, who had been hanged, fell to the ground, the handkerchief with which he had been suspended having given way. Croker produced his staff, said he was an officer, and demanded to know of the other man the cause of such conduct; in the mean time the man who had been hanged recovered, got up, and on Croker's interfering, gave him a violent blow on his nose, which nearly knocked him backward. The short man was endeavouring to make off; however, the officer procured assistance, and both were brought to the office, where the account they gave was that they worked on canals. They had been together on Wednesday afternoon, tossed for money, and afterwards for their CLOTHES; the tall man who was hanged won the other's jacket, trousers, and shoes; they then tossed up which should HANG THE OTHER, and the short one won the toss. They got upon the wall, the one to submit, and the other to hang him on the lamp-iron. They both agreed in this statement. The tall one, who had been hanged, said if he had won the toss he would have hanged the other. He said he then felt the effects upon his neck of his hanging, and his eyes were so much swelled that he saw DOUBLE.

The magistrates, continues the report in the 'Annual Register,' expressed their horror and disgust; and ordered the man who had

been hanged to find bail for the violent and unjustifiable assault upon the officer; and the short one, for hanging the other--a very odd decision in the latter case--since the act was murder 'to all intents and purposes' designed and intended. The report says, however, that, not having bail, they were committed to Bridewell for trial.[20] The result I have not discovered.

[20] Annual Register, 1812, vol. liv.

Innumerable duels have resulted from quarrels over the gaming table, although nothing could be more Draconic than the law especially directed against such duels. By the Act of Queen Anne against gaming, all persons sending a challenge on account of gaming disputes were liable to forfeit all their goods and to be committed to prison for two years. No case of the kind, however, was ever prosecuted on that clause of the Act, which was, in other respects, very nearly inoperative.

GAMBLING DUELS IN THE YEAR 1818.

It so happened that almost every month of the year 1818 was 'distinguished' by a duel or two, resulting from quarrels at gambling or in gambling houses.

January. 'A meeting took place yesterday at an early hour, between Captain B--r--y and Lieutenant T--n--n, in consequence of a dispute at play. Wimbledon Common was the ground, and the parties fired twice, when the lieutenant was slightly wounded in the pistol hand, the ball grazing the right side; and here the affair ended.'

January. 'A meeting took place on the 9th instant, at Calais, between Lieut. Finch, 20th regiment of Dragoons, and Lieut. Boileau, on half-pay of the 41st regiment. Lieut. Finch was bound over, some days back, to keep the peace in England; in consequence of which he proceeded to Calais, accompanied by his friend, Captain Butler, where they were followed by Lieut. Boileau and his friend Lieut. Hartley. It was settled by Captain Butler, previous to Lieut. Finch taking his ground, that HE WAS BOUND IN HONOUR to receive LIEUT. BOILEAU'S FIRE as he had given so serious a provocation as a blow. This arrangement was, however, defeated, by Lieut. Finch's pistol "accidentally" going off, apparently in the direction of his opponent, which would probably have led to fatal consequences had it not been for the IMPLICIT RELIANCE placed by Lieut. Boileau's friend on the STRICT HONOUR of Capt. Butler, whose anxiety, steadiness, and gentlemanly conduct on this and every other occasion, were too well known to leave a doubt on the minds of the opposite party, that Lieut. Finch's pistol going off was ENTIRELY ACCIDENTAL. A reconciliation, therefore, immediately took place.'

February 17. 'Information was received at the public office, Marlborough Street, on Saturday last, that a duel was about to take place yesterday, in the fields contiguous to Chalk Farm, between Colonel Tucker and Lieut. Nixon, the latter having challenged the former in public company, for which and previous abuse the colonel inflicted severe chastisement with a thick

stick. Subsequent information was received that the colonel's friends deemed it unnecessary for him to meet the challenger, but that his remedy was to repeat the former chastisement when insulted. It was further stated that a few half-pay officers, of inferior rank, had leagued together for the purpose of procuring others to give a challenge, and which it was the determination to put down by adopting the colonel's plan.'

February. 'A captain in the army shook hands with a gallant lieut.-colonel (who had distinguished himself in the Peninsula) at one of the West End gaming houses, and Lieut. N--, who was present, upbraided the colonel with the epithet of "poltroon." On a fit opportunity the colonel inflicted summary justice upon the lieutenant with a cane or horse-whip. This produced a challenge; but the colonel was advised that he would degrade himself by combat with the challenger, and he therefore declined it, but promised similar chastisement to that inflicted. It was then stated that the colonel was bound to fight any other person who would stand forth as the champion of Lieut. N--, to which the colonel consented,--when a Lieut. J--n--e appeared as the champion, and the meeting was appointed for Tuesday morning at Turnham Green. The information of the police was renewed, and Thomas Foy apprehended the parties at an inn near the spot, early in the morning. They were consequently bound over to keep the peace. It appears, however, that the lieutenant in this instance was not the champion of the former, but had been challenged by the colonel.'

April. 'A meeting was to have taken place yesterday in consequence of a dispute at play, between Captain R--n--s and Mr B--e--r, a gentleman of fortune; but it was prevented by the interference of the police, and the parties escaped. It took place, however, on the following day, on Wimbledon Common, and after exchanging a single shot the matter was adjusted.'

May. 'In consequence of a dispute at a gaming table, on Monday night, in the vicinity of Piccadilly, Mr M--, who was an officer in the British service at Brussels, and Mr B--n, a medical man, met, at three in the morning, on Tuesday, in the King's Road. They fought at twelve paces. Mr B--n was wounded on the back part of the hand, and the affair was adjusted.'

July. 'A duel was fought yesterday morning, on Wimbledon Common, between a Mr Arrowsmith and Lieut. Flynn, which ended in the former being wounded in the thigh. The dispute which occasioned the meeting originated in a gaming transaction.'

September. 'A duel was fought this morning on Hounslow Heath, between Messrs Hillson and Marsden. The dispute arose in one of the stands at Egham races. The latter was seriously wounded in the left side, and conveyed away in a gig.'

November. 'A duel originating, over a dispute at play was fixed to take place on Wimbledon Common, at daybreak, yesterday morning, but information having been received that police officers were waiting, the parties withdrew.'

GAMING DUEL AT PARIS, 1827.

A medical student, named Goulard, quarrelled at billiards with a fellow-student named Caire. Their mutual friends, having in vain tried every means of persuasion to prevent the consequences of the dispute, accompanied the young men without the walls of Paris. Goulard seemed disposed to submit to an arrangement, but Caire obstinately refused. The seconds measured the ground, and the first shot having been won by Goulard, he fired, and Caire fell dead. Goulard did not appear during the prosecution that followed; he continued absent on the day fixed for judgment, and the court, conformably to the code of criminal proceedings, pronounced on the charge without the intervention of a jury. It acquitted Goulard of premeditation, but condemned him for contumacy, to perpetual hard labour, and to be branded; and this in spite of the fact that the advocate-general had demanded Goulard's acquittal of the charge.

THE END OF A GAMESTER.

In 1788, a Scotch gentleman, named William Brodie, was tried and convicted at Edinburgh, for stealing bank-notes and money, with violence. This man, at the death of his father, twelve years before, inherited a considerable estate in houses, in the city of Edinburgh, together with £10,000 in money; but, by an unhappy connection and a too great propensity to gaming, he was reduced to the desperation which brought him at last to the scaffold. It is stated that his demeanour on receiving the dreadful sentence was equally cool and determined; moreover, that he was dressed in a blue coat, fancy vest, satin breeches, and white silk stockings; a cocked hat; his hair full dressed and powdered; and, lastly, that he was carried back to prison in a chair. Such was the respectful treatment of 'gentlemen' prisoners in Scotland towards the end of the last century.

DUEL WITH A SHARPER.

A Monsieur de Boisseuil, one of the Kings equerries, being at a card-party, detected one of the players cheating, and exposed his conduct.

The insulted 'gentleman' demanded satisfaction, when Boisseuil replied that he did not fight with a person who was a rogue.

'That MAY be,' said the other, 'but I do not like to be CALLED one.'

They met on the ground, and Boisseuil received two desperate wounds from the sharper.

This man's plea against Boisseuil is a remarkable trait. Madame de Stael has alluded to it in her best style. 'In France,' she says, 'we constantly see persons of distinguished rank, who, when accused of an improper action, will say--"It may have been wrong, but no one will dare assert it to my face!" Such an expression is an evident proof of confirmed depravity; for, what would be the condition of society if it was only requisite to kill one another, to commit with impunity every evil action,--to break one's word and assert falsehood--provided no one dared tell you

that you lied?'

In countries where public opinion is more severe on the want of probity and fair-dealing, should a man transgress the laws of these principles of human conduct, ten duels a day would not enable him to recover the esteem he has forfeited.

MAJOR ONEBY AND MR GOWER.

This duel originated as follows:--It appears that a Major Oneby, being in company with a Mr Gower and three other persons, at a tavern, in a friendly manner, after some time began playing at Hazard; when one of the company, named Rich, asked if any one would set him three half-crowns; whereupon Mr Gower, in a jocular manner, laid down three half-pence, telling Rich he had set him three pieces, and Major Oneby at the same time set Rich three half-crowns, and lost them to him.

Immediately after this, Major Oneby, in an angry manner, turned about to Mr Gower and said--'It was an impertinent thing to set down half-pence,' and called him 'an impertinent puppy' for so doing. To this Mr Gower answered--'Whoever calls me so is a rascal. 'Thereupon Major Oneby took up a bottle, and with great force threw it at Mr Gower's head, but did not hit him, the bottle only brushing some of the powder out of his hair. Mr Gower, in return, immediately tossed a candlestick or a bottle at Major Oneby, which missed him; upon which they both rose to fetch their swords, which were then hung in the room, and Mr Gower drew his sword, but the Major was prevented from drawing his by the company. Thereupon Mr Gower threw away his sword, and the company interposing, they sat down again for the space of an hour.

At the expiration of that time, Mr Gower said to Major Oneby--'We have had hot words, and you were the aggressor, but I think we may pass it over'--at the same time offering him his hand; but the Major replied--'No, d--n you, I WILL HAVE YOUR BLOOD.'

After this, the reckoning being paid, all the company, excepting Major Oneby, went out to go home, and he called to Mr Gower, saying--'Young man, come back, I have something to say to you.' Whereupon Mr Gower returned to the room, and immediately the door was closed, and the rest of the company excluded--when a clashing of swords was heard, and Major Oneby gave Mr Gower a mortal wound. It was found, on the breaking up of the company, that Major Oneby had his great coat over his shoulders, and that he had received three slight wounds in the fight. Mr Gower, being asked on his death-bed whether he had received his wounds in a manner among swordsmen called fair, answered--'I think I did.' Major Oneby was tried for the offence, and found guilty of murder, 'having acted upon malice and deliberation, and not from sudden passion.'

THE NEPHEW OF A BRITISH PEER.

In 1813, the nephew of a British peer was executed at Lisbon. He had involved himself by gambling, and being detected in robbing the house of an English friend, by a Portuguese servant, he shot

the latter dead to prevent discovery. This desperate act, however, did not enable him to escape the hands of justice. After execution, his head was severed from his body and fixed on a pole opposite the house in which the murder and robbery were committed.

The following facts will show the intimate connection between gambling and Robbery or Forgery.

EDWARD WORTLEY MONTAGU AND THE JEW ABRAHAM PAYBA.

Edward Wortley Montagu was the only son of the celebrated Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, whose eccentricities he inherited without her genius. Montagu, together with Lords Taffe and Southwell, was accused of having invited one Abraham Payba, alias James Roberts, a Jew, to dine with them at Paris, in the year 1751; and of having plied him with wine till he became intoxicated, and so lost at play the sum of 800 louis d'ors. It was affirmed that they subsequently called at his house, and that on his exhibiting an evident disinclination to satisfy their demands, they threatened to cut him across the face with their swords unless he instantly paid them. Terrified by their violence, and, at the same time, unwilling to part with his gold, the Jew had cunning enough to give them drafts on a Paris banker, by whom, as he had no dealings with him, he well knew that his bills would be dishonoured; and, to escape the vengeance of those whom he had outwitted, quitted Paris. On ascertaining how completely they had been duped, Montagu, with his associates Lords Taffe and Southwell, repaired to the house of the Jew, and after ransacking his drawers and strong boxes, are said to have possessed themselves of a very considerable sum of money, in addition to diamonds, jewels, and other valuable articles. The Jew had it now in his power to turn on his persecutors, and accordingly he appealed to the legislature for redress. Lord Southwell contrived to effect his escape, but Lord Taffe and Montagu were arrested, and were kept in separate dungeons in the Grand Chatelet, for nearly three months. The case was subsequently tried in a court of law, and decided in favour of the accused,--the Jew being adjudged to make reparation and defray the costs! Against the injustice of this sentence he appealed to the high court of La Tournelle at Paris, which reversed it. Lord Taffe and Montagu afterwards appealed, in their turn, but of the definitive result there is no record.

DR WILLIAM DODD.

Le Sage, in his 'Gil Blas,' says that 'the devil has a particular spite against private tutors;' and he might have added, against popular preachers. By popular preachers I do not mean such grand old things as Bossuet, Massillon, and Bourdaloue. All such men were proof against the fiery darts of the infernal tempter. From their earliest days they had been trained to live up to the Non nobis Domine, 'Not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name, give glory.' All of them had only at heart the glory of their church-cause; though, of course, the Jesuit Bourdaloue worked also for his great Order, then culminating in glory.

The last-named, too, was another La Fontaine in simplicity,

preparing for his grandest predications by sorrowfully rasping on an execrable fiddle. So, if the devil had lifted him up to a high mountain, showing him all he would give him, he would have simply invited him to his lonely cell, to have a jig to the tune of his catguts.

Your popular preachers in England have been, and are, a different sort of spiritual workers. They have been, and are, individualities, perpetually reminded of the fact, withal; and fiercely tempted accordingly. The world, the flesh, and the devil, incessantly knock at their door. If they fall into the snare it is but natural, and much to be lamented.

Dr Dodd had many amiable qualities; but his reputation as a scholar, and his notoriety as a preacher, appear to have entirely turned his head.

He had presented to him a good living in Bedfordshire; but the income thereof was of no avail in supplying his wants: he was vain, pompous, in debt, a gambler. Temptation came upon him. To relieve himself he tried by indirect means to obtain the rectory of St George's, Hanover Square, by sending an anonymous letter to Lady Apsley, offering the sum of £3000 if by her means he could be presented to the living; the letter was immediately sent to the chancellor, and, after being traced to the sender, laid before the king. His name was ordered to be struck out of the list of chaplains; the press abounded with satire and invective; Dodd was abused and ridiculed, and even Foote, in one of his performances at the Haymarket, made him a subject of entertainment. Dodd then decamped, and went to his former pupil, Lord Chesterfield, in Switzerland, who gave him another living; but his extravagance being undiminished, he was driven to schemes which covered him with infamy. After the most extravagant and unseemly conduct in France, he returned to England, and forged a bond as from his pupil, Lord Chesterfield, for the sum of £4200, and, upon the credit of it, obtained a large sum of money; but detection instantly following, he was committed to prison, tried and convicted at the Old Bailey, Feb. 24, and executed at Tyburn, June 27 (after a delay of four months), exhibiting every appearance of penitence. The great delay between the sentence and execution was owing to a doubt for some time respecting the admissibility of an evidence which had been made use of to convict him.

Lord Chesterfield has been accused of a cold and relentless disposition in having deserted his old tutor in his extremity. But Mr Jesse says that he heard it related by a person who lived at the period, that at a preliminary examination of the unfortunate divine, Lord Chesterfield, on some pretence, placed the forged document in Dodd's hands, with the kind intention that he should take the opportunity of destroying it, but the latter wanted either the courage or the presence of mind enough to avail himself of the occasion. This, however, is scarcely an excuse, for, certainly, it was not for Dr Dodd to destroy the fatal document. If Lord Chesterfield had wished to suppress that vital evidence he could have done so.

Dr Johnson exerted himself to the utmost to try and save poor

Dodd; but George III. was inexorable. Respecting this benevolent attempt of the Doctor, Chalmers writes as follows:--

Dr Johnson appears indeed in this instance to have been more swayed by popular judgment than he would perhaps have been willing to allow. The cry was--"the honour of the clergy;" but if the honour of the clergy was tarnished, it was by Dodd's crime, and not his punishment; for his life had been so long a disgrace to his cloth that he had deprived himself of the sympathy which attaches to the first deviation from rectitude, and few criminals could have had less claim to such a display of popular feeling.'

All applications for the Royal mercy having failed, Dr Dodd prepared himself for death, and with a warmth of gratitude wrote to Dr Johnson as follows:--

'June 25, Midnight.

'Accept, thou GREAT and GOOD heart, my earnest and fervent thanks and prayers for all thy benevolent and kind efforts in my behalf.--Oh! Dr Johnson! as I sought your knowledge at an early hour in my life, would to Heaven I had cultivated the love and acquaintance of so excellent a man!--I pray God most sincerely to bless you with the highest transports--the infelt satisfaction of HUMANE and benevolent exertions!--And admitted, as I trust I shall be, to the realms of bliss before you, I shall hail YOUR arrival there with transport, and rejoice to acknowledge that you were my comforter, my advocate, and my FRIEND. God be EVER with YOU!'

Dr Johnson's reply.

'To the Reverend Dr Dodd.

'Dear Sir,--That which is appointed to all men is now coming upon you. Outward circumstances, the eyes and thoughts of men, are below the notice of an immortal being about to stand the trial for eternity, before the Supreme Judge of heaven and earth. Be comforted: your crime, morally or religiously considered, has no very deep dye of turpitude. It corrupted no man's principles. It attacked no man's life. It involved only a temporary and reparable injury. Of this, and of all other sins, you are earnestly to repent; and may God, who knoweth our frailty, and desireth not our death, accept your repentance, for the sake of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord!

'In requital of those well-intended offices which you are pleased so emphatically to acknowledge, let me beg that you make in your devotions one petition for my eternal welfare.

'I am, dear Sir,

'Your affectionate servant,

'SAM. JOHNSON.

Next day, 27th June, Dr Dodd was executed.

CAPTAIN DAVIS.

Captain Davis was some time in the Life Guards, and a lieutenant in the Yeomen of the Household--a situation which placed him often about the persons of the Royal family. He was seldom known to play for less stakes than L50, often won or lost large sums, and was represented as a gentleman of extensive and independent fortune, although some of his enemies declared otherwise, and repeated anecdotes to confirm the assertion. He was at length committed for forgeries to an immense amount. To the fidelity of a servant he owed his escape from Giltspur Street prison--another fatal example of the sure result of gambling. Heir to a title--moving in the first society--having held a commission in the most distinguished of the Royal regiments--he was reduced to the alternative of an ignominious flight with outlawry, or risking the forfeiture of his wretched life, to the outraged laws of his country. When in Paris, he at one time had won L30,000, and on his way home he dropped into another gambling house, where he lost it all but L3000. He set out in life with L20,000 in money!

DESPERATE CAREER OF HENRY WESTON.

Henry Weston was nephew to the distinguished Admiral Sir Hugh Palliser.

Having unlimited control of the large property of his employer, a Mr Cowan, during the absence of the latter from town, he was tempted first to gamble in the funds, wherein being unfortunate, he next went to a gambling house in Pall Mall, and lost a very large sum; and at length, gamed away nearly all his master's property.

In this tremendous result--lost to all intents and purposes--he made a supreme effort to 'patch up' the ruin he had made. He forged the name of General Tonyn; and so dexterously, that he obtained from the Bank of England the sum of L10,000.

This huge robbery from Peter was not to pay Paul. Not a bit of it. It was to try the fickle goddess of gaming once more--a Napoleonic stroke for an Austerlitz of fortune.

He lost this L10,000 in two nights.

Did he despair at this hideous catastrophe? Did he tear his hair--rush out of the room--blow his brains out or drown himself?

Not a bit of it. He 'set his wits to work' once more. He procured a woman to personate General Tonyn's sister--forged again--and again obtained from the Bank of England another large supply of ready cash--with which, however, he 'went off' this time.

He was caught; and then only he thought of self-murder, and cut his throat--but not effectually. He recovered, was tried at the Old Bailey, and hanged on the 6th of July, 1796.

No doubt the reader imagines that the man of such a career was an OLD stager--some long-visaged, parchment-faced fellow the OTHER

side of forty at least. Well, this hero of the gaming table, Henry Weston, was aged only TWENTY-THREE years! What terrible times those must have been to produce such a prodigy!

To the judge who tried him Henry Weston sent a list of a number of PROFESSIONAL GAMBLERS, among them was a person of high rank. Weston, at different times, lost above L46,000 at play; and at a house in Pall Mall, where he lost a considerable part of it, three young officers also lost no less than L35,000.

ARTHUR THISTLEWOOD.

It seems that the wretched traitor Arthur Thistlewood, who paid the forfeit of his life for his crimes, had dissipated by gaming the property he had acquired by a matrimonial connection--L12,000. An unfortunate transaction at cards, during the Lincoln races, involved him in difficulties, which he found it impossible to meet; and he fled to avoid the importunities of his more fortunate associates. He was afterwards known only as the factious demagogue and the professed gambler!

FOUNTLEROY, THE FORGER.

Henry Fountleroy was a gentleman of rank, a partner in the banking house of Marsh, Sibbold, and Co., of Berners Street. He was convicted of having forged a deed for the transfer of L5450 long annuities, in fraud of a certain Frances Young. Like Thurtell, Fountleroy defended himself, and battled with the prejudicial reports circulated against him--among the rest his addiction to gambling. 'I am accused,' he said, 'of being an habitual gambler, an accusation which, if true, might easily account for the diffusion of the property. I am, indeed, a member of two clubs, the Albion and the Stratford, but never in my life did I play in either at cards, or dice, or any game of chance; this is well known to the gentlemen of these clubs; and my private friends, with whom I more intimately associated, can equally assert my freedom from all habit or disposition to play.'[21]

[21] See the case in 'Celebrated Trials,' vol. vi

I close this record of crime and misery by a few narratives of a more miscellaneous character.

GAMBLING FOR LIFE.

Marshal Grammont used to tell a story of three soldiers, who, having committed offences punishable by death, it was ordered that one of them should be hanged as an example, and the three were directed to decide which of them should suffer by throwing dice. The first threw fourteen, the second seventeen, and the last, taking up the dice as coolly as though he were engaged in a trivial game, threw eighteen! Thereupon he exclaimed, with an expression of vexation, 'Ah, now! if I had been playing for money I should not have been so lucky!'

This may appear 'taking it very cool;' but I think the following cases of Englishmen' rather stronger.'

ONE OF MANY INSTANCES.

In the Times of February 11th, 1819, mention is made of a gang of nearly thirty persons, male and female, and all presenting the most shocking appearance of both want and depravity, who were brought to the Marlborough Street Office. Among these wretched beings was a woman named Hewitt, said to be the wife of one Captain Hewitt, a leader of the ton, who, after ruining himself and family at the gambling table, ran away from them, and was not since heard of. His wife being left to herself, and having probably been tainted by his evil example, by an easy gradation became first embarrassed, then a prostitute, then a thief, and on the occasion above mentioned exhibited one of the most distressing spectacles of vice and misery that could be conceived.

THURTELL THE MURDERER.

This man, it is well known, was executed for the murder of Weare.

Thurtell was evidently no common man. His spoken defence, as reported, is one of the finest specimens of impassioned eloquence--perfectly Demosthenic. His indignation at the reports circulated in prejudice of his case was overwhelming. Nothing can be finer than the turn of the following sentence:--'I have been represented by the Press--WHICH CARRIES ITS BENEFITS OR CURSES ON RAPID WINGS from one extremity of the kingdom to the other--as a man more depraved, more gratuitously and habitually profligate and cruel, than has ever appeared in modern times.'

Touching his gambling pursuits, he said:--'I have been represented to you as a man who was given to gambling, and the constant companion of gamblers. To this accusation in some part my heart, with feeling penitence, pleads guilty. I have gambled; I have been a gambler, but not for the last three years. During that time I have not attended or betted upon a horse-race, or a fight, or any public exhibition of that nature. If I have erred in these things, half of the nobility of the land have been my examples; some of the most enlightened statesmen of the country have been my companions in them. I have, indeed, been a gambler; I have been an unfortunate one. But whose fortune have I ruined?--whom undone? My own family have I ruined; I have undone myself!'[22]

[22] See the entire speech in 'Celebrated Trials,' vol. vi. 547.

A MOST WONDERFUL END OF A GAMBLER.

In the Annual Register for the year 1766 occurs the following 'circumstantial and authentic account of the memorable case of Richard Parsons,' transmitted by the high sheriff of Gloucestershire to his friend in London.

On the 20th of February, 1766, Richard Parsons and three more met at a private house in Chalfold, in order to play at cards, about six o'clock in the evening. They played at Loo till about eleven

or twelve that night, when they changed their game for Whist. After a few deals a dispute arose about the state of the game. Parsons asserted with oaths that they were six, which the others denied; upon which he wished 'that he might never enter the kingdom of heaven, and that his flesh might rot upon his bones, if there were not six in the game.' These wishes were several times repeated both then and afterwards. Upon this the candle was put out by a party present, who said he was shocked with the oaths and expressions he heard, and that he put out the candle with a design to put an end to the game. Presently upon this they adjourned to another house, and there began a fresh game, when Parsons and his partner had great success. They then played at Loo again till four in the morning. During the second playing Parsons complained to one Rolles, his partner, of a bad pain in his leg, which from that time increased. There was an appearance of a swelling, and afterwards the colour changing to that of a mortified state. On the following Sunday he took advice of a surgeon, who attended him until his death. Notwithstanding all the applications that were made the mortification increased, and showed itself in different parts of the body. He was visited by a clergyman, who administered the sacrament to him, without any knowledge of what had happened before--the man appearing to be extremely ignorant of religion, having been accustomed to swear, to drink, to game, and to profane the Sabbath. After receiving the sacrament he said--'Now, I must never sin again.' He hoped God would forgive him, having been wicked not above six years, and that whatever should happen he would not play at cards again.

After this he was in great agony--chiefly delirious; spoke of his companions by name, and seemed as if his imagination was engaged at cards. He started, had distracted looks and gestures, and in a dreadful fit of shaking and trembling died on the 4th of March, just about a fortnight after the utterance of his terrible imprecation.

The worthy sheriff of Gloucestershire goes on to say that the man's eyes were open when he died, and could not be closed by the common method, so that they remained open when he was put into the coffin. From this circumstance arose a report that he WISHED HIS EYES MIGHT NEVER CLOSE; 'but,' says the sheriff, 'this is a mistake; for, from the most creditable witnesses, I am fully convinced no such wish was uttered; and the fact is, that he did close his eyes after he was taken with the mortification, and either dozed or slept several times.

'When the body came to be laid out, it appeared all over discoloured or spotted; and it might, in the most literal sense, be said, that his flesh rotted on his bones before he died.'

At the request of the sheriff, the surgeon (a Mr Pegler) who attended the unfortunate man, sent in the following report:--
'Sir,--You desire me to acquaint you, in writing, with what I know relating to the melancholy case of the late Richard Parsons; a request I readily comply with, hoping that his sad catastrophe will serve to admonish all those who profane the sacred name of God.

'February 27th last I visited Richard Parsons, who, I found, had

an inflamed leg, stretching from the foot almost to the knee, tending to a gangrene. The tenseness and redness of the skin was almost gone off, and became of a duskish and livid colour, and felt very lax and flabby. Symptoms being so dangerous, some incisions were made down to the quick, some spirituous fomentations made use of, and the whole limb dressed up with such applications as are most approved in such desperate circumstances, joined with proper internal medicines. The next day he seemed much the same; but on March the 1st he was worse, the incisions discharged a sharp fetid odor (which is generally of the worst consequence). On the next day, which was Sunday, the symptoms seemed to be a little more favourable; but, to my great surprise, the very next day I found his leg not only mortified up to the knee, but the same began anew in four different parts, viz., under each eye, on the top of his shoulder, and on one hand; and in about twelve hours after he died. I shall not presume to say there was anything supernatural in the case; but, however, it must be confessed, that such cases are rather uncommon in subjects so young, and of so good a habit as he had always been previous to his illness.'

On one occasion Justice Maule was about to pass sentence on a prisoner, who upon being asked to say why judgment should not be pronounced, 'wished that God might strike him dead if he was not innocent of the crime.' After a pause, the judge said:--'As the Almighty has not thought proper to comply with your request, the sentence of the court is,' &c.

A SAD REMINDER.

Every Englishman recollects the fate of that unhappy heiress, the richest of all Europe, married to a man of rank and family, who was plundered in the course of a few years of the whole of his wealth, in one of those club houses, and was obliged to surrender himself to a common prison, and ultimately fly from his country, leaving his wife with her relations in the greatest despair and despondency.'[23]

[23] Rouge et Noir: the Academicians of 1823.

GEORGE IV.

There are few departments of human distinction in which Great Britain cannot boast a 'celebrity'--genteel or ungenteel. In the matter of gambling we have been unapproachable--not only in the 'thorough' determination with which we have exhausted the pursuit--but in the vast, the fabulous millions which make up the sum total that Englishmen have 'turned over' at the gaming table.

I think that many thousands of millions would be 'within the mark' as the contribution of England to the insatiate god of gambling.

I have presented to the reader the record of gambling all the world over--the gambling of savages--the gambling of the ancient Persians, Greeks, and Romans--the gambling of the gorgeous monarchs of France and their impassioned subjects; but I have now

to introduce upon the horrible stage a Prince Royal, who surpassed all his predecessors in the gaming art, having right royally lost at play not much less than a million sterling, or, as stated, L800,000--before he was twenty-one years of age!

If the following be facts, vouched for by a writer of authority,[24] the results were most atrocious.

[24] James Grant (Editor of the Morning Advertiser), Sketches in London.

'Every one is aware that George IV., when Prince of Wales, was, as the common phrase is, over-head-and-ears in debt; and that it was because he would thereby be enabled to meet the claims of his creditors, that he consented to marry the Princess Caroline of Brunswick. But although this is known to every one, comparatively few people are acquainted with the circumstances under which his debts were contracted. Those debts, then, were the result of losses at the gaming table. He was an inveterate gambler--a habit which he most probably contracted through his intimacy with Fox. It is a well-ascertained fact that in two short years, after he attained his majority, he lost L800,000 at play.

'It was with the view and in the hope that marriage would cure his propensity for the gaming table, that his father was so anxious to see him united to Caroline; and it was solely on account of his marriage with that princess constituting the only condition of his debts being paid by the country, that he agreed to lead her to the hymeneal altar.

'The unfortunate results of this union are but too well known, not only as regarded the parties themselves, but as regarded society generally. To the gambling habits, then, of the Prince of Wales are to be ascribed all the unhappiness which he entailed on the unfortunate Caroline, and the vast amount of injury which the separation from her, and the subsequent trial, produced on the morals of the nation generally.'

CHAPTER V.

ODDITIES AND WITTICISMS OF GAMBLERS.

OSTENTATIOUS GAMESTERS.

Certain grandees and wealthy persons, more through vanity or weakness than generosity, have sacrificed their avidity to ostentation--some by renouncing their winnings, others by purposely losing. The greater number of such eccentrics, however, seem to have allowed themselves to be pillaged merely because they had not the generosity or the courage to give away what was wanted.

The Cardinal d'Este, playing one day with the Cardinal de Medicis, his guest, thought that his magnificence required him to allow the latter to win a stake of 10,000 crowns--'not wishing,'

he said, 'to make him pay his reckoning or allow him to depart unsatisfied.' Brantome calls this 'greatness;' the following is an instance of what he calls 'kindness.'

'Guilty or innocent,' he says, 'everybody was well received at the house of this cardinal, who kept an open table at Rome for the French chevaliers. These gentlemen having appropriated a portion of his plate, it was proposed to search them: 'No, no!' said the cardinal, 'they are poor companions who have only their sword, cloak, and crucifixes; they are brave fellows; the plate will be a great benefit to them, and the loss of it will not make me poorer.'

Vigneul de Marville tells us of certain extravagant abbés, named Ruccellai and Frangipani, who carried their ostentation to such a pitch as to set gold in dishes on their tables when entertaining their gaming companions! Were any of these base enough to put their hands in and help themselves? This is not stated by the historian. These two Italian abbés were ne plus ultras in luxury and effeminacy. In the reign of Henry IV., they laid before their guests vermilion dishes filled with gloves, fans, coins to play with after the repast, essences and perfumes.[25] I wonder if the delightful scent called Frangipani, vouchsafed to us by Rimmel and Piesse and Lubin, was named after this exquisite ecclesiastic of old?

[25] Melanges d' Hist. et de Lit.

One day when Henry IV. was dining at the Duc de Sully's, the latter, as soon as the cloth was raised, brought in cards and dice, and placed upon the table two purses of 4000 pistoles each, one for the King, the other to lend to the lords of his suite. Thereupon the king exclaimed:--'Great master, come and let me embrace you, for I love you as you deserve: I feel so comfortable here that I shall sup and stay the night.' Evidently Sully was more a courtier than usual on this occasion--as no doubt the whole affair was by the king's order, with which he complied reluctantly; but he made the king play with his own money only. The Duc de Lerme, when entertaining Monsieur the brother of Louis XIII. at his quarters near Maestricht, had the boldness to bring in, at the end of the repast, two bags of 1000 pistoles each, declaring that he gave them up to the players without any condition except to return them when they pleased.[26]

[26] Mem. de Jeu M. le Duc d'Orleans.

This Duc de Lerme was at least a great lord, and the army which he commanded may have warranted his extravagance; but what are we to think when we find the base and mean-spirited Fouquet giving himself the same princely airs? During certain festivities prepared for Louis XIV., Fouquet placed in the room of every courtier of the king's suite, a purse of gold for gambling, in case any of them should be short of money. Well might Duclos remark that 'Nobody was shocked at this MAGNIFICENT SCANDAL!'[27]

[27] Consideration sur les Moeurs,

They tell of a certain lordly gamester who looked upon any money that fell from his hands as lost, and would never stoop to pick it up! This reminds us of the freedman Pallas mentioned by Tacitus, who wrote down what he had to say to his slaves, lest he should degrade his voice to their level--ne vocem consociaret![28]

[28] Ann. I. xiii

AN INSINUATING, ELEGANT GAMESTER.

Osterman, Grand Chancellor of Russia, during the reign of the Empress Anne, obtained information that the court of Versailles had formed a scheme to send an insinuating, elegant gamester, to attack the Duke of Biran on his weak side--a rage for play--and thereby probably gain some political advantage over him.

The chancellor called on the duke to make the necessary communication, but the minister did not choose to be at home. The chancellor, then pretending to be suffering from a severe fit of gout, wrote to his sovereign, stating that he had important matter to reveal, but was unable to move, and the Duke of Biran was consequently ordered to wait on him by the empress. Osterman, affecting great pain, articulated with apparent difficulty these words--'The French are sending a gamester!' Thereupon the duke withdrew in a pet, and represented to the empress that the chancellor was delirious from the gout, and had really nothing to communicate.

The subject had long been forgotten by the duke, when an elegant, easy, dissipated marquis actually arrived. He had extensive credit on a house of the English Factory, and presently insinuated himself into the good graces of the duke, whom he soon eased of all his superfluous cash.

The chancellor became alarmed for the consequences, and resolved to try and play off the French for their clever finesse. He looked about for a match for the redoubtable French gamester, and soon got information of a party who might serve his turn. This was a midshipman at Moscow, named Cruckoff, who, he was assured, was without an equal in the MANAGEMENT of cards, and the knowledge of Quizzes--then the fashionable court game--and that at which the Duke of Biran had lost his money. The chancellor immediately despatched a courier to Moscow to fetch the Russian gamester.

The midshipman was forthwith made an ensign of the Guards, in order to entitle him to play at court. He set to work at once in accordance with his instructions, but after his own plan in the execution. He began with losing freely; and was, of course, soon noticed by the marquis, and marked as a pigeon worth plucking. The young Russian, however, forced him into high play, and he lost the greater part of his former gain. The marquis got nettled, lost his self-command, and proposed a monstrous stake, to the extent of his credit and gains, of which he thought he

might make himself sure by some master-stroke of art. Accordingly, by means of a sleight, he managed to hold fifteen in hand, but his wily antagonist was equal to the occasion: by the aid of some sweetmeats from an adjoining table he SWALLOWED a card, and, being first in hand, the chance was determined in his favour, and he ruined the marquis.

Once more the chancellor waited on the duke, and plainly told him that he had been anxious to guard him against the French gamester, purposely sent to fleece him, if he had had the patience to hear him. The duke then became outrageous, and wished to arrest the Frenchman as a cheat; but Osterman coolly said he had punished him in kind; and, producing a large bag, returned the duke's money, bidding him in future not to be so impatient when information was to be communicated by gouty persons.

The clever ensign was allowed to retain the rest of the spoil, with an injunction, however, never to touch a card again, unless he wished to end his days among the exiles of Siberia.

A PENITENT SONNET,

written by the Lord Fitz-Gerald[29] (a great gamester) a little before his death, which was in the year 1580.

[29] This Lord Fitzgerald was eldest son to the Earl of Kildare, and died at the age of twenty-one.

'By loss in play, men oft forget
The duty they do owe
To Him that did bestow the same,
And thousand millions moe.

'I loath to hear them swear and stare,
When they the Main have lost,
Forgetting all the Byes that wear
With God and Holy Ghost.

'By wounds and nails they think to win,
But truly 'tis not so;
For all their frets and fumes in sin
They moneyless must go.

'There is no wight that used it more
Than he that wrote this verse,
Who cries Peccavi now, therefore;
His oaths his heart do pierce.

'Therefore example take by me,
That curse the luckless time
That ever dice mine eyes did see,
Which bred in me this crime.

'Pardon me for that is past,
I will offend no more,
In this most vile and sinful cast,
Which I will still abhor.'[30]

LOVE AND GAMBLING.

Horace Walpole, writing to Mann, says:-- 'The event that has made most noise since my last is the extempore wedding of the youngest of the two Gunnings, two ladies of surpassing loveliness, named respectively Mary and Elizabeth, the daughters of John Gunning, Esq., of Castle Coote, in Ireland, whom Mrs Montague calls "those goddesses the Gunnings." Lord Coventry, a grave young lord, of the remains of the patriot breed, has long dangled after the eldest, virtuously, with regard to her honour, not very honourably with regard to his own credit. About six weeks ago Duke Hamilton, the very reverse of the earl, hot, debauched, extravagant, and equally damaged in his fortune and person, fell in love with the youngest at the masquerade, and determined to marry her in the spring. About a fortnight since, at an immense assembly at my Lord Chesterfield's, made to show the house, which is really most magnificent, Duke Hamilton made violent love at one end of the room, while he was playing at Faro at the other end; that is, he saw neither the bank nor his own cards, which were of three hundred pounds each: he soon lost a thousand. I own I was so little a professor in love that I thought all this parade looked ill for the poor girl; and could not conceive, if he was so much engaged with his mistress as to disregard such sums, why he played at all. However, two nights afterwards, being left alone with her, while her mother and sister were at Bedford House, he found himself so impatient that he sent for a parson. The Doctor refused to perform the ceremony without license or ring; the duke swore he would send for the archbishop; at last they were married with a ring of the BED-CURTAIN, at half-an-hour after twelve at night, at May-fair Chapel.'

This incident occurred in 1752, and reminds us of the marriage-scene described by Dryden in one of his tales, which was quoted by Lord Lyndhurst on that memorable occasion when he opposed Lord Campbell's Bill for the suppression of indecent publications, and made a speech which was more creditable to his wit than his taste, and perfectly horrifying to Lord Campbell, who inflicted a most damaging verbal castigation on his very sprightly but imprudent opponent.

'MANNERS MAKE THE MAN.

Mr Manners, a relation of the Duke of Rutland, many years ago, lost a considerable sum to a well-known gamester, who set up his carriage in consequence. Being at a loss for a motto, Mr Manners suggested the following:--

MANNERS MAKE(S) THE MAN.'

SHARP PRACTICE--NOT BY AN ATTORNEY.

The commanding officer of a Militia regiment having passed an evening with several of his officers, carried one of them, who was much intoxicated, to town with him. How the rest of the

night was passed was not known--at least to the young man; but in the morning the colonel slipped into his hand a memorandum of his having lost to him at play L700--for which sum he was actually arrested ON THE PARADE the same day, and was compelled to grant an annuity to a nominee of the colonel for L100 per annum!

A GAMESTER TO THE BACK-BONE.

Archdeacon Bruges mentions a gentleman who was so thorough a gamester, that he left in his will an injunction that his bones should be made into dice, and his skin prepared so as to be a covering for dice-boxes![31]

[31] A similar anecdote is related of a Frenchman.

FOOTE'S WITTICISMS.

A blackleg, famous for 'cogging a die,' said that there had been great sport at Newmarket. 'What!' said Foote, 'I suppose you were detected, and kicked out of the Hazard room.'

F--d, the Clerk of the Arraignment, brought off Lookup when indicted for perjury. Foote, afterwards playing with him at Whist, said, 'F--d, you can do anything, after bringing off Lookup. I don't wonder you hold thirteen trumps in your hand. The least he could do was to teach you the "long shuffle" for your services.'

The Rev. Dr Dodd was a very unlucky gamester, and received a guinea to forfeit twenty if he ever played again above a guinea. This, among gamblers, is termed being TIED UP. When the doctor was executed for forgery a gentleman observed to Foote--'I suppose the doctor is launched into eternity by this time.' 'How so?' said Foote, 'he was TIED UP long ago.'

EFFECT OF A SEVERE LOSS AT PLAY.

Lord C-- lost one night L33,000 to General Scott. The amiable peer, however, benefited by the severe lesson, and resolved never again to lose more than one hundred at a sitting! He is said to have strictly kept his resolve.

PADDY'S DECISION.

Some gamblers duping a country fellow at the game called Put, in a public-house near St Pancras, one of them appealed to an Irishman who was looking on whether he had not THREE TREYS IN HIS HAND? 'You had all that,' said Paddy; 'and what's more, I saw you TAKE THEM ALL out of your pocket.'

GAMBLING CAUSED BY GRIEF.

The Honourable Jesse Anker, in order to dissipate the gloom occasioned by the loss of his wife, whom he passionately loved, had recourse to gaming, by which, at different times, he lost considerable sums, but not so as to injure his property, which was very large, in any material degree. The remedy did not prove effectual; he shot himself at his lodgings at Bath.

A GAMBLER'S EXCUSE FOR NOT BEING A SECOND IN A DUEL.

A gentleman who had been called out, applied to a friend who had won a large sum of money to be his second. 'My dear friend,' answered the gamester, 'I won fifteen hundred guineas last night, and shall cut a poor figure at fighting to-day; but if you apply to the person I won them of, he will fight like a devil, for he has not a farthing left.'

'MORE FORTUNATE.'

Lord Mark Stair and Lord Stair were at play in a coffee-house, when a stranger overlooked the game, and disturbed them with questions. Lord Mark said--'Let us throw dice to see which of us shall pink this impudent fellow.' Lord Stair won. The other exclaimed--'Ah! Stair, Stair! you have been always more fortunate in life than I.'

CAPTAIN ROCHE.

Captain Roche, alias Tyger, alias Savage Roche, who stuck his gaming companion's hand to the table with a fork for concealing a card under it, happened to be at the Bedford Billiard-table, which was extremely crowded. Roche was knocking the balls about with his cue, and Major Williamson, another celebrity, with whom he was engaged on business, desired him to leave off, as he hindered gentlemen from playing. 'Gentlemen?' sneeringly exclaimed Roche; 'why, major, except you and me (and two or three more) there is not a gentleman in the room--the rest are all blacklegs.'

On leaving the place, the major expressed his astonishment at his rudeness, and wondered, out of so numerous a company, it was not resented. 'Oh, sir,' said Roche, 'there was no fear of that; there was not a thief in the room who did not suppose himself one of "the two or three gentlemen" I mentioned.'

FARO AT ROUTS.

The following advertisement appeared in the Courier newspaper in 1794:--

'As Faro is the most fashionable circular game in the haut ton in exclusion of melancholy Whist, and to prevent a company being cantoned into separate parties, a gentleman of unexceptionable character will, on invitation, do himself the honour to attend the rout of any lady, nobleman, or gentleman, with a Faro Bank and Fund, adequate to the style of play, from 500 to 2000 guineas.

'Address, G. A., by letter, to be left at Mr Harding's, Piccadilly, nearly opposite Bond Street.

'N.B.--This advertisement will not appear again.'

PROSPECT OF L5200 PER ANNUM FROM A CAPITAL OF L2000.

The following advertisement appeared in the Morning Chronicle in 1817:--

'Any person who can command Two Thousand Pounds in ready money, may advance it in a speculation which will realize at least L100 per week, and perhaps not require the advance of above one half the money. The personal attendance of the party engaging is requisite; but there will be no occasion for articles of partnership, or any establishment, as the profits may be divided daily.'

OF WHAT TRADE IS A GAMING-HOUSE KEEPER?

At a Westminster election the keeper of a notorious gaming house in St Ann's parish was asked, as usual, what his trade was, when, after a little hesitation, he said, 'I am an ivory turner.'

THE GAME PLAYED IN THE COURT OF CHANCERY.

Mrs Law, executrix of George Law, late proprietor of the Smyrna Coffee House, St James's Street, in 1807, found, among her husband's papers, several notes and memoranda of money advanced to a Mr Nelthorpe, which she put in suit. The latter alleged that they were for gambling purposes, and called Mrs Law to say whether her husband did not keep a common gambling house; and his counsel contended that it was clear the notes were for gaming transactions, BECAUSE they were for 100 GUINEAS, 200 GUINEAS, and so on--disdaining the vulgar enumeration of pounds. But the lord chancellor said that THE GAME PLAYED IN THE COURT OF CHANCERY--as far as counsel was concerned--was for GUINEAS.

THE ORIGINAL OF A RECENT PROPOSAL.

Not long since an advertisement appeared, and was noticed by several of the papers, purporting to enable any person to realize a large fortune by a small advance to the advertiser. It will readily be seen that the following is the ORIGINAL of the scheme, put forth in the Morning Chronicle, in 1818:--

'Important Offer. A gentleman of respectability has discovered a method of winning at any game of chance, fairly and honourably, to a certainty, by a method hitherto unknown;--he will SELL THE SECRET for a consideration, or treat with a gentleman able to join him with a capital of L300, by which a fortune may be made; in either case he will engage with one person only. This will be found well worth the attention of a member of the superior clubs. **** No personal application will be answered.'

GAME AND GAMBLING.

A gentleman celebrated for his quickness at repartee, when informed that a young nobleman of his acquaintance (remarkably fond of a fashionable game) had shot an immense number of RED partridges, and also of the BLACK game, which abounded on his estates, replied--'I am not in the least surprised; he was at all times, EVEN WHEN IN LONDON, devotedly attached to the GAME OF ROUGE ET NOIR.'

CATCHING A TARTAR.

'My skill at billiards,' says a confessing gamester, 'gave me a superiority over most I met with. I could also hide my skill very dexterously, which is generally found a work of great difficulty, and judiciously winning or losing, I contrived to make it answer my purpose,--until one day, going to a table which I was very much in the practice of frequenting, and where no one was then engaged, I was invited by a stranger to play. I accepted the invitation for a small stake, and won very easily, so much so, that on commencing a new game I offered to give him six, to place us more on an equality. He accepted it eagerly, but it produced him no benefit; he played so badly, and managed both his cue and mace so awkwardly--for I made no objection to his changing them as often as he pleased--that, playing very carelessly, I could not avoid beating him. We continued increasing the stakes every successive game; money seemed of no value to him; he appeared to have plenty, and lost it with a spirit that told me I had got hold of an excellent subject, who could pay me well for beating him. I did not wish to win too palpably, and therefore kept increasing the advantage I yielded him, till it amounted to sixteen. He now proposed making the bet ONE HUNDRED POUNDS, and that I should give him eighteen. His eagerness, as well as the manner in which he handled his tools, convinced me of his inexperience, and I accepted the proposal;--but, to my surprise, he won the game. He laughed so heartily at the event, and conducted himself so extravagantly, that I felt persuaded the thing was accidental. He proposed doubling the stakes, which I refused; yet I agreed to play him for the same sum as before, but giving him only fourteen. By some chance he won again; and then I declined playing any more; but he pushed me so hard, and offered to play the even game rather than I should give over, that I was induced to yield. He declared he did not want my money, and wished to give me an opportunity of recovering it. It was the depth of artifice, and I discovered it too late. He won . . . and I had no money to pay! One of the bystanders took part with him; my case did not invite or interest any one to stand by me. I was treated with great indignity; and though I gave up my watch and every article of value I possessed, yet I was not allowed to depart without very ill usage. I had transgressed the laws of gaming, by betting after I had ceased to be able to pay; but I had so confidently felt that I had my antagonist in my own power, that I considered the stake as my own as soon as the bet was made. The injuries I received were very severe, and confined me to my bed for several days.'

[32]

[32] Confessions of a Gamester.

The splendid and fascinating game of Billiards seems to have been an English invention; and it became greatly in vogue during the reign of Louis XIV. of France, to whom it was recommended by his physicians as an exercise after meals.

It is said that Chamillard, who played with the king, entirely owed his political fortune to the skill which he displayed in this game. Billiards has not as yet been placed, like skittles

and bowls, under the interdict of the police authorities, and it is difficult to see how they could venture upon so tremendous an experiment. The game seems to be more in vogue than ever, and doubtless heavy sums are lost and won at it. Billiard matches have during the last three years become quite one of the winter exhibitions, and particularly this season have the public shown their taste for the game. Perhaps the extraordinary performances of some of the first-class cueists have stirred up the shades of Kentfield's days, his homely game of cannons off list cushions and gently-played strength strokes; or by chance those that favour Marden's style, his losing hazards and forcing half balls, have revived once more, and we yearn with wonder to see the great spot strokes of the present age, when as many red hazards can be scored in one break as were made in olden times in an evening's play. At the present time Roberts, sen., may claim the honour in the billiard world of having brought the spot stroke to light: he has made no less than 104 consecutive hazards in one break, and up to the present winter that wonderful performance stood unparalleled. Cook, however, very recently in an exhibition match with J. Bennett, scored the spot hazard no less than 119 times, making 388 off the balls, the biggest break on record. Such feats as these, supplemented by the but little inferior play of Roberts, jun., and Bennett, have done more than excite surprise, and have caused old heads carefully to look into the style of play of 1869 and to ponder thereon. It appears that they affirm, and not without reason, that much of the success of the spot stroke arises from the position of the spot being further from the top cushion than formerly, and by this means not only is the angle of the striker's ball for position made easier, by a greater scope for screw or side, but the mouth of the pockets themselves are easier of access; and the chance of a wobble all but avoided. Billiard players and table makers should meet and arrange a regular standard size for table pockets and balls, with the spots at regulated positions. We should then be able to compare merits with greater certainty, and such terrible scores would not trouble the markers.

As a healthful exercise, and in its tendency to promote the physical development of the body, the game of Billiards is unsurpassed; but it is much to be regretted that it is generally-played in ill-ventilated and crowded rooms, often reeking with the pestilential fumes of tobacco, and not without the adjunct of frequent alcoholic potations. Moreover, there can be no doubt that many modern instances of billiard sharpening occur, such as I have just quoted, in which the unwary are unscrupulously 'fleeced.' I know of several.

'NOT KNOWING YOUR MAN.'

A certain high military character sat down to play with a Russian prince, who introduced loaded dice. The travelled Englishman lost every bet; for the Russian never missed his seven or eleven, and modestly threw only ten times. The supposed pigeon then took up the box with fair dice; and, having learned to 'secure,'[33] called different mains at pleasure; threw sixteen times; won all the aristocrat's money, and wished him good night. Such is the effect of not knowing your man!

[33] This term means making sure of what you throw.

A BLIND GAMESTER.

John Metcalfe, much better known by the nickname of blind Jack of Knaresborough, was a celebrity at Harrowgate during the first quarter of the present century. This extraordinary man had been deprived of his eyesight at so early a period that he retained no idea of either light or vision; but his remaining faculties were so actively employed that few persons in the full enjoyment of sight have surpassed him in the execution of undertakings, which seemed particularly to require the exercise of that faculty. He traversed the neighbourhood without a guide or companion; surveyed tracts of country to plan and lay down roads, where none had ever been before; contracted for the building of bridges, and fulfilled his contracts without the assistance of another person, either as architect or superintendent of the work; became a guide to those who, possessing sight, could not find their way across the neighbouring moors when covered with deep falls of snow and impenetrable fogs; rode well, and followed the hounds with a zeal and spirit equal to that of the most dashing horseman in the field, and, finally, played at many games of chance, or skill, with a knowledge and ingenuity that enabled him to come off victorious in many contests with persons eager to try his ability or to prove their own.

Such a man was sure to attract notice in any place or neighbourhood, but particularly at a place of general resort. Besides, he possessed a facetious mode of talking, and on several occasions exercised a practical sort of wit, which was equally certain of gaining patronage. Visitors of the highest rank treated him with kindness, and even familiarity; and as he never forgot himself, or trespassed upon those who thus favoured him, he continued in fashion as long as he lived, and terminated his singular career at more than 80 years of age.

Among his many exploits was the following. Various trials of his skill and activity were proposed by gentlemen who offered to support their opinions with their money. But Metcalfe had a determination of his own, and refused taking a share in any of the ingenious proposals urged upon him, until a country squire, the Nimrod of a neighbouring district, submitted a plan which he expected would baffle all his manoeuvres. He asked the blind man if he was willing to run 100 yards against his favourite mare. The offer was immediately accepted--provided he might CHOOSE THE GROUND, which should be an open space on the adjoining moor. The stakes were deposited the same evening; and a fine level space being selected, and the distance marked out with great exactness early the following morning, the decision followed with little delay. The party selected to ride against the blind man was much admired for his horsemanship; and at the appointed time, every preparation being completed, the signal was given and the race commenced. The horseman was instantly far ahead, but before he could finish his stipulated distance the fore feet of his hunter sank deep in a bog, from which, being unable to extricate them, he came completely over, treating his rider with a tremendous somerset. The loud shouts of the spectators announced to the

blind man that his expectations were realized. The turf showed no apparent difference, and was sufficiently strong to carry a man with safety,--perhaps it would have borne a horse going only at a moderate pace, but at full speed his feet pierced the sod, and entangled him in the hidden danger. Metcalfe passed his extended rival, terminated his career, and won the race before those who had run to the prostrate horseman could render him any assistance. Indeed, it was too late for that purpose, he had finished his earthly course having ruptured a vessel near the heart in his fall!

A NOBLE LORD AND A COMMONER, IN 1823.

A young and wealthy commoner, who seemed to vie with the pea-green in the desperate folly of getting rid of a suddenly obtained fortune of L130,000 in ready money, as fast as possible, and whose relish for the society of legs, bullies, and fighting men was equally notorious, went to the Fishmonger's Hall Club late one morning, much flushed with wine. The well-lighted avenues directed him to the French Hazard table. There was no play going on at the time, but at the entrance of this PIGEON, who before had been DRAWN of a good round sum, the box and dice were soon put in motion, and 'seven's the main, seven,' was promptly the cry. A certain noble lord, who had been for years an experienced NURSE of the dice, and who knew how to NICK the MAINS or THROW CRABS, as well as the best leg in England, held the bow. The commoner commenced by backing the noble lord IN. The noble lord threw OUT. He then backed the noble lord OUT, and the noble lord threw in. He backed the noble lord OUT again, who threw five to the main. The commoner betted the odds deeply at the rate of three to two. The noble lord threw the FIVE. The commoner, uneasy, changed about, and backed the noble lord IN for a large stake,--the noble lord then threw OUT. The commoner now rose in a rage, and insinuated broadly that he was cheated, robbed, and it could not be fair play. Of course much indignation was shown by the noble lord, and it was with difficulty that a fight was prevented; but his lordship, nevertheless, condescended to demonstrate that he played his own money at the time, and what he lost found its way into the bank, with which 'he was not at all connected.' This reasoning satisfied the suspicious young commoner (poor easy man!); an apology was given; and peace was restored.

DIAMOND CUT DIAMOND.

A party of players were assembled to throw for a stake, which was enormous. It was, however, agreed that the LOWEST throw should win. The players threw until one of them turned up two aces. All but one had thrown, and shouts of applause greeted the lucky caster, when the last who was to throw exclaimed--'Hold! I'll try and beat that.' . . .

Rattling the dice, he turned down the box on the table, and on lifting it up displayed the two dice ONE UPON THE TOP OF THE OTHER, and both aces! He was therefore declared the winner.[34]

[34] Menageana.

A TENDER MOTHER.

A French lady had an only child, a handsome young man, much addicted to gaming. He lost at one sitting £40,000, and being destitute of other resources, he joined a company of strolling players. They chanced some time afterwards to pass a short time at Worcester, near which his mother, who was considerably advanced in years, resided. The lady, though highly displeased with her son's life, yet, hearing of his performance, could not resist a wish to see him; and for this purpose she went thither incog. He supported the principal character in 'The Gamester.'

The feelings of the mother were so excited at the passages which closely applied to her son's conduct, that she exclaimed aloud, 'Ay, there he is--the--the beggar--the scoundrel! Always the same--no change in him!' The delusion so increased at the fifth act, when Beverley lifts his hand to kill the child, that the lady in a most distressing tone cried out--'Wretch that thou art, don't kill the child--I'll take it home with me!'

TWO MASTERS OF THE ART.

A Frenchman who had become notorious for the unerring certainty with which he won from all who ventured to play with him, at length found himself unable to induce persons to sit down to the table with him, there being not the slightest chance of winning against his play. After being thus idle for some time, an Englishman, who had heard of his triumphs, expressed his readiness to enter the lists against him. They sat down, and played for three hours without intermission, and at the end of that time were exactly in the same position as when they began. They at length paused to take some refreshment. 'Sare,' said the Frenchman, in a sort of whisper, to a party who accompanied his antagonist, 'your friend is a very clever man at de cards--deuced clever, sare.' 'He is a very clever fellow,' observed the Englishman. 'I shall try him again,' said Monsieur; and as he made the observation he proceeded to the room in which they had been playing, and which was fixed on as the scene of their continued contest. He had scarcely quitted the place when the other made his appearance, and observed that the Frenchman was the most skilful player he had ever met with. The parties again met, and the cards were again produced. The game was renewed at eleven o'clock, and continued without intermission till six o'clock on the following morning, at which time they found, to the surprise of each other, that they were still as they began. 'Sare,' said the Frenchman, 'you are the best player I ever met with.' 'And you, Monsieur,' returned the other, 'are the only gentleman I ever played with, from whom I could win nothing.' 'Indeed, sare!' said Monsieur, hesitatingly. 'It is a fact, I assure you.' 'Sare, I am quite astonished at your skill.' 'And I'm not less so at yours, Monsieur.' 'You're de most skilfullest man at de cards in England.' 'Not while you are in it, Monsieur,' replied the Englishman, with a smile. 'Sare, I CHEATED, and yet could not win from you!' remarked the Frenchman, hurriedly and with much emphasis, feeling it impossible any longer to conceal his surprise at the circumstance of being unable to play a winning game with the Englishman. 'And,

Monsieur, I did the same thing with you, and yet you are no loser!' remarked the other, with corresponding energy of tone.

The problem was thus solved: both had been cheating during the whole night, and were exactly equal in dexterity, both being unconscious of the dishonest practices of each other; and the result was that each got up from the table with the same amount of money as he had when he sat down. The cheats cordially shook hands, apparently much gratified that they had at length ascertained how it had happened that neither could pluck the other.

CHAPTER VI.

THE GAMING CLUBS.

On the subject of Clubs Mr Cunningham in his 'Clubs of London,' and Mr Timbs in his 'Club Life in London,' have said pretty well everything that we want to know, and by their help, and that of other writers, I shall endeavour to give an account of the gambling carried on in such places.

1. ALMACK'S.

'The gaming at Almack's,' writes Walpole to Horace Mann, 'which has taken the pas of White's, is worthy of the decline of our empire, or commonwealth, which you please. The young men of the age lose ten, fifteen, twenty thousand pounds in an evening there. Lord Stavordale, not one-and-twenty, lost L11,000 there last Tuesday, but recovered it by one great hand at Hazard. He swore a great oath--"Now, if I had been playing DEEP I might have won millions!" His cousin, Charles Fox, shines equally here and in the House of Commons.'

Among the rules of the establishment, it was ordered 'that every person playing at the twenty-guinea table do not keep less than twenty guineas before him,' and 'that every person playing at the new guinea table do keep fifty guineas before him.' That the play ran high may be inferred from a note against the name of Mr Thynne, in the Club-books:--'Mr Thynne having won ONLY 12,000 guineas during the last two months, retired in disgust, March 21st, 1772.' Indeed, the play was unusually high--for rouleaus of L50 each, and generally there was L10,000 in specie on the table. The gamesters began by pulling off their embroidered clothes, and putting on frieze great coats, or turned their coats inside out for luck! They put on pieces of leather (such as are worn by footmen when they clean knives) to save their laced ruffles; and to guard their eyes from the light, and to keep their hair in order, wore high-crowned straw hats with broad brims adorned with flowers and ribbons; they also wore masks to conceal their emotions when they played at quinz.[35] Each gamester had a small neat stand by him, to hold his tea, or a wooden bowl with an edge of ormolu, to hold the rouleaus of guineas.

[35] Quinze, the French for fifteen. This is a game at cards, in which the winner is he who counts fifteen, or nearest to that

number, in all the points of his hand. Three, five, or six might play at it. Two entire packs of cards are used, so disposed that the spades and clubs are on one side, and the hearts and diamonds on the other. The entire art of the game consists in making fifteen; below that number the party loses.

2. THE COCOA-TREE CLUB.

This club was remarkable for high if not for foul play. Walpole, writing to Horace Mann in 1780, says:--'Within this week there has been a cast at Hazard at the Cocoa-tree (in St James's Street) the difference of which amounted to one hundred and fourscore thousand pounds! Mr O'Birne, an Irish gamester, had won one hundred thousand pounds of a young Mr Harvey of Chigwell, just started into an estate by his elder brother's death. O'Birne said,--"You can never pay me." "I can," said the youth, "my estate will sell for the debt." "No," said O'Birne, "I will win ten thousand,--you shall throw for the odd ninety." They did, and Harvey won!'

3. GRAHAM'S CLUB.

This gaming club is remarkable for a scandal which made some noise at the time of its occurrence, and one version of which a writer in the Times has been at some pains to rectify. In Mr Duncombe's 'Life' of his father occurs the following account of this curious transaction.

'In Graham's Club there was also a good deal of play, and large sums were lost and won among the noblemen and gentlemen who were its members. An unpleasant rumour circulated in town in the winter of 1836, to the effect that a noble lord had been detected in cheating by means of marked cards. The presumed offender was well known in society as a skilful card-player, but by those who had been most intimate with him was considered incapable of any unfair practice. He was abroad when the scandal was set afloat, but returned to England directly he heard of it, and having traced the accusation to its source, defied his traducers. Thus challenged, they had no alternative but to support their allegation, and it took this shape:--They accused Henry William Lord de Ros of marking the edges of the court cards with his thumb-nail, as well as of performing a certain trick by which he unfairly secured an ace as the turn-up card. His accusers were ---- ----, who had formerly kept a gaming table; Mr ---- ----, also a professional gambler; Lord Henry Bentinck, and Mr F. Cumming. Lord Henry appears to have taken no very active part in the proceedings; the other three had lost money in play with Lord de Ros, and, as unsuccessful gamblers have done before and since, considered that they had lost it unfairly.

'Lord de Ros, instead of prosecuting the four for a libel, brought an action only against Cumming, which permitted the others to come forward as witnesses against him. The cause came on in the Court of King's Bench before Lord Denman. The plaintiff's witnesses were Lord Wharncliffe, Lord Robert Grosvenor, the Earl of Clare, and Sir Charles Dalbiac, who had known and played with him from between 20 to 30 years, as a very skilful but honourable Whist player. The evidence of Mr

Lawrence, the eminent surgeon, proved that Lord de Ros had long suffered under a stiffness of the joints of the fingers that made holding a pack of cards difficult, and the performance of the imputed trick of legerdemain impossible. For the defence appeared the keeper of the house and his son; two or three gamblers who had lived by their winnings; one acknowledged to have won £35,000 in 15 years. Mr Baring Wall, one of the witnesses, swore that he had never witnessed anything improper in the play of Lord de Ros, though he had played with and against him many years; another witness, the Hon. Colonel Anson, had observed nothing suspicious; but the testimony of others went to prove that the aces and kings had been marked inside their edges; and one averred that he had seen Lord de Ros perform sauter la coupe a hundred times. The whole case wore much the look of a combination among a little coterie who lived by gambling to drive from the field a player whose skill had diminished their income; nevertheless, the incidents sworn to by some of them wore a suspicious significance, and a verdict was given against Lord de Ros, which he only survived a short time.'

On this statement the Times' reviewer comments as follows:--

'If many old scandals may be revived with impunity, there are some that cannot. Mr Duncombe the younger has hit on one which affects several gentlemen still living, and his injurious version of it cannot be neutralized or atoned for by an apology to one. We call attention to it in the hope that any more serious notice will be rendered needless by the simple exposure of its inaccuracies.

'It is difficult to conceive a more inexcusable misstatement, for the case was fully reported,[36] and the public judgment perfectly coincided with the verdict. Lord de Ros was not abroad when the scandal was set afloat. He went abroad after the scene at Graham's had set all London talking, and he returned in consequence of a peremptory call from his friends. He was most reluctantly induced to take the required steps for the vindication of his character; and it is preposterous to suppose that any little coterie would have dreamt of accusing a man of his rank and position with the view of driving a skilful player from the field. His accusers were not challenged. Neither were they volunteers. They became his accusers, because they formed the Whist party at which he was first openly denounced. They signed a paper particularizing their charge, and offered to refer the question to a tribunal of gentlemen, with the Duke of Wellington or Lord Wharnccliffe to preside. Would a little coterie, who lived by gambling, have made this offer? Or would Lord de Ros have refused it if he had been the intended victim of a conspiracy? Lord Henry Bentinck signed the paper, appeared as a witness, and took quite as active a part in the proceedings as any of the four, except Mr Cumming, who undertook the sole legal liability by admitting the publication of the paper.

[36] The Times of February 11 and 13, 1837.

'The evidence was overwhelming. Suspicions had long been rife; and on no less than ten or twelve occasions the marked packs had

been examined in the presence of unimpeachable witnesses, and sealed up. These packs were produced at the trial. Several witnesses swore to the trick called sauter la coupe. It was the late Sir William Ingilby who swore that he had seen Lord de Ros perform it from 50 to 100 times; and when asked why he did not at once denounce him, he replied that if he had done so before his Lordship began to get blown upon, he should have had no alternative between the window and the door. Of course, every one who had been in the habit of playing with Lord de Ros prior to the exposure would have said the same as Sir Charles Dalbiac and Mr Baring Wall. With regard to the gentlemen whose names we have omitted we take it for granted that the author is not aware of the position they held, and continue to hold, or he would hardly have ventured to describe them so offensively. He has apologized to one, and he had better apologize to the other without delay.

'The case was complete without the evidence of either of the original accusers, and the few friends of Lord de Ros who tried to bear him up against the resulting obloquy were obliged to go with the stream. When Lord Alvanley was asked whether he meant to leave his card, he replied, "No, he will stick it in his chimney-piece and count it among his honours.' "

Having read through the long case as reported in the Times, I must declare that I do not find that the evidence against Lord de Ros was, after all, so 'overwhelming' as the reviewer declares; indeed, the 'leader' in the Times on the trial emphatically raises a doubt on the subject. Among other passages in it there is the following:--

'In the process of the trial it appeared that the most material part of the evidence against Lord de Ros, that called sauter la coupe,--which, for the sake of our English readers we shall translate into CHANGING THE TURN-UP CARD,--the times and places at which it was said to have been done could not be specified. Some of the witnesses had seen the trick done 50 or 100 times by Lord de Ros, but could neither say on what day, in what week, month, or even year, they had so seen it done. People were excessively struck at this deviation from the extreme punctuality required in criminal cases by the British courts of law.'

'The disclosures,' says Mr Grant,[27] 'which took place in the Court of Queen's Bench, on the occasion of the trial of Lord de Ros, for cheating at cards, furnished the strongest demonstration that he was not the only person who was in the habit of cheating in certain clubs; while there were others who, if they could not be charged with direct cheating, or cheating in their own persons, did cheat indirectly, and by proxy, inasmuch as they, by their own admission, were, on frequent occasions, partners with Lord de Ros, long after they knew that he habitually or systematically cheated. The noble lord, by the confession of the titled parties to whom I allude, thus cheated for himself and them at the same time.'

[37] Sketches in London.

Lord de Ros was at the head of the barons of England. He was the son of Lord Henry Fitzgerald, and Lady de Ros, who inherited in her own right that ancient title, which dates from the reign of Henry III. He had studied at Eton and Oxford, and afterwards on the Continent, and there was not a more accomplished man in Europe. He possessed an ample fortune, was a member of several of the clubs--White's, Boodle's, Brookes', and Graham's, and one of the best Whist players in England.

It appears that at Graham's Club, at the commencement of the season, and before Lord de Ros came to town, whispers were circulated of unfair play, and various persons were supposed guilty. A determination was therefore formed that the club should be dissolved and reconstructed, leaving out the names of certain persons to whom suspicion attached. The main object of the master of the club, and of some of those who attended it for the purpose of professional gain, was that its character should be cleared. Not long after Lord de Ros came to town he received an anonymous letter, cautioning him against continuing to play at Graham's, and intimating to him, if he did so, that measures would be taken which he would have reason to regret. Of course his Lordship disregarded the threat; he attended the club for several days more assiduously than before, and continued to play until the end of the season, in the beginning of July. In September the Satirist newspaper published a distinct charge of unfair play against Lord de Ros, whilst the latter was at Baden, and he returned to England and commenced an action for libel against the newspaper.

He was charged with being in the habit of marking the cards, the effect being to create a very slight and almost imperceptible indentation, and to make a ridge or wave on the back, so that a practised eye would be able, on looking at the right place, knowing where to expect a mark, to discern whether the ace was there or not. He was also charged with cheating by reversing the cut--that is, when the cards had come to him, after having been cut by his adversary, instead of putting the bottom card at the top, keeping the bottom card at the bottom, by some shuffling contrivance when he dealt. Another witness said:--

"When he took up the two parcels of cards, after the operation of cutting the pack by his right-hand adversary, he was always attacked with a hacking cough, or what I may properly denominate, especially from the result it produced, a 'king cough,' because a king or an ace was invariably its effect. The cough always came on at the most convenient moment to distract the attention of the other players, and was evidently indulged in for the purpose of abstracting their attention from the table and from the manoeuvre he was about to perform. However, I never saw him "slip the card," and I never had cognizance of its execution, but certain it was that the ace or the king, which was at the bottom of the pack prior to the cut, invariably found its way to the same position after the cut, and hence was the turn-up card. With regard to the operation of dealing, his Lordship delivered the cards particularly slow, examining every card minutely towards its corners, as if looking for some mark.'

Many curious facts came out during the trial.

It was Mr Brooke Greville who admitted that he was a considerable winner at play--having 'no hesitation in saying that he had won L35,000 in the course of 15 years,' chiefly at Whist; that he had followed play as an occupation, at Graham's Club. He lost, however, L14,000 at Brighton in 1828, a considerable portion of it to Lord de Ros; but this loss he made up in three or four years (that is, won L14,000 in that time), and, excepting that reverse, he was generally fortunate at play.'

A Captain J. Alexander, half-pay R. N., declared that he had won as much as L700 at a time, having, however, to pay half to another partner; his winnings might be L1600 a-year. 'I began to play,' he said, 'about 25 or 28 years ago, and, expecting that I should be asked the question, I have looked into my accounts, and find that I am about L10,000 better than as though I had not played. That is a yearly average of L500.' He had, however, lost about L1000 during the previous year.

This Captain Alexander was asked how many hours he played before dinner, and he answered--'From three to five hours'--adding, however, that 'he HAD played ALL NIGHT.' Then the counsel said, 'I suppose you take but a slight dinner?' He replied:--

'Why, I generally make as good a dinner as I can get.' The learned counsel continued:--

'A small boiled chicken and a glass of lemonade, perhaps?' This seemed an offensive question, and the captain said,--

'I believe never, and (with increased earnestness of manner) mind, I DENY THE LEMONADE ALTOGETHER; I never take lemonade. (Laughter, in which the noble lords on the bench joined involuntarily.)

Sir W. Ingilby entered into a description and practical illustration of the trick of sauter la coupe with a pack of cards, and it is said that the performance of the honourable baronet elicited demonstrations of laughter, which the judge suppressed, and even REPROBATED. Altogether, it must have been a most interesting and exciting trial.

As before stated, Lord Denman was the presiding judge; there was a special jury; the attorney-general, Sir W. Follet, and Mr Wightman appeared for the noble plaintiff; and the keen-witted and exquisitely polished Mr Thesiger (now Lord Cholmondeley), Mr Alexander, and Mr W. H. Watson for the defendant. A great many of the nobility were present, together with several foreigners of distinction.

4. BROOKES' CLUB, IN ST JAMES'S STREET.

This was a house notorious for very high gaming, and was frequented by the most desperate of gamblers, among the rest Fox, Brummell, and Alderman Combe. According to Captain Gronow:--

At Brookes's, for nearly half a century, the play was of a more gambling character than at White's. . . . On one occasion Lord

Robert Spencer contrived to lose the last shilling of his considerable fortune given him by his brother, the Duke of Marlborough. General Fitzpatrick being much in the same condition, they agreed to raise a sum of money, in order that they might keep a Faro bank. The members of the club made no objection, and ere long they carried out their design. As is generally the case, the bank was a winner, and Lord Robert bagged, as his share of the proceeds, £100,000. He retired, strange to say, from the fetid atmosphere of play, with the money in his pocket, and never again gambled. The lowest stake at Brookes' was £50; and it was a common event for a gentleman to lose or win £10,000 in an evening. Sometimes a whole fortune was lost at a single sitting.[38]

[38] Walpole, *passim*.

5. WHITE'S CLUB.

White's Club seems to have won the darkest reputation for gambling. Lord Lyttleton, writing to Dr Doddridge, in 1750, says:--'The Dryads of Hogley are at present pretty secure, but I tremble to think that the rattling of a dice-box at White's may one day or other (if my son should be a member of that noble academy) shake down all our fine oaks. It is dreadful to see, not only there, but almost in every house in the town, what devastations are made by that destructive fury, the spirit of play.' A fact stated by Walpole to Horace Mann shows the character of the company at this establishment:--'There is a man about town, Sir William Burdett, a man of very good family, but most infamous character. In short, to give you his character at once--there is a wager in the bet-book at White's (a MS. of which I may one day or other give you an account), that the first baronet that will be hanged is this Sir William Burdett.' Swift says:--'I have heard that the late Earl of Oxford, in the time of his ministry, never passed by White's chocolate-house (the common rendezvous of infamous sharpers and noble cullies) without bestowing a curse upon that famous academy as the bane of half the English nobility.'

It was from the beginning a gaming club, 'pure and simple.' The play was mostly at Hazard and Faro. No member was to hold a Faro bank. Whist was comparatively harmless. Professional gamblers, who lived by dice and cards, provided they were free from the imputation of cheating, procured admission to White's. It was a great supper-house, and there was play before and after supper, carried on to a late hour and to heavy amounts.

At White's they betted on every possible thing, as shown by the betting-book of the establishment--on births, deaths, and marriages; the length of a life; the duration of a ministry; a placeman's prospect of a coronet; the last scandal at Ranelagh or Madame Cornely's; or the shock of an earthquake! 'A man dropped down at the door of White's; he was carried into the house. Was he dead or not? The odds were immediately given and taken for and against. It was proposed to bleed him. Those who had taken the odds that the man was dead protested that the use of a lancet would affect the fairness of the bet.' I have met with a similar

anecdote elsewhere. A waiter in a tavern in Westminster, being engaged in attendance on some young men of distinction, suddenly fell down in a fit. Bets were immediately proposed by some of the most thoughtless on his recovery, and accepted by others. The more humane part of the company were for sending immediately for medical assistance, but this was overruled; since, by the tenor of the bets, he was to be 'left to himself,' and he died accordingly!

According to Walpole--'A person coming into the club on the morning of the earthquake, in 1750, and hearing bets laid whether the shock was caused by an earthquake or the blowing up of powder-mills, went away in horror, protesting they were such an impious set that he believed if the last trump were to sound they would bet puppet-show against Judgment.'

And again: 'One of the youths at White's, in 1744, has committed a murder, and intends to repeat it. He betted L1500 that a man could live twelve hours under water; hired a desperate fellow, sunk him in a ship, by way of experiment, and both ship and man have not appeared since. Another man and ship are to be tried for their lives instead of Mr Blake, the assassin.'

He also tells us of a very curious entry in the betting-book. Lord Mountford bets Sir John Bland twenty guineas that Nash outlives Cibber.' 'How odd,' says Walpole, 'that these two old creatures, selected for their antiquities, should live to see both their wagers put an end to their own lives! Cibber is within a few days of eighty-four, still hearty, and clear, and well. I told him I was glad to see him look so well. "Faith," said he, "it is very well that I look at all." Lord Mountford would have been the winner: Cibber died in 1757, Nash in 1761.'

Hogarth's scene at the gambling house is taken at White's. 'We see the highwayman, with his pistols peeping out of his pocket, waiting by the fireside till the heaviest winner takes his departure, in order to "recoup" himself for his losings; and in the Beaux' Stratagem, Aimwell asks of Gibbet--"Ha'n't I seen your face at White's?" "Ay, and at Will's too," is the highwayman's answer.'

According to Captain Gronow, George Harley Drummond, of the famous banking-house, Charing Cross, only played once in his whole life at White's Club, at Whist, on which occasion he lost L20,000 to Brummell. This even caused him to retire from the banking-house, of which he was a partner.

'Walpole and a party of friends (Dick Edgumbe, George Selwyn, and Williams), in 1756, composed a piece of heraldic satire--a coat of arms for the two gaming clubs at White's--which was "actually engraven from a very pretty painting of Edgumbe, whom Mr Chute, as Strawberry King at Arms," appointed their chief herald-painter. The blazon is vert (for a card-table); three parols proper on a chevron sable (for a Hazard table); two rouleaux in saltire between two dice proper, on a canton sable; a white ball (for election) argent. The supporters are an old and young knave of clubs; the crest, an arm out of an earl's coronet shaking a dice-box; and the motto, Cogit amor nummi--"The love of

money compels." Round the arms is a claret-bottle ticket by way of order.'

6. WATTIER'S CLUB.

This great Macao gaming house was of short duration. Mr Raikes says of it:--'The club did not endure for twelve years altogether; the pace was too quick to last; it died a natural death in 1819, from the paralyzed state of its members. The house was then taken by a set of blacklegs, who instituted a common bank of gambling. To form an idea of the ruin produced by this short-lived establishment among men whom I have so intimately known, a cursory glance to the past suggests the following melancholy list, which only forms a part of its deplorable results: none of the dead reached the average age of man.' Among the members were Beau Brummell and the madman Bligh.

7. CROCKFORD'S CLUB.

This once celebrated gaming house is now 'The Wellington,' where the rattle of knives and forks has succeeded that of dice. It was erected in 1827, and at its opening it was described as 'the new Pandemonium--the drawing-rooms, or real hell, consisting of four chambers: the first an ante-room, opening to a saloon embellished to a degree which baffles description; thence to a small curiously-formed cabinet or boudoir, which opens to the supper-room. All these rooms are panelled in the most gorgeous manner; spaces are left to be filled up with mirrors and silk, or gold enrichments; while the ceilings are as superb as the walls. A billiard-room on the upper floor completes the number of apartments professedly dedicated to the use of the members. Whenever any secret manoeuvre is to be carried on, there are smaller and more retired places, both under this roof and the next, whose walls will tell no tales.'

'It rose,' says a writer in the Edinburgh Review, 'like a creation of Aladdin's lamp; and the genii themselves could hardly have surpassed the beauty of the internal decorations, or furnished a more accomplished maitre d'hotel than Ude. To make the company as select as possible, the establishment was regularly organized as a club, and the election of members vested in a committee. "Crockford's" became the rage, and the votaries of fashion, whether they like play or not, hastened to enroll themselves. The Duke of Wellington was an original member, though (unlike Blucher, who repeatedly lost everything he had at play) the great captain was never known to play deep at any game but war or politics. Card-tables were regularly placed, and Whist was played occasionally; but the aim, end, and final cause of the whole was the Hazard bank, at which the proprietor took his nightly stand, prepared for all comers. Le Wellington des Joueurs lost £23,000 at a sitting, beginning at twelve at night, and ending at seven the following evening. He and three other noblemen could not have lost less, sooner or later, than £100,000 a piece.[39] Others lost in proportion (or out of proportion) to their means; but we leave it to less occupied moralists and better calculators to say how many ruined families went to make Mr Crockford a MILLIONNAIRE--for a millionaire he was in the English sense of the term, after making the largest possible

allowance for bad debts. A vast sum, perhaps half a million, was sometimes due to him; but as he won, all his debtors were able to raise, and easy credit was the most fatal of his lures. He retired in 1840, much as an Indian chief retires from a hunting country when there is not game enough left for his tribe, and the club tottered to its fall.'

[39] 'Le Wellington des Joueurs was the name given to Lord Rivers in Paris. The other three, we believe, were Lord Sefton, Lord Chesterfield, and Lord Granville or Lord Talbot.' Times, 7 Jan. 1868.

Crockford was originally a FISHMONGER, keeping a shop near Temple Bar. By embarking in this speculation he laid the foundation of the most colossal fortune that was ever made by play.

It was said there were persons of rank and station, who had never paid their debts to Crockford, up to 1844, and that some of his creditors compounded with him for their gambling debts. His proprietorship had lasted 15 or 16 years.

Crockford himself was examined by the committee of the House of Commons on the Gaming Houses; but in spite of his assurance by the members that were indemnified witnesses in respect of pending actions, he resolutely declined to 'tell the secrets of his prison-house.' When asked whether a good deal of play was carried on at his club, he said:--'There may have been so; but I do not feel myself at liberty to answer that question--to DIVULGE THE PURSUITS OF PRIVATE GENTLEMEN. Situated as I was, I do not feel myself at liberty to do so. I do not feel myself at liberty to answer that question.'

When asked to whom he had given up the house, he fenced in like manner, saying that he had given it up to a 'committee' of about 200 gentlemen,--concerning which committee he professed to 'know absolutely nothing'--he could not even say to whom he had given up the house--he gave it up to the gentlemen of the club four years before--he could not even say (upon his word) whether he signed any paper in giving it up--he believed he did not--adding--'I said I grew too old, and I could not continue in the club any longer, and I wished to give up the club to the gentlemen, who made their own arrangement.'

Being asked, 'Do you think that a person is just as honourably bound to pay a debt which he loses upon a game of Hazard, as he would be to pay a bet which he loses on a horse-race?' Crockford replied--'I think most certainly he would honourably be bound to pay it.'--'Do you think that if the loser of a bet on a game at Hazard had no charge to make of any kind of unfairness, and he were to commence an action to recover that money back again, he would lay himself open to a charge in the world of having acted dishonourably?' The old gambler's reply was most emphatic, overwhelming, indignant--'I should take all the pains I could to avoid such a man.'

If this evidence was not satisfactory, it was, at any rate, very characteristic.

A few interesting facts came out before the parliamentary committee on Gaming, in 1844, respecting Crockford's.

It was said that Crockford gave up the business in 1840, because there were no more very high players visiting his house.

'A number of persons,' according to the admission of the Honourable Frederick Byng, 'who were born to very large properties, were very nearly ruined at Crockford's.'

The sums won on the turf were certainly larger than those won by players at Crockford's; a man might lose £20,000 in one or more bets, to one or more persons; but against this he might have won an equivalent amount in small sums from 200 or more persons.[40]

[40] This is not very clearly put, but the meaning is that much more money was lost at Crockford's than on the turf.

Some years previously to Crockford's retirement, it is said that he found the debts so bad that he was obliged to leave off his custom of paying cheques; and said he would cancel all previous debts, but that in future gentlemen would have to pay with money.

He made them play for money instead of with counters, in consequence of the large sums that were owing to him upon those counters.

8. THE TRAVELLERS' CLUB,

next the Athenseum in Pall Mall, originated soon after the peace of 1814, in a suggestion of the late Lord Londonderry, then Lord Castlereagh, for the resort of gentlemen who had resided or travelled abroad, as well as with a view to the accommodation of foreigners, who, when properly recommended, receive an invitation for the period of their stay.[41] Here Prince Talleyrand was fond of a game at Whist. With all the advantage of his great imperturbability of face, he is said to have been an indifferent player.

[41] Quarterly Review, No. cx. p. 481.

Rule 10 of the club directs, 'that no dice and no game of hazard be allowed in the rooms of the club, nor any higher stake than guinea points, and that no cards be introduced before dinner.'

CHAPTER VII.

DOINGS IN GAMING HOUSES.

Besides the aristocratic establishments just described, there were numerous houses or places of resort for gambling, genteel and ungentleel. In vain did the officers of the law seem to exert their utmost vigilance; if they drove the serpent out of one hole it soon glided into another; never was the proverb--'Where there's a will there's a way'--more strikingly fulfilled.

COFFEE-HOUSE SHARPERS.

Sir John Fielding thus describes the men in the year 1776. 'The deceivers of this denomination are generally descended from families of some repute, have had the groundwork of a genteel education, and are capable of making a tolerable appearance. Having been equally profuse of their own substance and character, and learnt, by having been undone, the ways of undoing, they lie in wait for those who have more wealth and less knowledge of the town. By joining you in discourse, by admiring what you say, by an officiousness to wait upon you, and to assist you in anything you want to have or know, they insinuate themselves into the company and acquaintance of strangers, whom they watch every opportunity of fleecing. And if one finds in you the least inclination to cards, dice, the billiard table, bowling-green, or any other sort of Gaming, you are morally sure of being taken in.

For this set of gentry are adepts in all the arts of knavery and tricking. If, therefore, you should observe a person, without any previous acquaintance, paying you extraordinary marks of civility; if he puts in for a share of your conversation with a pretended air of deference; if he tenders his assistance, courts your acquaintance, and would be suddenly thought your friend, avoid him as a pest; for these are the usual baits by which the unwary are caught.'[42]

[42] The Magistrate: Description of London and Westminster.

In 1792, Mr Br--gh--n, the son of a baronet, one day at a billiard-table in St James's Street, won L7000 from a Mr B--, but the latter, at the close of the day, recovered the loss, and won L15,000 more. Payment was thus arranged--L5000 on the death of the father of the former, and L10,000 secured by a reversionary annuity, to commence on the father's decease, on the life of the Duc de Pienne, between whom and B-- a previous gaming account existed.

In 1794, Mr ---- was a billiard player of the first class, ranking with Brenton, Phillips, Orrel, and Captain Wallis, who were the leaders of the day in this noble game of skill, tact, and discretion.[43] Having accidentally sported his abilities with two other players, he was marked as a 'pigeon' whom every preparation was made for 'plucking.' Captain Cates, of Covent Garden celebrity, was pitted against him at the coffee-room billiard-table, during Epsom races, to play 21 games, for two guineas each game, and five guineas the odds. Mr ---- won 13 games to eight from his veteran opponent, who was invariably backed by the leading sportingmen of the day, whilst the company at large were casually the adherents of Mr ----.

[43] The game of Chess may be played in application of the principles of Strategy; the game of Billiards in application of Tactics; indeed, all man's favourite diversions and pastimes most significantly relate to war--which has been called his natural state--exemplifying always either the brute-force that crushes, the skill that foils, the stratagem that surprises, or the ruse

that deceives; and such is war to all intents and purposes. The philosophic diversions of science also come in and lend their aid in the game of war--the pastime of heroes and the necessary defence of nations.

The match was renewed at the ensuing Ascot meeting, at the rooms of the celebrated Simson, so much frequented by the Etonians--where Mr ---- again obtained the victory, by 36 games to 17. Immense sums were sported on these occasions.

Mr ---- resided at Windsor, and was surprised by a message on the Sunday evening preceding the Winchester races, purporting that a gentleman wished to see him on very particular business. It proved to be a request to play a match at Billiards during the races at Winchester, for which the parties offered 10 guineas for the journey. But it was explained to him that the match was of a particular kind, and must be played in a PARTICULAR way-- either to WIN or LOSE--so that those concerned might be sure of winning upon the whole, let the match terminate how it would! . . .

This villainous proposal being made without the presence of a third person, Mr ---- indignantly rejected it, instantly left the room, and communicated the facts for the protection of the unwary against a set of desperate sharpers.

MILLER'S GAMING HOUSE.

In 1796, one Thomas Miller was indicted for keeping a gaming house; and wished to have the matter settled summarily by admitting conviction; but Lord Kenyon, the presiding judge, chose to have evidence brought forward. John Shepherd, an attorney of the King's Bench, who had himself been plundered, stated that he was at the defendant's, Leicester Street, on a certain night, and saw Hazard played. Sometimes L20 or L30 depended on a throw. One morning between three and four o'clock, a gentleman came in much intoxicated. He had a great deal of money about him. Miller said--'I did not mean to play; but now I'll set to with this fellow.' Miller scraped a little wax with his finger off one of the candles, and put the dice together, so that they came seven every way. Seven was the main, and he could not throw anything but seven. A dispute arose, and the persons at the table gave it in Miller's favour. The young man said he had lost about L70. Miller observed--'We have cleaned him.' If the attorney had remarked on this at the time, they would have broken his head, or thrown him out of the window.

He had often seen men pawn their watches and rings to Miller, and once a man actually pawned his coat, and went away without it! When articles were offered to be pawned, Liston, who was a partner in the concern, said--'I don't understand the value of these things well,' and he would then call Miller.[44]

[44] Even at the present day it is said that other 'articles' besides 'valuables' are 'left' with the marker at billiards 'for a consideration.' A fine umbrella, very little used, was lately shown to me as having been sold for five shillings, by a marker; it probably cost twenty-five.

Miller said there was no disgrace in standing in the pillory for gaming. He could spare £500 out of his coffers without missing it. His gaming table was once broken up by a warrant from Bow Street, when he said it was too good a thing to relinquish, and he set up another, one large enough for 20 or 30 persons to sit at. They played at it all night, and on one or two occasions all the next day too, so that Miller said to witness on his return in the evening--'Some of the people are still here who came last night. They stick to it rarely.' Sunday was the grand day. He had seen more than 40 persons at a time there, and they frequently offered half-a-crown for a seat. Wine and suppers were furnished gratis. Some looked over the backs of others and betted. A Mr Smith, the very man who had pawned his coat, confirmed the above evidence. Miller was convicted, and the judge, Lord Kenyon, made the following solemn observations before passing sentence:--

'Gaming is a crime of greater enormity, and of more destructive consequences to society, than many which the laws of the country have made capital. What is the crime of stealing a sheep, or picking a pocket of a handkerchief, when placed in comparison with this crime, traced through all its consequences?

'With regard to those in the higher walks of life, experience tells us it often leads to self-murder and duelling, about gambling debts, which terminate in the total ruin of families once opulent, and reduce to beggary their innocent and helpless children; and as for those in a lower sphere of life, when they have lost their money, they often betake themselves to housebreaking and the highway, in order to replenish their coffers, and at last end their lives by the hand of justice.'

With many other most excellent observations on the tendency of this selfish and avaricious vice, he concluded by sentencing Miller to a fine of £500, one year's imprisonment, and security for his good behaviour for seven years, himself in £500 and two others in £250 each, adding:--'It appeared that you played with loaded dice. The Court has not taken that into consideration, because it was not charged in the indictment.'

ATTACKS ON GAMING HOUSES.

In 1797 the Bedford Arms, Covent Garden, kept by one John Twycross, was attacked, under warrant. The gaming-room stood an hour's siege, for the doors were so plated with iron that the repeated blows of a sledge-hammer made no impression on them. The officers at length entered the back through the window. They found fifteen persons at table, but not actually playing, so no conviction could take place.

In the same year a party of Bow Street officers searched a gaming house at 19, Great Suffolk Street. They were an hour in effecting their entrance. Two very stout doors, strongly bolted and barred, obstructed them. All the gamesters but one escaped by a subterraneous passage, through a long range of cellars, terminating at a house in Whitcomb Street, whence their leader, having the keys of every door, conducted them safely into the

open air.

In the previous year a party, mostly French emigrants, were taken at a house in Oxendon Street, with the table, cards, &c. A city magistrate and a city officer had a dispute at cards, and a knock-down game ensued.

In 1799 the Marlborough Street officers apprehended at the gaming house, No. 3, Leicester Square, thirteen out of twenty persons, from the first floor, playing at Rouge et Noir. One of the gamblers, when they first entered, threw up the sash, and, stepping from the leads, fell into the area, and died in being conveyed to the hospital.

In the same year, two notorious gaming houses, Nos. 1 and 3, King's Place, were attacked, by authority of a search warrant. All the paraphernalia of the profession, as tables, dice, counters, &c., were seized; but the inmates effected their escape over the roofs of the adjoining houses. The proprietor of No. 3 was smoked in a chimney, and three French emigrants intercepted in their retreat. On one of them was found a gold watch, which appeared, by the robbery-book, to have been stolen about five years previously. The banks had been conveyed away,--at least, they were not among the captures.

'SOMETHING HONOURABLE TO THE BRITISH FLAG.'

It is stated as highly honourable to the British flag that, among the gamesters of the first quarter of the present century, no Admirals were seen at the INFERIOR tables. Their proper pride kept them from a familiar association with pursers, clerks, grocers, horse-dealers, linen-draper, silk-mercenary, masons, builders, timber-merchants, booksellers, &c., &c., and men of the very lowest walks of life.

COARSE LANGUAGE OF GAMESTERS.

'I heard those who, in another place, even in the most polished courts, would take a high rank for good breeding and gentlemanly education, at these tables make use of language which, I hope, Billingsgate itself would turn from with disgust. It cannot be repeated; neither would it be believed, unless by such as, like myself, have had "confirmation strong," too strong to be rejected, if I did not, at the same time, reject the evidence of my senses.'[45]

[45] Seymour Harcourt, The Gaming Calendar.

BOASTED PROTECTION OF GREAT NAMES TO GAMING HOUSES.

'On one occasion I was at the Pigeon Hole, in St James's Square (since removed to King Street), when the apprehensions which the rapid sale of The Greeks (a work exposing the system) excited among the players were warmly debated. To my great astonishment, a person who I supposed was a proprietor, boasted the impenetrability of HIS house, and on what ground, think you? Why, on that of it having the countenance of the Lord Chief

Justice of England! True or false, it seemed to revive the flagging spirits of its visitors. They knew better. Not even the warm feelings of a father would turn the scale of justice in the even hand of Lord Ellenborough.'

It must not, however, be taken for granted, merely because these fellows assert it, that the sons of the late Chief Justice really frequented that den of iniquity. It is part of the system of these houses to delude the ignorant, by pretending that this or the other person uses their tables. I had an instance of that myself at ----, in Pall Mall. Asking who that gentleman was, pointing to the party, I was answered--'That is Mr Hay, private secretary to Lord Melville, the First Lord of the Admiralty.' Now, I believe I may safely say, and from my own knowledge, too, that Mr Hay, whose character and conduct is deservedly held in the highest estimation, NEVER was at that or any such house; yet his name was constantly quoted, and particularly to young officers of the navy and marines, to whom his acquaintance held out hopes of future advantage in their profession! [46]

[46] Id. ibid.

FORTUNATE RISE OF A CLUB-HOUSE WAITER.

'A waitership at a club sometimes led to fortune. Thomas Rumbold, originally a waiter at White's gaming club, got an appointment in India, and suddenly rose to be Sir Thomas, and Governor of Madras! On his return, with immense wealth, a bill of pains and penalties was brought into the House by Dundas, with the view of stripping Sir Thomas of his ill-gotten gains. This bill was briskly pushed through the earlier stages; suddenly the proceedings were arrested by adjournment, and the measure fell to the ground. The rumour of the day attributed Rumbold's escape to the corrupt assistance of Rigby; who, in 1782, found himself, by Lord North's retirement, deprived of his place in the Pay Office, and called upon to refund a large amount of public moneys unaccounted for. In this strait, Rigby was believed to have had recourse to Rumbold. Their acquaintance had commenced in earlier days, when Rigby was one of the boldest "punters" at White's, and Rumbold bowed to him for half-crowns as waiter. Rumbold is said to have given Rigby a large sum of money, on condition of the former being released from the impending pains and penalties. The truth of the report has been vehemently denied; but the circumstances are suspicious. The bill was dropped; Dundas, its introducer, was Rigby's intimate associate. Rigby's nephew and heir soon after married Rumbold's daughter. Sir Thomas himself had married a daughter of Dr Law, Bishop of Carlisle. The worthy bishop stood godfather to one of Rumbold's children; the other godfather was the Nabob of Arcot, and the child was christened "Mahomet." So, at least, Walpole informs Mann.' [47]

[47] Timbs, Club Life in London.

PLAY IN 1820.

According to the Morning Post of May 15, 1820, at one of the

gaming houses at the West End, in one night, property to the amount of L50,000 is said to have changed hands.

ACCOUNT OF A GAME AT HAZARD.

The following account of a game at Hazard was given by a young man, who, in the year 1820, was decoyed into one of the gambling houses in the city, kept by one John Morley, who was convicted by the Lord Mayor, in the penalty of L200, 'for keeping Hazard;' but who, it is stated, left this country for Ireland the moment proceedings were instituted.

'The house in question was to all appearance devoted to the game of billiards, and most of those who frequented it engaged merely in that game. Through the agency of professed gamesters, who shared in the profits of the concern, those who appeared to be proper objects of plunder were soon introduced to the Hazard table, which was kept in a retired and private part of the house.

'The evidence of the young man was to the following effect:--He had been in Morley's house; the game of Hazard was played in the front room on the second floor; a door led into it from the landing-place, and another from the public billiard-room, which was the back room on the same floor; both these doors were during the time of play kept barred and locked, and never opened except to the voice of some person known to the master of the house. During the play the door was seldom or never opened, but before the play commenced there was an understanding given that proceedings were about to begin.

'In the centre of the room was a large circular table, over which a lamp was suspended, and round the table the players sat, in number, generally, from six to ten.

'The play commenced by one of the players taking the dice-box with two dice in it; two other dice were covered on the table, and might be substituted for those in the box, upon application to Morley, who acted as "groom porter." The person who held the box was called the caster, and he called a main, that is, he mentioned aloud any number on the dice from five to nine; and throwing the dice on the table, counted the number on the two dice as his chance, the number which he called being the chance of his setter. Before the main is called, the caster throws down his stake, which any person present has the option of covering, or, as it is called, "setting," by placing a similar sum on the table. For instance, if the caster, after being "set," call five the main, and throws immediately four and one, or three and two, he "nicks" it, that is, wins his money at once. If he throws six and one, five and two, or four and three, each of which two numbers makes seven, he bets the ODDS, which are three to two in his favour--inasmuch as there are three ways of throwing seven, and only two of throwing five; and he continues throwing until either five or seven come off. By the former he loses, by the latter he wins.

'If he calls seven the main, and throws three and one, or six and four, the odds are two to one against him--inasmuch as there are only three ways each of throwing, the four and the ten and six

wins, throwing the seven, that is, three on each die.[48] If the caster wishes, he calls a main, and continues to do so till he loses, which, in the technical phraseology, is "throwing out." He then passes the bow to the person next on the left hand, who, in like manner, passes it to his neighbour. Morley is remunerated for his table very handsomely. When the caster throws in three mains successively, he pays to Morley what is called a box (one of the pieces of the house with which the game is played). The prices are eighteen-pence each, and he gives them in exchange for notes, and retakes them. The caster pays nothing unless he wins. The players generally leave off play at eleven or twelve o'clock. On Saturday there is most play, as Morley on that day always gives a dinner at four o'clock, immediately after which the play commences. On other days tea and coffee are given.'

[48] I confess I do not understand the above passage.

A number of young men, most of whom were clerks, were called to confirm the evidence as to the system, but none of them appeared.

In a letter published in the Times of July 22, 1824, we read as follows:--

'The action against the keepers of a certain notorious "hell," which was noticed in the different journals as "coming on," is withdrawn, or, more properly speaking, is "compromised." Thus it will always be; and the different hells still flourish with impunity, to the enrichment of a few knaves, and the ruin of many thousands, till more effectual laws are framed to meet the evil. As they net thousands a night, a few hundreds or even thousands can be well spared to smother a few actions and prosecutions, which are very rarely instituted against them, and never but by ruined men, who are easily quieted by a small consideration, which, from recent judgments, will not be withheld; therefore we shall see recorded but very few convictions if any at all. At the head of these infamous establishments is one yclept "Fishmollgers' Hall,"[49] which sacks more plunder than all the others put together, though they consist of about a dozen. This place has been fitted up at an expense of L40,000, and is the most splendid house, interiorly and exteriorly, in all the neighbourhood. It is established as a bait for the fortunes of the great, many of whom have already been severe sufferers. Invitations to dinner are sent to noblemen and gentlemen, at which they are treated with every delicacy, and the most intoxicating wines.

[49] Otherwise called Crock-odile Hall.

'After such "liberal" entertainment, a visit to the French Hazard table, in the adjoining room, is a matter of course, when the consequences are easily divined. A man thus allured to the den may determine not to lose more than the few pounds he has about him; but in the intoxication of the moment, and the delirium of play, it frequently happens that, notwithstanding the best resolves, he borrows money on his cheques, which are known to be

good, and are readily cashed to very considerable amounts. In this manner L10,000, L20,000, L30,000, or more, have been often swept away!

They left King Street about three years ago, when, in conjunction with T ---- (a man who a few years ago took the benefit of the act, and subsequently took one or two "hells" in Pall Mall, but has amassed full L150,000 of plunder) and A ----, who has L70,000 of plunder, they opened a club-house in Piccadilly, with a French Hazard bank of L10,000, when in a short time they divided between the four--after all their heavy expenses were covered--upwards of L200,000. In proportion to the extent of the bank and the stakes, so do they collect the plunder.'

PROGRESS IN THE GAMING TRADE.

In the minor gaming houses the players assembled in parties of from 40 to 50 persons, who probably brought on an average, each night, from one to twenty shillings to play with. As the money was lost, the losers fell off, if they could not borrow or beg more; and this went on sometimes in the winter season for 14 to 16 hours in succession; so that from 100 to 150 persons might be calculated to visit one gaming table in the course of a night; and it not unfrequently happened that ultimately all the money brought to the table got into the hands of one or two of the most fortunate adventurers, save that which was paid to the table for 'box-hands'--that is, when a player won three times in succession. At these establishments the price of a box varied from one shilling to half-a-crown. Every man thus engaged was destined to become either a more finished and mischievous gambler, or to appear at the bar of the Old Bailey. The successful players by degrees improved their external appearance, and obtained admittance into houses of higher play, where two shillings and sixpence or three shillings and fourpence was demanded for the box-hand. If success attended them in the first step of advancement, they next got initiated into better houses, and associated with gamblers of a higher grade.

PLAY IN 1838.

About the year 1838 the gaming houses were kept open all day, the dice were scarcely ever idle, day or night. From Sunday to Sunday, all the year round, persons were to be found in these places, losing their money, and wasting away their very bodies by the consuming anxiety consequent on their position at the Hazard or Roulette table.

STATISTICS OF GAMBLING IN 1844.

The following facts came out in evidence before the committee of the House of Commons, in 1844.

Down to that year there were no less than 12 gaming houses in St James's and St George's. The play was higher in old times, but not so GENERAL.

'The increase of gambling houses was entirely the offspring of Crockford's.' Such was the opinion of the Honourable Frederick

Byng, before the committee, who added, 'that the facility to everybody to gamble at Crockford's led to the establishment of other gambling houses fitted up in a superior style, and attractive to gentlemen who never would have thought of going into them formerly.'

Previously, in the clubs, the gambling was confined to a very high rate and to a very few people. The above-named witness said he 'could have named all the gamblers in his early days at the clubs. No person coming into a room where Hazard was carried on would have been permitted to play for a SMALL SUM, and therefore he left it.'

The same gentleman remembered the time when gambling tables were kept in private houses.

'It is a fact that most of those who played very high were pretty well cleaned out.'

'Crockford increased gambling everywhere.' 'Persons of the middling classes, butchers, and gentleman's servants went to the low gambling houses.'

These places held out inducements to robbery. 'If a servant or shopman could scrape together L200 or L300, he had, by the agency of the keepers of these houses, the opportunity of lending out his money to the losers at 60 per cent.'

DESPERATION AT GAMING HOUSES.

The most particular inspection was made of the player's person by the gaming house keeper's spies, and even his dress was strictly observed. He was obliged, before entering the saloon, to deposit his great coat and cane, which might perchance afford the introduction of some WEAPON; and the elegance of the covering did not save him from the humiliation of having it taken from him at the door. The attempts which were sometimes made on the lives of the bankers led to these precautions--like the indignities which are practised only in prisons for the security of the unhappy inmates. It is certain that gamblers, reduced to desperation, and on the eve of committing suicide, have conveyed into these places infernal machines with an intention of destroying at once their cruel plunderers and themselves.

'DEVILISH DOINGS IN A "HELL." '

In 'Doings in London,' a work published as lately as the year 1850, we find under this startling title a strange story.

'A scandalous scene of violence, which often happens at these places, but seldom becomes publicly known, on account of the disgrace attending exposures, occurred lately at a low "hell" in King Street, St James's. A gentleman who had lost considerable sums of money at various times, announced his full determination never to come to a place of the sort again with money. His visits, therefore, were no longer wanted, and so orders were given to the porters not to admit him again. About two o'clock on a subsequent night, which happened to be Saturday, he sought

admittance, and was refused. A warm altercation ensued in the passage between him and the porters, which brought down some of the proprietors. One of them--a powerful man--a bankrupt butcher--struck him a tremendous blow, which broke the bridge of his nose, covered his face with blood, and knocked him down. On getting up he was knocked down again. He arose once more, and instantly received another blow, which would have laid him upon his back, but one of the porters by this time had got behind him, and as he was falling struck him at the back of his head, which sent him upon his face. The watch had now arrived, into whose hands the keeper of the "hell" and the porter were given. At the watch-house they were ordered to find bail. The gentleman was then about quitting, when he was suddenly called back. A certain little lawyer, who alternately prosecutes and defends keepers of gaming houses, was sent for. He whispered to the ex-butcher to charge the gentleman with stealing his handkerchief and hat, which, it was alleged, had been lost in the affray. Though nothing was found upon the gentleman, who desired to be searched, this preposterous and groundless charge was taken, and the hellites admitted to bail; but the gentleman who had been so cruelly beaten, being charged with a felony on purpose to cause his detention, and the power held by magistrates to take bail in doubtful cases not extending to night-constables, he was locked up below with two wretches who had stolen lead, and five disorderlies--his face a mass of blood and bruises--and there detained till Monday morning, in a most pitiable condition. The magistrate before whom the party appeared on that day, understanding that the affair took place at a gaming house, dismissed both complaints, leaving the parties to their remedy at the sessions.'

GAFFING.

Gaffing is or was one of the ten thousand modes of swindling practised in London. Formerly it was a game in very great vogue among the macers, who congregated nightly at the 'flash houses.' One of these is described as follows:--This gaffer laughed a great deal and whistled Moore's melodies, and extracted music from a deal table with his elbow and wrist. When he hid a half-penny, and a flat cried 'head' for L10, a 'tail' was sure to turn up. One of his modes of commanding the turn-up was this: he had a half-penny with two heads, and a half-penny with two tails.

When he gaffed, he contrived to have both half-pence under his hand, and long practice enabled him to catch up in the wrinkles or muscles of it the half-penny which it was his interest to conceal. If 'tail' was called a 'head' appeared, and the 'tail' half-penny ran down his wrist with astonishing fidelity. This ingenious fellow often won 200 or 300 sovereigns a night by gaffing; but the landlord and other men, who were privy to the robbery, and 'pitched the baby card' (that is, encouraged the loser by sham betting), always came in for the 'regulars,' that is, their share of the plunder.

This gaffer contrived to 'bilk' all the turnpikes in the kingdom.

In going to a fight or to a race-course, when he reached a turnpike he held a shilling between his fingers, and said to the

gatekeeper--'Here, catch,' and made a movement of the hand towards the man, who endeavoured to catch what he saw. The shilling, however, by a backward jerk, ran down the sleeve of the coat, as if it had life in it, and the gate-keeper turned round to look in the dust, when the tall gaffer drove on, saying--'Keep the change.'

A young fellow, who previously was a marker at a billiard-table, and who had the appearance of a soft, inexperienced country-lad, was another great hand at gaffing. There was a strong adhesive power in his hand, and such exquisite sensibility about it, that he could ascertain by dropping his palm, even upon a worn-out half-penny or shilling, what side was turned up. Indeed, so perfect a master was he of the science that Breslaw could never have done more upon cards than he could do with a pair of 'grays' (gaffing-coins).

A well-known macer, who was celebrated for slipping an 'old gentleman' (a long card) into the pack, and was the inheritor by birth of all the propensities of this description, although the inheritance was equally divided between his brother and himself, got hold of a young fellow who had L170 in his pocket, and introduced him to one of the 'cock-and-hen' houses near Drury Lane Theatre, well-primed with wine. Gaffing began, and the billiard-marker before described was pitched upon to 'do' the stranger. The macer 'pitched the baby card,' and of course lost, as well as the unfortunate victim. He had borrowed L10 of the landlord, who was to come in for the 'regulars;' but when all was over, the billiard-marker refused to make any division of the spoil, or even to return the L10 which had been lost to him in 'bearing up' the cull. The landlord pressed his demand upon the macer, who, in fact, was privately reimbursed by the marker; but he was coolly told that he ought not to allow such improper practices in his house, and that the sum was not recoverable, the transaction being illegal.

How these spurious coins are procured is a question; but I am assured that they are still in use and often made to do service at public-houses and other places.

TOMMY DODD.

This is a mode of gambling very much in vogue at the present time. It is often played at public-houses among parties to decide who is to pay the reckoning. Each party turns down a half-penny, and, on uncovering it, the matter is decided as in 'heads or tails.' Of course this expeditious method is also used in gambling for money. Not long ago a retired tradesman, happening to be in a public-house, where such things were connived at, allowed himself to be induced to play at Tommy Dodd with two low sharpers. They soon eased him of all the cash he had about him. A bright idea, however, occurred to him. 'Stop a bit,' he said, 'I must have my revenge. Just wait till I go home for more money.' The sharpers were rejoiced at the idea, and rubbed their hands with delight, whilst the tradesman went, as they felt sure, only to bring more money into their 'till.' The man made all haste, for he was determined to have his revenge, and soon returned with a large bag of money, which he clinked on

the table.

He first pulled out some coppers, telling them to choose from the lot the coins they would play with. They assented, although they did not seem 'much to like it.' 'And now,' said the tradesman, 'let's set to business.'

The game proceeded with alternate success on both sides; but the tradesman went on DOUBLING THE STAKES EVERY TIME, WHETHER HE LOST OR WON, and, of course, at length completely broke their bank, and went off with their money.

GAMBLING AT THE WINE AND OYSTER ROOMS, OR 'SALOONS.'

The gambling which was carried on in the private rooms of the wine and oyster houses, about thirty years ago, and perhaps later, was just such as that which had so long flourished in the low vicinity of St James's. Indeed, the constant frequenters of the former had attained the most profound knowledge of the art of robbing at the West End gaming houses. The blacklegs visited the saloons every night, in order to pick up new acquaintances among the young and inexperienced. They were polite, well-dressed, gentlemanlike persons; and if they could trace anything 'soft' in the countenance of a new visitor, their wits went to work at once to establish an acquaintance with him. Wine was set a- going, and cards were proposed. The master of the concern soon provided a room, and play advanced, accompanied by the certainty of loss to the unfortunate stranger. But if the invitation to play was rejected, they made another plant upon him. The ruffians attacked him through a passion of a different kind. They gave the word to one of their female 'pals,' who threw herself in his way, and prevailed upon him to accompany her to HER establishment. In the morning the 'gentleman,' who in vain had solicited him to play at the saloon the night before, would call--just to pay 'a friendly visit.' Cards were again spoken of, and again proposed, with the additional recommendation of the 'lady,' who offered to be the partner of her friend in the game. The consequence was inevitable. Many young noblemen and gentlemen were plundered by this scheme, of hundreds, nay, of thousands of pounds. To escape without loss was impossible. They packed and distributed the cards with such amazing dexterity, that they could give a man, as it were, whatever cards they pleased.

CARDS THAT WOULD BEAT THE D--L HIMSELF!

A number of sharpers were detected in a trick by which they had won enormous sums. An Ecarte party, consisting of a nobleman, a captain in the army, an Armenian gentleman, and an Irish gentleman, sat down in one of the private chambers attached to one of the large wine and shell-fish rooms. The Armenian and the Irishman were partners, and were wonderfully successful; indeed, so extraordinary was their luck in turning up cards, that the captain, who had been in the town for some time, suspected the integrity of his competitors, and, accordingly, handled the cards very minutely. He soon discovered that there was an 'old gentleman' (a card somewhat larger and thicker than the rest of the pack, and in considerable use among the LEGS) in the midst of

them. The captain and his partner exclaimed that they were robbed, and the cards were sealed up, and referred to a card-maker for his opinion.

'The old saying,' said the referee, 'that THE CARDS WOULD BEAT THE CARD-MAKER, was never more true than it is in this instance, for this pack would beat not only me, but the very d--l himself; there is not only an OLD GENTLEMAN, but an OLD LADY (a card broader than the rest) amongst them.'

The two 'gentlemen' were immediately accused of the imposition, but they feigned ignorance of the fraud, refused to return a farthing of the 'swag,' and, in their turn, charged the losers with having got up the story in order to recover what they had fairly lost.

GENEROSITY (?) OF A GAMING HOUSE KEEPER.

A young West Indian chanced one night to enter one of the gaming houses in London, and began trying his chance at Roulette. Fortune favoured him at first, and he won about a hundred pounds.

Instead of leaving off he only became the more excited by his success, when his luck began to change, and he lost and lost until he staked the last coin he had in his pocket. He then pawned to the master of the table successively every ring and trinket he had, for money to continue the stakes. All in vain. His luck never returned; and he made his way down-stairs in a mood which may well be imagined. But what was his surprise when the master of the table came running after him, saying--'Sir, these things may be valuable to you--do me the favour to take them with you. Next time I hope you will be more lucky,' and returned all his rings and trinkets.

The moon was shining brightly at the time, and the young man swore by it, that he would never again enter a gaming house, and he kept his oath. Of course the generosity was but a decoy to entice the youth to further ruin.

HOSPITALITY OF GAMING HOUSES, AND POPULARITY OF CITY MEN AT THEM.

Joseph Atkinson and his wife, who for many years kept a gaming house at No. 15 under the Piazza, Covent Garden, gave daily magnificent play dinners,--cards of invitation for which were sent to the clerks of merchants, bankers, and brokers in the city. Atkinson used to say that he liked CITIZENS--whom he called FLATS--better than any one else, for when they had DINED they played freely, and after they had lost all their money they had credit to borrow more. When he had CLEANED THEM OUT, when THE PIGEONS WERE COMPLETELY PLUCKED, they were sent to some of their solvent friends. After dinner play was introduced, and, till dinner time the next day, different games at cards, dice, and E O were continually going on.

THE TRAFFIC IN HUSH MONEY.

Theophilus Bellasis, an infamous character, was well known at Bow Street, where he had been charged with breaking into the

counting-house of Sir James Sanderson, Bart. Bellasis was sometimes clerk and sometimes client to John Shepherd, an attorney of Bow Street; while at other times Shepherd was prosecutor of those who kept gaming houses, and Bellasis attorney. Sir William Addington, the magistrate, was so well aware that these two men commenced prosecutions solely for the purpose of HUSH MONEY, that he refused to act. The Joseph Atkinson just mentioned at one time gave them L100, at another L80; and in this way they had amassed an immense sum, and undertook, for a specific amount, to defend keepers of gaming houses against all prosecutions!

WALKING OFF WITH A L200 BANK-NOTE.

The runaway son of an extensive linen-draper went to a gaming house in King Street, and pocketed a L200 bank-note from the table. He was not kicked out, because it would not be safe for the proprietors of these houses to run the risk of getting involved in law; but he was civilly walked down-stairs by the master of the establishment, who forbid him the house evermore. The dashing youth, however, put both the money and the affront in his pocket, and was only too thankful to get away in so good a plight.

PERQUISITES OF GAMBLING HOUSE WAITERS.

A waiter in one of the gambling houses in St James's Street received in Christmas boxes above L500. A nobleman, who had in the course of a week won L80,000, gave him L100 of his winnings. He was said to have actually borrowed of the waiter the money which led to his extraordinary success!

PAUL ROUBEL.

Paul Roubel was a gaming house keeper, who seems to have been an exception to his class, according to the following account:--'A foreigner once applied for the situation of croupier at old Paul Roubel's, stating as his qualification that he could cut or turn up whatever card he pleased. The old man (for he was nearly eighty, and a very good hearty fellow in his way) declined the offer, saying--"You are too clever for me; my customers must have some chance!" It is true Roubel kept a gambling house; but it is also true that few men in higher walks of life possessed a kinder heart, or a hand which opened more freely or more liberally to the calls of humanity! Peace be to his manes!'

TITLED GREEKS, OR 'DECOYS.'

In all the gaming houses of any note there were unprincipled and reckless persons paid by the hellites, employed in various capacities, and for various purposes. Sometimes they played for the proprietors against any one who chose to put down his money; at other times, when there were no other individuals playing at all, they pretended to be strangers themselves, and got up sham games with the proprietors, with the view of practising a deception on any strangers who might be in the room, and by that means inducing them to put down their money. They were dressed in the most fashionable manner, always exhibiting a profusion of

jewellery, and living in great splendour when they have any particular person in their eye, in the various hotels throughout town.[50]

[50] Grant, Sketches in London.

In some cases, in the higher class of gaming establishments, the Greeks, or decoys, being men of title or considerable standing in society, did not receive a fixed salary for seducing young men of fortune, but being in every case very needy men, they nominally borrowed, from time to time, large sums of money from the hell-keepers. It was, however, perfectly understood on both sides that the amount so borrowed was never to be repaid.[51]

[51] Grant, Ubi supra.

WHY CHEATS WERE CALLED GREEKS.

M. Robert-Houdin says that this application of the term 'Greek' originated from a certain modern Greek, named Apoulos, who in the reign of Louis XIV. was caught cheating at court, and was condemned to 20 years at the galleys. I think this a very improbable derivation, and unnecessary withal. Aristotle of old, as before stated, ranked gamesters 'with thieves and plunderers, who for the sake of gain do not scruple to despoil their best friends.' We afterwards find them bearing just as bad a character among the Romans. Says Juvenal--

Graeculus esuriens in coelum jussuris, ibit.
'Bid the hungry Greek to heaven, to heaven he goes.'

Dr Johnson translated the words, 'Bid him to h--l, to h--l he goes'--which is wrong. A DIFFICULTY is implied, and everybody knows that it is easier to go to the latter place than the former. It means that a needy Greek was capable of doing anything. Lord Byron protested that he saw no difference between Greeks and Jews--of course, meaning 'Jews' in the offensive sense of the word. Among gamblers the term was chiefly applied to 'decoys.'

GAMING TABLE SLANG AND MANOEUVRES.

Captain Sharp. A cheating bully, whose office it was to bully any 'Pigeon,' who, suspecting roguery, refused to pay what he had lost.

St Hugh's bones. Dice. A bale of bard cinque deuces; a bale of flat cinque deuces; a bale of flat size aces; a bale of bard cater treys; a bale of flat cater treys; a bale of Fulhams; a bale of light graniers; a bale of gordes, with as many highmen and lowmen for passage; a bale of demies; a bale of long dice for even or odd; a bale of bristles; a bale of direct contraries,--names of false dice.

Do. To cheat.

Done up. Ruined.

Down-hills. False dice which run low.

Elbow-shaker. A gamester.

Fulhams. Loaded dice.

Fuzz. To shuffle cards closely: to change the pack.

Game. Bubbles, Flats, Pigeons.

Gull Gropers. Usurers who lend money to gamesters.

Greeks. Cheats at play.

Hedge. To secure a bet by betting on the other side.

High Jinks. A gambler who drinks to intoxicate his Pigeon.

Hunting. Drawing in the unwary.

Main. Any number on the dice from five to nine.

Paum. To hide a card or die.

Pigeons. Dupes of sharpers at play.

Vincent's Law. The art of cheating at cards, by the banker, who plays booty, Gripe, who bets, and the Vincent, who is cheated. The gain is called termage.

Vowel. To give an I. O. U. in payment.

Up-hills. False dice which run high.

SPECIMEN OF A QUASI GAMING HOUSE CIRCULAR.

'SIR,--I hope you will join with the rest of the parishioners in recommending what friends you can to my shops. They shall have good candles and fair play. Sir, we are a not gang of swindlers,

Like other Gaming Houses,
We are men of character.
Our Party is,
Tom Carlos--alias Pistol,
Ned Mogg,--from Charing Cross,
Union Clarke, -----

{The best in the world at
A Frenchman,{
{sleight of hand.
My poor Brother,
and
Melting Billy,
Your humble Servant.

To the Church-Wardens, Overseers, and each
respectable inhabitant in the Parish.'

A card was enclosed, as follows:--

!****

Gaming House Keeper,
and **** **** to
The Honourable House of Commons
No. 7 and 8 **** St, St James's.'

This circular was sent to Stockdale, the publisher, in 1820, who published it with the names in asterisks suppressed. It was evidently intended to expose some doings in high places.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DOCTRINE OF PROBABILITIES APPLIED TO GAMBLING.

A distinction must be made between games of skill and games of chance. The former require application, attention, and a certain degree of ability to insure success in them; while the latter are devoid of all that is rational, and are equally within the reach of the highest and lowest capacity. To be successful in throwing the dice is one of the most fickle achievements of fickle fortune; and therefore the principal game played with them is very properly and emphatically called 'Hazard.' It requires, indeed, some exertion of the mental powers, of memory, at least, and a turn for such diversions, to play well many games at cards.

Nevertheless, it is often found that those who do so give no further proofs of superior memory and judgment, whilst persons of superior memory and judgment not unfrequently fail egregiously at the card-table.

The gamester of skill, in games of skill, may at first sight seem to have more advantage than the gamester of chance, in games of chance; and while cards are played merely as an amusement, there is no doubt that a recreation is more rational when it requires some degree of skill than one, like dice, totally devoid of all meaning whatever. But when the pleasure becomes a business, and a matter of mere gain, there is more innocence, perhaps, in a perfect equality of antagonists--which games of chance, fairly played, always secure--than where one party is likely to be an overmatch for the other by his superior knowledge or ability.

Nevertheless, even games of chance may be artfully managed; and the most apparently casual throw of the dice be made subservient to the purposes of chicanery and fraud, as will be shown in the sequel.

In the matter of skill and chance the nature of cards is mixed,--most games having in them both elements of interest,--since the success of the player must depend as much on the chance of the 'deal' as on his skill in playing the game. But even the chance of the deal is liable to be perverted by all the tricks of shuffling and cutting--not to mention how the honourable player may be deceived in a thousand ways by the craft of the sharper, during the playing, of the cards themselves; consequently professed gamblers of all denominations, whether their games be

of apparent skill or mere chance, may be confounded together or considered in the same category, as being equally meritorious and equally infamous.

Under the name of the Doctrine of Chances or Probabilities, a very learned science,--much in vogue when lotteries were prevalent,--has been applied to gambling purposes; and in spite of the obvious abstruseness of the science, it is not impossible to give the general reader an idea of its processes and conclusions.

The probability of an event is greater or less according to the number of chances by which it may happen, compared with the whole number of chances by which it may either happen or fail.

Wherefore, if we constitute a fraction whereof the numerator be the number of chances whereby an event may happen, and the denominator the number of all the chances whereby it may either happen or fail, that fraction will be a proper designation of the probability of happening. Thus, if an event has 3 chances to happen, and 2 to fail, then the fraction $\frac{3}{5}$ will fairly represent the probability of its happening, and may be taken to be the measure of it.

The same may be said of the probability of failing, which will likewise be measured by a fraction whose numerator is the number of chances whereby it may fail, and the denominator the whole number of chances both for its happening and failing; thus the probability of the failing of that event which has 2 chances to fail and 3 to happen will be measured by the fraction $\frac{2}{5}$.

The fractions which represent the probabilities of happening and failing, being added together, their sum will always be equal to unity, since the sum of their numerators will be equal to their common denominator. Now, it being a certainty that an event will either happen or fail, it follows that certainty, which may be conceived under the notion of an infinitely great degree of probability, is fitly represented by unity.

These things will be easily apprehended if it be considered that the word probability includes a double idea; first, of the number of chances whereby an event may happen; secondly, of the number of chances whereby it may either happen or fail. If I say that I have three chances to win any sum of money, it is impossible from the bare assertion to judge whether I am likely to obtain it; but if I add that the number of chances either to obtain it or miss it, is five in all, from this will ensue a comparison between the chances that are for and against me, whereby a true judgment will be formed of my probability of success; whence it necessarily follows that it is the comparative magnitude of the number of chances to happen, in respect of the whole number of chances either to happen or to fail, which is the true measure of probability.

To find the probability of throwing an ace in two throws with a single die. The probability of throwing an ace the first time is $\frac{1}{6}$; whereof $\frac{1}{6}$ is the first part of the probability required. If the ace be missed the first time, still it may be thrown on the second; but the probability of missing it the first time is

5/6, and the probability of throwing it the second time is 1/6; therefore the probability of missing it the first time and throwing it the second, is $5/6 \times 1/6 = 5/36$ and this is the second part of the probability required, and therefore the probability required is in all $1/6 + 5/36 = 11/36$.

To this case is analogous a question commonly proposed about throwing with two dice either six or seven in two throws, which will be easily solved, provided it be known that seven has 6 chances to come up, and six 5 chances, and that the whole number of chances in two dice is 36; for the number of chances for throwing six or seven 11, it follows that the probability of throwing either chance the first time is 11/36, but if both are missed the first time, still either may be thrown the second time; but the probability of missing both the first time is 25/36, and the probability of throwing either of them on the second is 11/36; therefore the probability of missing both of them the first time, and throwing either of them the second time, is $25/36 \times 11/36 = 275/1296$, and therefore the probability required is $11/36 + 275/1296 = 671/1296$, and the probability of the contrary is 625/1296.

Among the many mistakes that are committed about chances, one of the most common and least suspected was that which related to lotteries. Thus, supposing a lottery wherein the proportion of the blanks to the prizes was as five to one, it was very natural to conclude that, therefore, five tickets were requisite for the chance of a prize; and yet it is demonstrable that four tickets were more than sufficient for that purpose. In like manner, supposing a lottery in which the proportion of the blanks to the prize is as thirty-nine to one (as was the lottery of 1710), it may be proved that in twenty-eight tickets a prize is as likely to be taken as not, which, though it may contradict the common notions, is nevertheless grounded upon infallible demonstrations.

When the Play of the Royal Oak was in use, some persons who lost considerably by it, had their losses chiefly occasioned by an argument of which they could not perceive the fallacy. The odds against any particular point of the ball were one and thirty to one, which entitled the adventurers, in case they were winners, to have thirty-two stakes returned, including their own; instead of which, as they had but twenty-eight, it was very plain that, on the single account of the disadvantage of the play, they lost one-eighth part of all the money played for. But the master of the ball maintained that they had no reason to complain, since he would undertake that any particular point of the ball should come up in two and twenty throws; of this he would offer to lay a wager, and actually laid it when required. The seeming contradiction between the odds of one and thirty to one, and twenty-two throws for any chance to come up, so perplexed the adventurers that they began to think the advantage was on their side, and so they went on playing and continued to lose.

The doctrine of chances tends to explode the long-standing superstition that there is in play such a thing as LUCK, good or bad. If by saying that a man has good luck, nothing more were meant than that he has been generally a gainer at play, the expression might be allowed as very proper in a short way of

speaking; but if the word 'good luck' be understood to signify a certain predominant quality, so inherent in a man that he must win whenever he plays, or at least win oftener than lose, it may be denied that there is any such thing in nature. The asserters of luck maintain that sometimes they have been very lucky, and at other times they have had a prodigious run of bad luck against them, which whilst it continued obliged them to be very cautious in engaging with the fortunate. They asked how they could lose fifteen games running if bad luck had not prevailed strangely against them. But it is quite certain that although the odds against losing so many times together be very great, namely, 32,767 to 1,--yet the POSSIBILITY of it is not destroyed by the greatness of the odds, there being ONE chance in 32,768 that it may so happen; therefore it follows that the succession of lost games was still possible, without the intervention of bad luck. The accident of losing fifteen games is no more to be imputed to bad luck than the winning, with one single ticket, the highest prize in a lottery of 32,768 tickets is to be imputed to good luck, since the chances in both cases are perfectly equal. But if it be said that luck has been concerned in the latter case, the answer will be easy; for let us suppose luck not existing, or at least let us suppose its influence to be suspended,--yet the highest prize must fall into some hand or other, not as luck (for, by the hypothesis, that has been laid aside), but from the mere necessity of its falling somewhere.

Among the many curious results of these inquiries according to the doctrine of chances, is the prodigious advantage which the repetition of odds will amount to. Thus, 'supposing I play with an adversary who allows me the odds of 43 to 40, and agrees with me to play till 100 stakes are won or lost on either side, on condition that I give him an equivalent for the gain I am entitled to by the advantage of my odds;--the question is, what I am to give him, supposing we play at a guinea a stake? The answer is 99 guineas and above 18 shillings,[52] which will seem almost incredible, considering the smallness of the odds--43 to 40. Now let the odds be in any proportion, and let the number of stakes played for be never so great, yet one general conclusion will include all the possible cases, and the application of it to numbers may be worked out in less than a minute's time.'[53]

[52] The guinea was worth 21s. 6d. when the work quoted was written.

[53] De Moivre, Doctrine of Chances.

The possible combinations of cards in a hand as dealt out by chance are truly wonderful. It has been established by calculation that a player at Whist may hold above 635 thousand millions of various hands! So that, continually varied, at 50 deals per evening, for 313 evenings, or 15,650 hands per annum, he might be above 40 millions of years before he would have the same hand again!

The chance is equal, in dealing cards, that every hand will have seven trumps in two deals, or seven trumps between two partners,

and also four court cards in every deal. It is also certain on an average of hands, that nothing can be more superstitious and absurd than the prevailing notions about luck or ill-luck. Four persons, constantly playing at Whist during a long voyage, were frequently winners and losers to a large amount, but as frequently at 'quits;' and at the end of the voyage, after the last game, one of them was minus only one franc!

The chance of having a particular card out of 13 is $13/52$, or 1 to 4, and the chance of holding any two cards is $1/4$ of $1/4$ or $1/16$. The chances of a game are generally inversely as the number got by each, or as the number to be got to complete each game.

The chances against holding seven trumps are 160 to 1; against six, it is 26 to 1; against five, 6 to 1; and against four nearly 2 to 1. It is 8 to 1 against holding any two particular cards.

Similar calculations have been made respecting the probabilities with dice. There are 36 chances upon two dice.

It is an even chance that you throw 8. It is 35 to 1 against throwing any particular doublets, and 6 to 1 against any doublets at all. It is 17 to 1 against throwing any two desired numbers. It is 4 to 9 against throwing a single number with either of the dice, so as to hit a blot and enter. Against hitting with the amount of two dice, the chances against 7, 8, and 9 are 5 to 1; against 10 are 11 to 1; against 11 are 17 to 1; and against sixes, 35 to 1.

The probabilities of throwing required totals with two dice, depend on the number of ways in which the totals can be made up by the dice;--2, 3, 11, or 12 can only be made up one way each, and therefore the chance is but $1/36$;--4, 5, 9, 10 may be made up two ways, or $1/8$;--6, 7, 8 three ways, or $1/12$. The chance of doublets is $1/36$, the chance of PARTICULAR doublets $1/216$.

The method was largely applied to lotteries, cock-fighting, and horse-racing. It may be asked how it is possible to calculate the odds in horse-racing, when perhaps the jockeys in a great measure know before they start which is to win?

In answer to this a question may be proposed:--Suppose I toss up a half-penny, and you are to guess whether it will be head or tail--must it not be allowed that you have an equal chance to win as to lose? Or, if I hide a half-penny under a hat, and I know what it is, have you not as good a chance to guess right, as if it were tossed up? My KNOWING IT TO BE HEAD can be no hindrance to you, as long as you have liberty of choosing either head or tail. In spite of this reasoning, there are people who build so much upon their own opinion, that should their favourite horse happen to be beaten, they will have it to be owing to some fraud.

The following fact is mentioned as a 'paradox.'

It happened at Malden, in Essex, in the year 1738, that three horses (and no more than three) started for a L10 plate, and they were all three distanced the first heat, according to the common

rules in horse-racing, without any quibble or equivocation; and the following was the solution:--The first horse ran on the inside of the post; the second wanted weight; and the third fell and broke a fore-leg.[54]

[54] Cheany's Horse-racing Book.

In horse-racing the expectation of an event is considered as the present value, or worth, of whatsoever sum or thing is depending on the happening of that event. Therefore if the expectation on an event be divided by the value of the thing expected, on the happening of that event, the quotient will be the probability of happening.

Example I. Suppose two horses, A and B, to start for L50, and there are even bets on both sides; it is evident that the present value or worth of each of their expectations will be L25, and the probabilities 25/50 or 1/2. For, if they had agreed to divide the prize between them, according as the bets should be at the time of their starting, they would each of them be entitled to L25; but if A had been thought so much superior to B that the bets had been 3 to 2 in his favour, then the real value of A's expectation would have been L30, and that of B's only L20, and their several probabilities 30/50 and 20/50.

Example II. Let us suppose three horses to start for a sweepstake, namely, A, B, and C, and that the odds are 8 to 6 A against B, and 6 to 4 B against C--what are the odds--A against C, and the field against A? Answer:--2 to 1 A against C, and 10 to 8, or 5 to 4 the field against A. For

A's expectation is 8
B's expectation is 6
C's expectation is 4

18

But if the bets had been 7 to 4 A against B; and even money B against C, then the odds would have been 8 to 7 the field against A, as shown in the following scheme:--

7 A
4 B
4 C

15

But as this is the basis upon which all the rest depends, another example or two may be required to make it as plain as possible.

Example III. Suppose the same three as before, and the common bets 7 to 4 A against B; 21 to 20 (or 'gold to silver') B against C; we must state it thus:--7 guineas to 4 A against B; and 4 guineas to L4, B against C; which being reduced into shillings, the scheme will stand as follows:--

147 A's expectation.
81 B's expectation.
80 C's expectation.

By which it will be 164 to 147 the field against A, (something more than 39 to 35). Now, if we compare this with the last example, we may conclude it to be right; for if it had been 40 to 35, then it would have been 8 to 7, exactly as in the last example. But, as some persons may be at a loss to know why the numbers 39 and 35 are selected, it is requisite to show the same by means of the Sliding Rule. Set 164 upon the line A to 147 upon the slider B, and then look along till you see two whole numbers which stand exactly one against the other (or as near as you can come), which, in this case, you find to be 39 on A, standing against 35 on the slider B (very nearly). But as $164/311$ and $147/311$ are in the lowest terms, there are no less numbers, in the same proportion, as 164 to 147,--39 and 35 being the nearest, but not quite exact.

Example IV. There are four horses to start for a sweepstake, namely, A, B, C, D, and they are supposed to be as equally matched as possible. Now, Mr Sly has laid 10 guineas A against C, and also 10 guineas A against D. Likewise Mr Rider has laid 10 guineas A against C, and also 10 guineas B against D. After which Mr Dice laid Mr Sly 10 guineas to 4 that he will not win both his bets. Secondly, he laid Mr Rider 10 guineas to 4 that he will not win both his bets.

Now, we wish to know what Mr Dice's advantage or disadvantage is, in laying these two last-mentioned wagers.

First, the probability of Mr Sly's winning both his bets is $1/3$ of 14 guineas; and Mr Dice's expectation is $2/3$ of 14 guineas, or L9 16s., which being deducted from his own stake (10 guineas), there remains 14s., which is his disadvantage in that bet.

Secondly, Mr Rider's expectation of winning his two bets is $1/4$, and, therefore, Mr Dice's expectation of the 14 guineas, is $3/4$, or L11 0s. 6d., from which deduct 10 guineas (his own stake), and there remains 10s. 6d., his advantage in this bet,--which being deducted from 14s. (his disadvantage in the other), there remains 3s 6d., his disadvantage in paying both these bets.

These examples may suffice to show the working of the system; regular tables exist adapted to all cases; and there can be no doubt that those who have realized large fortunes by horse-racing managed to do so by uniformly acting on some such principles, as well as by availing themselves of such 'valuable information' as may be secured, before events come off, by those who make horse-racing their business.

The same system was applied, and with still greater precision, to Cock-fighting, to Lotteries, Raffles, Backgammon, Cribbage, Put, All Fours, and Whist, showing all the chances of holding any particular card or cards. Thus, it is 2 to 1 that your partner has not one certain card; 17 to 2 that he has not two certain cards; 31 to 26 that he has not one of them only; and 32 to 25 (or 5 to 4) that he has one or both--that is, when two cards are in question. It is 31 to 1 that he has three certain cards; 7 to

2 that he has not two; 7 to 6 that he has not one; 13 to 6 that he has either one or two; 5 to 2 that he has one, two, or three cards; that is, when three cards are in question.

With regard to the dealer and his partner, it is 57,798 to 7176 (better than 8 to 1) that they are not four by honours; it is 32,527 to 32,448 (or about an even bet) that they are not two by honours; it is 36,924 to 25,350 (or 11 to 7 nearly) that the honours count; it is 42,237 to 22,737 (or 15 to 8 nearly) that the dealer is nothing by honours.[55]

[55] Proctor, *The Sportsman's Sure Guide*. Lond. A.D. 1733.

Such is a general sketch of the large subject included under the term of the calculation of probabilities, which comprises not only the chances of games of hazard, insurances, lotteries, &c., but also the determination of future events from observations made relative to events of the same nature. This subject of inquiry dates only from the 17th century, and occupied the minds of Pascal, Huygens, Fermot, Bernouilli, Laplace, Fourier, Lacroix, Poisson, De Moivre; and in more modern times, Cournot, Quetelet, and Professor De Morgan.

In the matter of betting, or in estimating the 'odds' in betting, of course an acquaintance with the method must be of some service, and there can be no doubt that professional gamblers endeavoured to master the subject.

M. Robert-Houdin, in his amusing work, *Les Tricheries des Grecs dévoilées*, has propounded some gaming axioms which are at least curious and interesting; they are presented as those of a professional gambler and cheat.

1. 'Every game of chance presents two kinds of chances which are very distinct,--namely, those relating to the person interested, that is, the player; and those inherent in the combinations of the game.'

In the former there is what must be called, for the want of a better name, 'good luck' or 'bad luck,' that is, some mysterious cause which at times gives the play a 'run' of good or bad luck; in the latter there is the entire doctrine of 'probabilities' aforesaid, which, according to M. Houdin's gaming hero, may be completely discarded for the following axiom:--

2. 'If chance can bring into the game all possible combinations, there are, nevertheless, certain limits at which it seems to stop. Such, for instance, as a certain number turning up ten times in succession at Roulette. This is possible, but it has never happened.'

Nevertheless a most remarkable fact is on record. In 1813, a Mr Ogden betted 1000 guineas to ONE guinea, that calling seven as the main, the caster would not throw that number ten times successively. Wonderful to relate! the caster threw seven nine times following. Thereupon Mr Ogden offered him 470 guineas to be off the bet--which he refused. The caster took the box again

and threw nine,--and so Mr Ogden won his guinea![56] In this case there seems to have been no suspicion whatever of unfair dice being used.

[56] Seymour Harcourt, The Gaming Calendar.

3. 'In a game of chance, the oftener the same combination has occurred in succession, the nearer we are to the certainty that it will not recur at the next cast or turn up. This is the most elementary of the theories on probabilities; it is termed the MATURITY OF THE CHANCES.'

'Hence,' according to this great authority, 'a player must come to the table not only "in luck," but he must not risk his money excepting at the instant prescribed by the rules of the maturity of the chances.'

Founded on this theory we have the following precepts for gamesters:--

1. 'For gaming, prefer Roulette, because it presents several ways of staking your money[57]--which permits the study of several.

[57] 'Pair, impair, passe, manque, and the 38 numbers of the Roulette, besides the different combinations of POSITION' and 'maturities' together.

2. 'A player should approach the gaming table perfectly calm and cool--just as a merchant or tradesman in treaty about any affair.

If he gets into a passion, it is all over with prudence, all over with good luck--for the demon of bad luck invariably pursues a passionate player.

3. 'Every man who finds a pleasure in playing runs the risk of losing.

4. 'A prudent player, before undertaking anything, should put himself to the test to discover if he is "in vein"--in luck. In all doubt, you should abstain.'

I remember a curious incident in my childhood, which seems much to the point of this axiom. A magnificent gold watch and chain were given towards the building of a church, and my mother took three chances, which were at a very high figure, the watch and chain being valued at more than L100. One of these chances was entered in my name, one in my brother's, and the third in my mother's. I had to throw for her as well as myself. My brother threw an insignificant figure; for myself I did the same; but, oddly enough, I refused to throw for my mother on finding that I had lost my chance, saying that I should wait a little longer--rather a curious piece of prudence for a child of thirteen. The raffle was with three dice; the majority of the chances had been thrown, and 34 was the highest. After declining to throw I went on throwing the dice for amusement, and was surprised to find

that every throw was better than the one I had in the raffle. I thereupon said--'Now I'll throw for mamma.' I threw thirty-six, which won the watch! My mother had been a large subscriber to the building of the church, and the priest said that my winning the watch for her was quite PROVIDENTIAL. According to M. Houdin's authority, however, it seems that I only got into 'vein'--but how I came to pause and defer throwing the last chance, has always puzzled me respecting this incident of my childhood, which made too great an impression ever to be effaced.

5. 'There are persons who are constantly pursued by bad luck. To such I say--NEVER PLAY.

6. 'Stubbornness at play is ruin.

7. 'Remember that Fortune does not like people to be overjoyed at her favours, and that she prepares bitter deceptions for the imprudent, who are intoxicated by success.'

Such are the chief axioms of a most experienced gamester, and M. Houdin sums up the whole into the following:--

8. 'Before risking your money at play, you must deeply study your "vein" and the different probabilities of the game--termed the maturity of the chances.'

M. Robert-Houdin got all this precious information from a gamester named Raymond. It appears that the first meeting between him and this man was at a subscription-ball, where the sharper managed to fleece him and others to a considerable amount, contriving a dexterous escape when detected. Houdin afterwards fell in with him at Spa, where he found him in the greatest poverty, and lent him a small sum--to practise his grand theories as just explained--but which he lost--whereupon Houdin advised him 'to take up a less dangerous occupation.' He then appears to have revealed to Houdin the entertaining particulars which form the bulk of his book, so dramatically written. A year afterwards Houdin unexpectedly fell in with him again; but this time the fellow was transformed into what he called 'a demi-millionnaire,' having succeeded to a large fortune by the death of his brother, who died intestate. According to Houdin the following was the man's declaration at the auspicious meeting:-- 'I have,' said Raymond, 'completely renounced gaming. I am rich enough, and care no longer for fortune. And yet,' he added proudly, 'if I now cared for the thing, how I could BREAK those bloated banks in their pride, and what a glorious vengeance I could take of BAD LUCK and its inflexible agents! But my heart is too full of my happiness to allow the smallest place for the desire of vengeance.'

A very proper speech, unquestionably, and rendered still more edifying by M. Houdin's assurance that Raymond, at his death three years after, bequeathed the whole of his fortune to various charitable institutions at Paris.

With regard to the man's gaming theories, however, it may be just as well to consider the fact, that very many clever people, after contriving fine systems and schemes for ruining gaming banks,

have, as M. Houdin reminds us, only succeeded in ruining themselves and those who conformed to their precepts.

Et s'il est un joueur qui vive de son pain, On en voit tous les jours mille mourir de faim.

'If ONE player there be that can live by his gain, There are thousands that starve and strive ever in vain!'

CHAPTER IX.

THE HISTORY OF DICE AND CARDS.

The knights of hazard and devotees of chance, who live in and by the rattle of the box, little know, or care, perhaps, to whom they are indebted for the invention of their favourite cube. They will solace themselves, no doubt, on being told that they are pursuing a diversion of the highest antiquity, and which has been handed down through all civilized as well as barbarous nations to our own times.

The term 'cube,' which is the figure of a die, comes originally from the Arabic word 'ca'b,' or 'ca'be,' whence the Greeks derived their cubos, and cubeia, which is used to signify any solid figure perfectly square every way--such as the geometrical cube, the die used in play, and the temple at Mecca, which is of the same figure. The Persic name for 'die' is 'dad,' and from this word is derived the name of the thing in Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian, namely, dado. In the old French it is det, in the plural dets; in modern French de and dez, whence our English name 'die,' and its plural 'dies,' or 'dice.'

Plato tells us that dice and gaming originated with a certain demon, whom he calls Theuth, which seems very much like the original patronymic of our Teutonic races, always famous for their gambling propensity. The Greeks generally, however, ascribed the invention of dice to one of their race, named Palamedes, a sort of universal genius, who hit upon many other contrivances, among the rest, weights and measures. But this worthy lived in the times of the Trojan war, and yet Homer makes no mention of dice--the astragaloï named by the poet being merely knuckle-bones. Dice, however, are mentioned by Aristophanes in his comedies, and so it seems that the invention must be placed between the times of the two poets, that is, about 2300 years ago. At any rate the cube or die has been in use as an instrument of play, at least, during that period of time.

The great antiquity, therefore, of the die as an instrument of pastime is unquestionable, and the general reason assigned for its invention was the amusement and relaxation of the mind from the pressure of difficulties, or from the fatigues and toils of protracted war. Indeed, one conjecture is, that gaming was invented by the Lydians when under the pressure of a great famine; to divert themselves from their sufferings they contrived dice, balls, tables, &c. This seems, however, rather a bad joke.

The afflicted Job asks--'Can a man fill his belly with the east

wind?' And we can imagine that plenty of tobacco to smoke and 'chaw' would mitigate the pangs of starvation to an army in the field, as has been seriously suggested; but you might just as well present a soldier with a stone instead of bread, as invite him to amuse himself with dice, or anything else, to assuage the pangs of hunger.

Be that as it may, time soon matured this instrument of recreation into an engine of destruction; and the intended palliative of care and labour has proved the fostering nurse of innumerable evils. This diminutive cube has usurped a tyranny over mankind for more than two thousand years, and continues at this day to rule the world with despotic sway-- levelling all distinctions of fortune in an instant by the fiat of its single turn.

The use of dice was probably brought into this island by the Romans, if not before known; it became more frequent in the times of our Saxon ancestry, and has prevailed with almost unimpaired vigour from those days to our own.

The Astragalos of the Greeks and Talus of the Romans were, as before stated, nothing but the knuckle-bones of sheep and goats, numbered, and used for gaming, being tossed up in the air and caught on the back of the hand. Two persons played together at this game, using four bones, which they threw up into the air or emptied out of a dice-box (*fritillus*), observing the numbers of the opposite sides. The numbers on the four sides of the four bones admitted of thirty-five different combinations. The lowest throw of all was four aces; but the value of the throw was not in all cases the sum of the four numbers turned up. The highest in value was that called *Venus*, in which the numbers cast up were all different; the sum of them being only fourteen. It was by obtaining this throw, hence called *basilicus*, that 'the King of the Feast' was appointed by the Romans. Certain other throws were called by particular names, taken from the gods, heroes, kings, courtesans, animals; altogether there were sixty- four such names. Thus, the throw consisting of two aces and two treys, making eight, was denominated *Stesichorus*. When the object was simply to throw the highest number, the game was called *pleistobolinda*, a Greek word of that meaning. When a person threw the *tali*, he often invoked either a god or his mistress.

Dice were also made of ivory, bone, or some close-grained wood, especially *privet ligustris tesseris utilissima*, *Plin. H. N.*). They were numbered as at present.

Arsacides, King of the Parthians, presented Demetrius Nicator, among other presents, with golden dice--it is said, in contempt for his frivolous propensity to play--in *exprobationem puerilis levitatis*.^[58]

[58] *Justini Hist.*, lib. xxxviii. 9. 9.

Dice are also mentioned in the New Testament, where occurs the word *cubeia* (*Eph. iv. 14*), ('the only word for "gambling" used in

the Bible'), a word in very common use, among Paul's kith and kin, for 'cube,' 'dice,' 'dicery,' and it occurs frequently in the Talmud and Midrash. The Mishna declares unfit either as 'judge or witness,' 'a cubea-player, a usurer, a pigeon-flier (betting-man), a vendor of illegal (seventh-year) produce, and a slave.' A mitigating clause--proposed by one of the weightiest legal authorities, to the effect that the gambler and his kin should only be disqualified 'if they have but that one profession'--is distinctly negated by the majority, and the rule remains absolute. The classical word for the gambler or dice-player, cubeutes, appears aramaized in the same sources into something like kubiustis, as the following curious instances may show: When the Angel, after having wrestled with Jacob all night, asks him to let him go, 'for the dawn has risen' (A. V., 'the day breaketh'), Jacob is made to reply to him, 'Art thou, then, a thief or a kubiustis, that thou art afraid of the day?' To which the Angel replies, 'No, I am not; but it is my turn to-day, and for the first time, to sing the Angelic Hymn of Praise in Heaven: let me go.' In another Tadmudical passage an early biblical critic is discussing certain arithmetical difficulties in the Pentateuch. Thus he finds the number of Levites (in Numbers) to differ, when summed up from the single items, from that given in the total. Worse than that, he finds that all the gold and silver contributed to the sanctuary is not accounted for, and, clinching his argument, he cries, 'Is, then, your master Moses a thief or a kubiustis? Or could he not make up his accounts properly?' The critic is then informed of a certain difference between 'sacred' and other coins; and he further gets a lesson in the matter of Levites and Firstborn, which silences him. Again, the Talmud decides that, if a man have bought a slave who turns out to be a thief or a kubiustis,--which has here been erroneously explained to mean a 'manstealer,'--he has no redress. He must keep him, as he bought him, or send him away; for he has bought him with all his vices.

Regarding the translation 'sleight' in the A.V., this seems a correct enough rendering of the term as far as the SENSE of the passage goes, and comes very near the many ancient translations--'nequitia,' 'versutia,' 'inanis labor,' 'vana et inepta (?) subtilitas,' &c., of the Fathers. Luther has 'Schalkheit,'--a word the meaning of which at his time differed considerably from our acceptation of the term. The Thesaurus takes Paul's cubeia (s.v.) more literally, to mean 'in alea hominum, i. e., in certis illis casibus quibus jactantur homines.' [59]

[59] E. Deutseh in the Athenaeum of Sept. 28, 1867.

The ancient tali, marked and thrown as above described, were also used in DIVINATION, just as dice are at the present day; and doubtless the interpretations were the same among the ancients--for all superstitions are handed down from generation to generation with wondrous fidelity. The procedure is curious enough, termed 'the art of telling fortunes by dice.'

Three dice are taken and well shaken in the box with the left hand, and then cast out on a board or table on which a circle is

previously drawn with chalk; and the following are the supposed predictions of the throws:--

Three, a pleasing surprise; four, a disagreeable one; five, a stranger who will prove a friend; six, loss of property; seven, undeserved scandal; eight, merited reproach; nine, a wedding; ten, a christening, at which some important event will occur; eleven, a death that concerns you; twelve, a letter speedily; thirteen, tears and sighs; fourteen, beware that you are not drawn into some trouble or plot by a secret enemy; fifteen, immediate prosperity and happiness; sixteen, a pleasant journey; seventeen, you will either be on the water, or have dealings with those belonging to it, to your advantage; eighteen, a great profit, rise in life, or some desirable good will happen almost immediately, for the answers to the dice are said to be fulfilled within nine days. To throw the same number twice at one trial shows news from abroad, be the number what it may. If the dice roll over the circle, the number thrown goes for nothing, but the occurrence shows sharp words impending; and if they fall on the floor it is blows. In throwing the dice if one remain on the top of the other, 'it is a present of which you must take care,' namely, 'a little stranger' at hand.

Two singular facts throw light on the kind of dice used some 100 and 150 years ago. In an old cribbage card-box, curiously ornamented, supposed to have been made by an amateur in the reign of Queen Anne, and now in my possession, I found a die with one end fashioned to a point, evidently for the purpose of spinning--similar to the modern teetotum. With the same lot at the sale where it was bought, was a pack of cards made of ivory, about an inch and a half in length and one inch in width--in other respects exactly like the cards of the period.

Again, it is stated that in taking up the floors of the Middle Temple Hall, about the year 1764, nearly 100 pairs of dice were found, which had dropped, on different occasions, through the chinks or joints of the boards. They were very small, at least one-third less than those now in use. Certainly the benchers of those times did not keep the floor of their magnificent hall in a very decent condition.

A curious fact relating to dice may here be pointed out. Each of the six sides of a die is so dotted or numbered that the top and bottom of every die (taken together) make 7; for if the top or uppermost side is 5, the bottom or opposite side will be 2; and the same holds through every face; therefore, let the number of dice be what it may, their top and bottom faces, added together, must be equal to the number of dice multiplied by 7. In throwing three dice, if 2, 3, and 4 are thrown, making 9, their corresponding bottom faces will be 5, 4, and 3, making 12, which together are 21--equal to the three dice multiplied by 7.

CARDS.

The origin of cards is as doubtful as that of dice. All that we know for certain is that they were first used in the East. Some think that the figures at first used on them were of moral import: the Hindoo and Chinese cards are certainly emblematic in

a very high degree; the former illustrate the ten avatars, or incarnations of the deity Vishnu; and the so-called 'paper-tickets' of the Chinese typify the stars, the human virtues, and, indeed, every variety of subject. Sir William Jones was convinced that the Hindoo game of Chaturaji--that is, 'the Four Rajahs or Kings'--a species of highly-complicated chess--was the first germ of that parti-coloured pasteboard, which has been the ruin of so many modern fortunes. A pack of Hindoostani cards, in the possession of the Royal Asiatic Society, and presented to Captain Cromline Smith in 1815, by a high caste Brahman, was declared by the donor to be actually 1000 years old: 'Nor,' said the Brahman, 'can any of us now play at them, for they are not like our modern cards at all.' Neither, indeed, do they bear any remarkable resemblance to our own--the pack consisting of no less than eight sorts of divers colours, the kings being mounted upon elephants, and viziers, or second honours, upon horses, tigers, and bulls. Moreover, there are other marks distinguishing the respective value of the common cards, which would puzzle our club-quidnuncs not a little--such as 'a pine-apple in a shallow cup,' and a something like a parasol without a handle, and with two broken ribs sticking through the top. The Chinese cards have the advantage over those of Hindoostan by being oblong instead of circular.

It was not before the end of the 14th century that cards became known in Europe; and it is a curious fact that the French clergy took greatly to card-playing about that time--their favourite game being the rather ungentle 'All Fours,' as now reputed; for they were specially forbidden that pastime by the Synod of Langres in 1404.

The ancient cards of both Spain and France, particularly the 'court-cards,' exhibit strong marks of the age of chivalry; but here we may observe that the word is written by some ancient writers, 'coate-cards,' evidently signifying no more than figures in particular dresses. The giving pre-eminence or victory to a certain suit, by the name of 'trump,' which is only a corruption of the word 'triumph,' is a strong trait of the martial ideas of the inventors of these games. So that, if the Chinese started the idea, it seems clear that the French and Spanish improved upon it and gave it a plain significance; and there is no reason to doubt that cards were actually employed to amuse Charles VI. in his melancholy and dejection.

The four suits of cards are supposed to represent the four estates of a kingdom:--1. The nobility and gentry; 2. The ecclesiastics or priesthood; 3. The citizens or commercial men; 4. The peasantry or Husbandmen. The nobility are represented in the old Spanish cards by the espada, or sword, corrupted by us into 'spades,'--by the French with piques, 'pikes or spears.' The ecclesiastical order is pointed out by copas, or sacramental cups, which are painted in one of the suits of old Spanish cards, and by coeurs, or 'hearts,' on French cards, as in our own--thereby signifying choir-men, gens de choeur, or ecclesiastics--from choeur de l'eglise, 'the choir of the church,' that being esteemed the most important part or the HEART of the church.

The Spaniards depicted their citizens or commercial men under dineros, a small coin, an emblem very well adapted to the productive classes; the French by carreaux, squares or lozenges--importing, perhaps, unity of interest, equality of condition, regularity of manners, and the indispensable duty of this class of men to deal with one another 'on the square.' The Spaniards made bastos, or knotty clubs, the emblem of the 'bold peasantry,' taken probably from the custom that the plebeians were permitted to challenge or fight each other with sticks and quarter-staves only, but not with the sword, or any arms carried by a gentleman; while the French peasantry were pointed out under the ideas of husbandry, namely, by the trefles, trefoil or clover-grass. So much for the SUITS.

With regard to the depicted figures of cards, each nation likewise followed its own inventions, though grounded in both on those ideas of chivalry which then strongly prevailed. The Spanish cards were made to carry the insignia and accoutrements of the King of Spain, the ace of deneros being emblazoned with the royal arms, supported by an eagle. The French ornamented their cards with fleurs de lis, their royal emblem. The Spanish kings, in conformity to the martial spirit of the times when cards were introduced, were all mounted on horseback, as befitted generals and commanders-in-chief; but their next in command (among the cards) was el caballo, the knight-errant on horseback--for the old Spanish cards had no queens; and the third in order was the soto, or attendant, that is, the esquire, or armour-bearer of the knight--all which was exactly conformable to those ideas of chivalry which ruled the age. It is said that David (king of spades), tormented by a rebellious son, is the emblem of Charles VII., menaced by his son (Louis XI.), and that Argine (queen of clubs) is the anagram of Regina, and the emblem of Marie d'Anjou, the wife of that prince; that Pallas (queen of spades) represents Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans; that Rachel (queen of diamonds) is Agnes Sorel; lastly, that Judith (queen of hearts) is the Queen Isabeau. The French call the queens at cards dames.

The four knaves (called in French, valets or varlets) are four valiant captains--Ogier and Lancelot, the companions of Charlemagne, Hector de Gallard, and Lahire, the generals of Charles VII. The remainder of the pack equally presents a sort of martial allegory; the heart is bravery; the spade (espad, 'sword') and the diamond (carreau, that is, a square or shield) are the arms of war; the club (in French trefle, 'trefoil') is the emblem of provisions; and the ace (in French as, from the Latin aes, 'coin') is the emblem of money--the sinews of war.

In accordance with this allegorical meaning, the function of the ace is most significant. It leads captive every other card, queen and king included--thus indicating the omnipotence of gold or mammon!

'To the mighty god of this nether world--
To the spirit that roams with banner unfurl'd
O'er the Earth and the rolling Sea--
And hath conquer'd all to his thralldom
Where his eye hath glanced or his footstep sped--

Who hath power alike o'er the living and dead--
Mammon![59] I sing to thee!

[59] Steinmetz Ode to Mammon.

Some say that the four kings represent those famous champions of antiquity--David, Alexander, Julius Caesar, and Charlemagne; and that the four queens, Argine, Pallas, Esther, and Judith, are the respective symbols of majesty, wisdom, piety, and fortitude; and there can be no doubt, if you look attentively on the queens of a pack of cards, you will easily discern the appropriate expressions of all these attributes in the faces of the grotesque ladies therein depicted. The valets, or attendants, whom we call knaves, are not necessarily 'rascals,' but simply servants royal; at first they were knights, as appears from the names of some of the famous French knights being formerly painted on the cards.

Thus a pack of cards is truly a monument of the olden time--the days of chivalry and its numberless associations.

In addition to the details I have given in the previous chapter respecting the probability of holding certain cards, there are a few other curious facts concerning them, which it may be interesting to know.

There is a difference in the eyes of two of the knaves--those of diamonds and hearts, more apparent in the old patterns, suggesting the inference that they are blind. This has been made the basis of a card trick, as to which two of the four knaves presenting themselves would be selected as servants. Of course the blind ones would be rejected. A bet is sometimes proposed to the unwary, at Whist, but one of the party will have in his hand, after the deal, only one of a suit, or none of a suit. The bet should not be taken, as this result very frequently happens.

Lastly, there is an arithmetical puzzle of the most startling effect to be contrived with a pack of cards, as follows. Let a party make up parcels of cards, beginning with a number of pips on any card, and then counting up to twelve with individual cards. In the first part of the trick it must be understood that the court cards count as ten, all others according to the pips. Thus, a king put down will require only two cards to make up 12, whereas the ace will require 11, and so on. Now, when all the parcels are completed, the performer of the trick requires to know only the number of parcels thus made, and the remainder, if any, to declare after a momentary calculation, the exact number of pips on the first cards laid down--to the astonishment of those not in the secret. In fact, there is no possible arrangement of the cards, according to this method, which can prevent an adept from declaring the number of pips required, after being informed of the number of parcels, and the remainder, if any. This startling performance will be explained in a subsequent chapter--amusing card tricks.

Cards must soon have made their way among our countrymen, from the great intercourse that subsisted between England and France about the time of the first introduction of cards into the latter

kingdom. If the din of arms in the reign of our fifth Henry should seem unfavourable to the imitation of an enemy's private diversions, it must be remembered that France was at that period under the dominion of England, that the English lived much in that country, and consequently joined in the amusements of the private hour, as well as in the public dangers of the field.

Very soon, however, the evil consequences of their introduction became apparent. One would have thought that in such a tumultuous reign at home as that of our sixth Henry, there could not have been so much use made of cards as to have rendered them an object of public apprehension and governmental solicitude; but a record appears in the beginning of the reign of Edward IV., after the deposition of the unfortunate Henry, by which playing cards, as well as dice, tennis-balls, and chessmen, were forbidden to be imported.

If this tended to check their use for a time, the subsequent Spanish connection with the court of England renewed an acquaintance with cards and a love for them. The marriage of Prince Arthur with the Infanta Catherine of Arragon, brought on an intimacy between the two nations, which probably increased card-playing in England,--it being a diversion to which the Spaniards were extremely addicted at that period.

Cards were certainly much in use, and all ideas concerning them very familiar to the minds of the English, during the reign of Henry VIII., as may be inferred from a remarkable sermon of the good bishop Latimer. This sermon was preached in St Edward's church, Cambridge, on the Sunday before Christmas day, 1527, and in this discourse he may be said to have 'dealt' out an exposition of the precepts of Christianity according to the terms of card-playing. 'Now ye have heard what is meant by this "first card," and how you ought to "play" with it, I purpose again to "deal" unto you "another card almost of the same suit," for they be of so nigh affinity that one cannot be well "played" without the other, &c.' 'It seems,' says Fuller, 'that he suited his sermon rather to the TIME--being about Christmas, when cards were much used--than to the text, which was the Baptist's question to our Lord--"Who art thou?"--taking thereby occasion to conform his discourse to the "playing at cards," making the "heart triumph."'

This blunt preaching was in those days admirably effectual, but it would be considered ridiculous in ours--except from the lips of such original geniuses as Mr Spurgeon, who hit upon this vein and made a fortune of souls as well as money. He is, however, inimitable, and any attempt at entering into his domain would probably have the same result as that which attended an imitation of Latimer by a country minister, mentioned by Fuller. 'I remember,' he says, 'in my time (about the middle of the seventeenth century), a country minister preached at St Mary's, from Rom. xii. 3,--"As God has DEALT to every man the measure of faith." In a fond imitation of Latimer's sermon he followed up the metaphor of DEALING,--that men should PLAY ABOVE-BOARD, that is, avoid all dissembling,--should not POCKET CARDS, but improve their gifts and graces,--should FOLLOW SUIT, that is, wear the surplice, &c.,--all which produced nothing but laughter in the audience. Thus the same actions by several persons at several

times are made not the same actions, yea, differenced from commendable discretion to ridiculous absurdity. And thus he will make but bad music who hath the instruments and fiddlesticks, but none of the "resin" of Latimer.'

The habit of card-playing must have been much confirmed and extended by the marriage of Philip of Spain with our Queen Mary, whose numerous and splendid retinue could not but bring with them that passionate love of cards which prevailed in the Spanish court.

It seems also probable that the cards then used (whatever they might have been before) were of Spanish form and figure, in compliment to the imperious Philip; since even to this day the names of two Spanish suits are retained on English cards, though without any reference to their present figure. Thus, we call one suit spades, from the Spanish *espada*, 'sword,' although we retain no similitude of the sword in the figure,--and another clubs, in Spanish, *bastos*, but without regard to the figure also.

Old Roger Ascham, the tutor of Queen Elizabeth, gives us a picture of the gambling arts of his day, as follows:--How will they use these shiftes when they get a plaine man that cannot skill of them! How they will go about, if they perceive an honest man have moneye, which list not playe, to provoke him to playe! They will seek his companye; they will let him pay noughte, yea, and as I hearde a man once saye that he did, they will send for him to some house, and spend perchaunce a crowne on him, and, at last, will one begin to saye: at, my masters, what shall we do? Shall every man playe his twelve-pence while an apple roste in the fire, and then we will drincke and departe?" "Naye" will another saye (as false as he), "you cannot leave when you begin, and therefore I will not playe: but if you will gage, that every man as he hath lost his twelve-pence, shall sit downe, I am contente, for surelye I would Winne no manne's moneye here, but even as much as woulde pay for my supper." Then speaketh the thirde to the honeste man that thought not to play:--"What? Will you play your twelve-pence?" If he excuse him--"Tush! man!" will the other saye, "sticke not in honeste company for twelve-pence; I will beare your halfe, and here is my moneye." Nowe all this is to make him to beginne, for they knowe if he be once in, and be a loser, that he will not sticke at his twelve-pence, but hopeth ever to get it againe, whiles perhappes he will lose all. Then every one of them setteth his shiftes abroache, some with false dyse, some with settling of dyse, some with having outlandish silver coynes gilded, to put awaye at a time for good golde. Then, if there come a thing in controversye, must you be judged by the table, and then farewell the honeste man's parte, for he is borne downe on every syde.'

It is evident from this graphic description of the process, that the villany of sharpers has been ever the same; for old Roger's account of the matter in his day exactly tallies with daily experience at the present time.

The love of card-playing was continued through the reign of Elizabeth and James I.,[60] and in the reign of the latter it had reached so high a pitch that the audiences used to amuse

themselves with cards at the play-house, while they were waiting for the beginning of the play. The same practice existed at Florence. If the thing be not done at the present day, something analogous prevails in our railway carriages throughout the kingdom. It is said that professed card-sharpers take season-tickets on all the lines, and that a great DEAL of money is made by the gentry by duping unwary travellers into a game or by betting.

[60] King James, the British Solomon, although he could not 'abide' tobacco, and denounced it in a furious 'Counterblaste,' could not 'utterly condemn' play, or, as he calls it, 'fitting house-pastimes.' 'I will not,' he says, 'agree in forbidding cards, dice, and other like games of Hazard,' and enters into an argument for his opinion, which is scarcely worth quoting. See Basilicon Doron--a prodigy of royal fatuity--but the perfect 'exponent' of the characteristics of the Stuart royal race in England.

There is no reason to suppose that the fondness for this diversion abated, except during the short 'trump or triumph of the fanatic suit'--in the hard times of Old Oliver--when undoubtedly cards were styled 'the devil's books.' But, indeed, by that time they had become an engine of much fraud and destruction; so that one of the early acts of Charles II.'s reign inflicted large penalties on those who should use cards for fraudulent purposes.

'Primero was the fashionable game at the court of England during the Tudor dynasty. Shakspeare represents Henry VIII. playing at it with the Duke of Suffolk; and Falstaff says, "I never prospered since I forswore myself at Primero." In the Earl of Northumberland's letters about the Gunpowder-plot, it is noticed that Joscelin Percy was playing at this game on Sunday, when his uncle, the conspirator, called on him at Essex House. In the Sidney papers, there is an account of a desperate quarrel between Lord Southampton, the patron of Shakspeare, and one Ambrose Willoughby. Lord Southampton was then "Squire of the Body" to Queen Elizabeth, and the quarrel was occasioned by Willoughby persisting to play with Sir Walter Raleigh and another at Primero, in the Presence Chamber, after the queen had retired to rest, a course of proceeding which Southampton would not permit. Primero, originally a Spanish game, is said to have been made fashionable in England by Philip of Spain, after his marriage with Queen Mary.

Maw succeeded Primero as the fashionable game at the English court, and was the favourite game of James I., who appears to have played at cards, just as he played with affairs of state, in an indolent manner; requiring in both cases some one to hold his cards, if not to prompt him what to play. Weldon, alluding to the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury, in his Court and Character of King James, says: 'The next that came on the stage was Sir Thomas Monson, but the night before he was to come to his trial, the king being at the game of Maw, said, "To-morrow comes Thomas Monson to his trial." "Yea," said the king's card-holder, "where, if he do not play his master's prize, your Majesty shall

never trust me." This so ran in the king's mind, that at the next game he said he was sleepy, and would play out that set the next night.

'It is evident that Maw differed very slightly from Five Cards, the most popular game in Ireland at the present day. As early as 1674 this game was popular in Ireland, as we learn from Cotton's Compleat Gamester, which says: "Five Cards is an Irish game, and is much played in that kingdom for considerable sums of money, as All-fours is played in Kent, and Post-and-pair in the west of England."

'Noddy was one of the old English court games. This has been supposed to have been a children's game, and it was certainly nothing of the kind. Its nature is thus fully described in a curious satirical poem, entitled Batt upon Batt, published in 1694.

"Show me a man can turn up Noddy still,
And deal himself three fives too, when he will;
Conclude with one-and-thirty, and a pair,
Never fail ten in Stock, and yet play fair,
If Batt be not that wight, I lose my aim."

'From these lines, there can be no doubt that the ancient Noddy was the modern cribbage--the Nod of to-day, rejoicing in the name of Noddy, and the modern Crib, being termed the Stock.

'Ombre was most probably introduced into this country by Catherine of Portugal, the queen of Charles II.; Waller, the court poet, has a poem on a card torn at Ombre by the queen. This royal lady also introduced to the English court the reprehensible practice of playing cards on Sunday. Pepys, in 1667, writes: "This evening, going to the queen's side to see the ladies, I did find the queen, the Duchess of York, and another at cards, with the room full of ladies and great men; which I was amazed at to see on a Sunday, having not believed, but contrarily flatly denied the same, a little while since, to my cousin."[61]

[61] Hombre, or rather El Hombre, or 'The Man,' was so named as requiring thought and reflection, which are qualities peculiar to man; or rather, alluding to him who undertakes to play the game against the rest of the gamesters, emphatically called The Man. It requires very great application to play it well: and let a man be ever so expert, he will be apt to fall into mistakes if he thinks of anything else, or is disturbed by the conversation of those that look on. It is a game of three, with 40 cards, that is, rejecting the eights, nines, and tens of all the suits.

'In a passage from Evelyn's Memoirs, the writer impressively describes another Sunday-evening scene at Whitehall, a few days before the death of Charles II., in which a profligate assemblage of courtiers is represented as deeply engaged in the game of Basset. This was an Italian game, brought by Cardinal Mazarin to France; Louis XIV. is said to have lost large sums at it; and it was most likely brought to England by some of the French ladies

of the court. It did not stand its ground, however, in this country; Ombre continuing the fashionable game in England, down till after the expiration of the first quarter of the last century.

'Quadrille succeeded Ombre, but for a curious reason did not reign so long as its predecessor. From the peculiar nature of Quadrille, an unfair confederacy might be readily established, by any two persons, by which the other players could be cheated.

'While the preceding games were in vogue the magnificent temple of Whist, destined to outshine and overshadow them, was in course of erection.

"Let India vaunt her children's vast address,
Who first contrived the warlike sport of Chess;
Let nice Piquette the boast of France remain,
And studious Ombre be the pride of Spain;
Invention's praise shall England yield to none,
When she can call delightful Whist her own."

'All great inventions and discoveries are works of time, and Whist is no exception to the rule; it did not come into the world perfect at all points, as Minerva emerged from the head of Jupiter. Nor were its wonderful merits early recognized. Under the vulgar appellations of Whisk and Swobbers, it long lingered in the servants'-hall ere it could ascend to the drawing-room. At length, some gentlemen, who met at the Crown coffee-house, in Bedford Row, studied the game, gave it rules, established its principles, and then Edward Hoyle, in 1743, blazoned forth its fame to all the world.

'Many attempts have been made, at various times, to turn playing-cards to a very different use from that for which they were originally intended. Thus, in 1518, a learned Franciscan friar, named Murner, published a Logica Memorativa, a mode of teaching logic, by a pack of cards; and, subsequently, he attempted to teach a summary of civil law in the same manner. In 1656, an Englishman, named Jackson, published a work, entitled the Scholar's Sciential Cards, in which he proposed to teach reading, spelling, grammar, writing, and arithmetic, with various arts and sciences, by playing-cards; premising that the learner was well grounded in all the games played at the period. And later still, about the close of the seventeenth century, there was published the Genteel Housekeeper's Pastime; or the Mode of Carving at Table represented in a Pack of Playing-Cards, by which any one of ordinary Capacity may learn how to Carve, in Mode, all the most usual Dishes of Flesh, Fish, Fowl, and Baked Meats, with the several Sauces and Garnishes proper to Every Dish of Meat. In this system, flesh was represented by hearts, fish by clubs, fowl by diamonds, and baked-meat by spades. The king of hearts ruled a noble sirloin of roast-beef; the monarch of clubs presided over a pickled herring; and the king of diamonds reared his battle-axe over a turkey; while his brother of spades smiled benignantly on a well-baked venison-pasty.

'The kind of advertisements, now called circulars, were often, formerly, printed on the backs of playing-cards. Visiting-cards,

too, were improvised, by writing the name on the back of playing-cards. About twenty years ago, when a house in Dean Street, Soho, was under repair, several visiting-cards of this description were found behind a marble chimney-piece, one of them bearing the name of Isaac Newton. Cards of invitation were written in a similar manner. In the fourth picture, in Hogarth's series of "Marriage a-la-Mode," several are seen lying on the floor, upon one of which is inscribed: "Count Basset begs to no how Lade Squander sleapt last nite." Hogarth, when he painted this inscription, was most probably thinking of Mrs Centlivre's play, *The Basset Table*, which a critic describes as containing a great deal of plot and business, without much sentiment or delicacy.

'A curious and undoubtedly authentic historical anecdote is told of a pack of cards. Towards the end of the persecuting reign of Queen Mary, a commission was granted to a Dr Cole to go over to Ireland, and commence a fiery crusade against the Protestants of that country. On coming to Chester, on his way, the doctor was waited on by the mayor, to whom he showed his commission, exclaiming, with premature triumph, "Here is what shall lash the heretics of Ireland." Mrs Edmonds, the landlady of the inn, having a brother in Dublin, was much disturbed by overhearing these words; so, when the doctor accompanied the mayor downstairs, she hastened into his room, opened his box, took out the commission, and put a pack of cards in its place. When the doctor returned to his apartment, he put the box into his portmanteau without suspicion, and the next morning sailed for Dublin. On his arrival he waited on the lord-lieutenant and privy council, to whom he made a speech on the subject of his mission, and then presented the box to his Lordship; but on opening it, there appeared only a pack of cards, with the knave of clubs uppermost. The doctor was petrified, and assured the council that he had had a commission, but what was become of it he could not tell. The lord-lieutenant answered, "Let us have another commission, and, in the mean while, we can shuffle the cards." Before the doctor could get his commission renewed Queen Mary died, and thus the persecution was prevented. We are further informed that, when Queen Elizabeth was made acquainted with the circumstances, she settled a pension of £40 per annum on Mrs Edmonds, for having saved her Protestant subjects in Ireland.' [62]

[62] *The Book of Days*, Dec. 28.

All the pursuits of life, all the trades and occupations of men, have, in all times, lent expressions to the languages of nations, and those resulting from the propensity of GAMING are among those which perpetually recur in daily conversation, and with the greatest emphasis. Thus we have:--'He has played his cards well or ill,'--applied to the management of fortune or one's interest; *jacta est alea*, 'the die is cast,' as exclaimed Julius Caesar before crossing the Rubicon; 'he has run his RACE--reached the GOAL' a turf adage applied to consummate success or disastrous failure; 'a lucky throw or hit;' 'within an ACE,' meaning one point of gaining a thing; 'he HAZARDS everything;' 'chances are for and against;' 'he was PIQUED,' from the game of piquet,

meaning, angry at losing something; 'left in the lurch,' from the French game l'Ourche, wherein on certain points happening the stake is to be paid double, and meaning, 'under circumstances unexpected and peculiarly unfavourable;' 'to save your bacon or gamon,' from the game Back-gammon[63] a blot is hit,' from the same; 'checked in his career,' that is, stopped in his designs from the game of chess.

[63] The etymology of the word Back-gamon has been disputed. Hyde seems to have settled it. A certain portion of the hog is called in Italian gambone, whence our English word gambon or gammon. Confounding things that differ, many think that 'gamon' in the game has the same meaning, and therefore they say--'he saved his gamon or bacon,' which is absurd, although it is a proverbial phrase of sufficient emphasis. The word Backgammon seems to be derived from the very nature of the game itself, namely, back-game-on, that is, when one of your pieces is taken, you must go back--begin again--and then game on-- 'Back-game-on'.

The fabrication of cards is a most important manufacture of France; and Paris and Nancy are the two places where most cards are made. The annual consumption of cards in France amounts to 1,500,000 francs, or L62,500; but France also supplies foreigners with the article, especially the Spanish, American, Portuguese, and English colonies, to the value of 1,000,000 francs, or L41,666. The government derives from this branch of French industry not much less than L25,000 annual revenue, that is, from 20 to 25 per cent. of the product. The duty on cards is secured and enforced by severe penalties.

English cards are about a third larger than the French. The double-headed cards are an English invention, and they are being adopted by the French. Their advantage is obvious, in securing the secrecy of the hand, for by observing a party in arranging his cards after the deal, the act of turning up a card plainly shows that it must be at least a face card, and the oftener this is done the stronger the hand, in general. In Germany, a fourth face-card is sometimes added to the pack, called the Knight, or Chevalier. The Italians have also in use long cards, called tarots, which, however, must not be confounded with the French cards called tarotees, with odd figures on them, and used by fortune-tellers.

The method of making playing-cards seems to have given the first hint to the invention of printing, as appears from the first specimens of printing at Haerlem, and those in the Bodleian Library.

'The manufacture of playing-cards comprises many interesting processes. The cardboard employed for this purpose is formed of several thicknesses of paper pasted together; there are usually four such thicknesses; and the paper is so selected as to take paste, paint, and polish equally well. The sheets of paper are pasted with a brush, and are united by successive processes of cold-drying, hot-drying, and hydraulic pressure. Each sheet is large enough for forty cards. The outer surfaces of the outer sheets are prepared with a kind of flinty coating, which gives

sharpness to the outline of the various coloured devices. Most packs of cards are now made with coloured backs. The ground-tint is laid on with a brush, and consists of dis-temper colour, or pigments mixed with warm melted size. The device impressed on this ground-tint is often very beautiful. Messrs De la Rue, the leading firm in the manufacture, employ tasteful artists, and invest a large amount of capital in the introduction of new patterns. On cards sold at moderate prices, the colours at the back are generally two--one for the ground, and one for the device; but some of the choicer specimens display several colours; and many of the designs are due to the pencil of Mr Owen Jones. The printing of the design is done on the sheets of paper, before the pasting to form cardboard. The pips or spots on the faces of playing-cards are now spades, clubs, hearts, and diamonds; but at different times, and in different countries, there have been leaves, acorns, bells, cups, swords, fruit, heads, parasols, and other objects similarly represented. In English cards the colours are red and black; Messrs De la Rue once introduced red, black, green, and blue for the four suits; but the novelty was not encouraged by card-players. The same makers have also endeavoured to supersede the clumsy devices of kings, queens, and knaves, by something more artistic; but this, too, failed commercially; for the old patterns, like the old willow-pattern dinner-plates, are still preferred--simply because the users have become accustomed to them. Until within the last few years the printing of cards was generally done by stencilling, the colour being applied through perforated devices in a stencil-plate. The colour employed for this purpose is mixed up with a kind of paste. When there is a device at the back, the outline of the device is printed from an engraved wood-block, and the rest filled in by stencilling. The stencilling of the front and back can be done either before or after the pasting of the sheets into cardboard. One great improvement in the manufacture has been the substitution of oil colour for paste or size colour; and another, the substitution of printing for stencilling. Messrs De la Rue have expended large sums of money on these novelties; for many experiments had to be made, to determine how best to employ oil colour so that the spots or pips may be equal-tinted, the outline clear and sharp, the pigment well adherent to the surface, and the drying such as to admit of polishing without stickiness. The plates for printing are engraved on copper or brass, or are produced by electrotpe, or are built up with small pieces of metal or interlaced wire. The printing is done in the usual way of colour-printing, with as many plates as there are colours (usually five), and one for the outlines; it is executed on the sheets of paper, before being pasted into cardboard. When the printing, drying, and pasting are all completed, a careful polish is effected by means of brush-wheels, pasteboard wheels, heated plates, and heated rollers; in such a way that the polish on the back may differ from that on the face--since it is found that too equally polished surfaces do not slide quite so readily over each other. Formerly, every pack of cards made in England for home use paid a duty of one shilling, which duty was levied on the ace of spades.

The maker engraved a plate for twenty aces of spades; the printing was done by the government at Somerset House, and L1 was paid by the maker for every sheet of aces so printed. The law is

now altered. Card sellers pay an annual license of 2s. 6d., and to each pack of cards is affixed a three-pence stamp, across which the seller must write or stamp his name, under a penalty of L5 for the omission.

The cardboard, when all the printing is finished, is cut up into cards; every card is minutely examined, and placed among the 'Moguls,' 'Harrys,' or 'Highlanders,' as they are technically called, according to the degree in which they may be faultless or slightly specked; and the cards are finally made up into packs.'[64]

[64] Chambers's Cyclopaedia.

Machinery has been called into requisition in card-playing. In 1815 a case was tried in which part of the debt claimed was for an instrument to cut cards so as to give an unfair advantage to the person using it. The alleged debtor had been most fortunate in play, winning at one time L11,000 from an officer in India. For an exactly opposite reason another machine was used in 1818 by the Bennet Street Club. It consisted of a box curiously constructed for dealing cards, and was invented by an American officer.

Another curious fact relating to cards is the duty derived from them. In the year 1775 the number of packs stamped was 167,000, amounting to between L3000 and L4000 duty. Lord North put on another sixpence. Of course, a vast number of packs were smuggled in, paying no duty, as in the case of tobacco, in all times since its fiscal regulations. In the time of Pitt, 1789, L9000 were to be raised by an additional duty of sixpence on cards and dice, consequently there must have been no less than 360,000 packs of cards and pairs of dice stamped in the year 1788, to justify the calculation--a proof that gaming in England was not on the decline. In the year 1790, the duty on cards was two shillings per pack, and on dice thirteen shillings per pair.

This duty on cards went on increasing its annual addition to the revenue, so that about the year 1820 the monthly payments of Mr Hunt alone, the card-maker of Picadilly, for the stamp-duty on cards, varied from L800 to L1000, that is, from L9600 to L12,000 per annum. In 1833 the stamp-duty on cards was 6d., and it yielded L15,922, showing a consumption of 640,000 packs per annum. Much of this, however, was sheer waste, on account of the rule of gamblers requiring a fresh pack at every game.

In the Harleian Miscellany[65] will be found a satirical poem entitled 'The Royal Gamblers; or, the Odd Cards new shuffled for a Conquering Game,' referring to the political events of the years from 1702 to 1706, and concluding with the following lines--

'Thus ends the game which Europe has in view,
Which, by the stars, may happen to be true.'

[65] Vol. i. p. 177.

In vol. iv. of the same work there is another poem of the kind, entitled 'The State Gamesters; or, the Old Cards new packed and shuffled,' which characteristically concludes as follows--

'But we this resolution have laid down--
Never to play so high as for a Crown.'

Finally, as to allusions to gaming, the reader may remember the famous sarcasm of the late Earl of Derby (as Lord Stanley) some thirty years ago, comparing the Government to Thimble-riggers in operation.

CHAPTER X.

PIQUET, BASSET, FARO, HAZARD, PASSE-DIX, PUT, CROSS AND PILE, THIMBLE-RIG.

PIQUET

Piquet is said to have derived its name from that of its inventor, who contrived it to amuse Charles VI. of France. The game was played with thirty two cards, that is, discarding out of the pack all the deuces, treys, fours, fives, and sixes. Regular piquet-packs were sold. In reckoning up the points, every card counted for its value, as ten for ten, nine for nine, and so on down to seven, which was, of course, the lowest; but the ace reckoned for eleven. All court cards reckoned for ten. As in other games, the ace won the king, the king the queen, and so on, to the knave, which won the ten. The cards were dealt at option by fours, threes, or twos, to the number of twelve, which was the hand--'discarding' being allowed; but both the dealer and he that led were OBLIGED to discard at least one card, let their game be ever so good. When the cards were played out, each counted his tricks; and he that had most reckoned 10 for winning the cards; if the tricks were equal, neither reckoned at all. He who, without playing (that is, according to the various terms of the game), could reckon up 30 in hand, when his antagonist reckoned nothing, scored 90 for them; this was called a repic; and all above 30 counted so many,--32 counting 92, and so on. He who could make up 30, part in hand and part by play, before the other made anything, scored 60; this was called a pic.

The game was also played as pool precisely according to the rules briefly sketched as above, the penalty for losing being a guinea to the pool.

Piquet required much practice to play it well. It became so great a favourite that, by the middle of the 18th century, the meanest people were well acquainted with it, and 'let into all the tricks and secrets of it, in order to render them complete sharpers.' Such are the words of an old author, who adds that the game was liable to great imposition, and he explains the

methods in use. Short cards were used for cutting, as in Whist, at the time. Of these cards there were two sorts, one longer than the rest; and the advantage gained by them was as the adversary managed it, by cutting the longer or broader, as best suited his purpose, or imposing on the dealer, when it was his turn, to cut those which made most against him. The aces, kings, queens, and knaves were marked with dots at the corners, and in the very old book from which I am quoting precise directions are given how this marking can be effected in such a manner 'as not to be discovered by your ADVERSARY, and at the same time appear plain to YOURSELF.' With a fine pointed pen and some clear spring water, players made dots upon the glazed card at the corners according to the above method; or they coloured the water with india ink, to make the marks more conspicuous. The work concludes as follows:--'There are but 32 cards made use of at Piquet, so that just half of them will be known to you; and in dealing you may have an opportunity to give yourself those you LIKE best; and if you cannot conveniently CHANGE the PACK according to your desire, you will commonly KNOW what YOU are to TAKE IN, which is a demonstrative advantage to win any one's money.'

Evidently they did not 'assume a virtue' in those days, 'if they had it not.'

BASSET.

The game of Basset (in French Wassette) was considered one of the most polite games with cards, and only fit for persons of the highest rank to play at, on account of the great losses or gains that might accrue on one side or the other.

The sums of money lost in France at this game were so considerable that the princes of the blood were in danger of being undone; and after many persons of distinction were ruined the court of France thought fit to forbid Basset. Then Faro was invented; and both were soon introduced into England, and after three or four years' play here, they impoverished so many families, that Parliament enacted a suppression of both games, with severe penalties. The two games are, therefore, of historical interest, and deserve an explanation.

Basset was a sort of lottery. The dealer who kept the bank at Basset, having the sole disposal of the first and last card, and other considerable privileges in dealing the cards, had a much greater prospect of gaining than those who played. This was a truth so acknowledged in France that the king, by public edict, ordered that the privilege of a talliere, or banker at Basset, should only be allowed to the 'chief cadets,' or sons of noblemen--supposing that whoever kept the bank must, in a very short time, acquire a considerable fortune.

In this game there was: 1. The Talliere, the banker, who laid down a sum of money to answer every winning card which might turn up. 2. The Croupiere, the assistant of the former, standing by to supervise the losing cards,--so that when there were many at play he might not lose by overlooking anything which might turn up to his profit. 3. The Punter, or every player. 4. The Fasse,

that is, the first card turned up by the talliere, by which he gained half the value of the money laid upon every card of THAT SORT by the punters or players. 5. The Couch, which was the first stake that every punter laid upon each card-- every player having a book of 13 cards before him, upon which he must lay his money, more or less, according to his fancy. 6. The Paroli: in this, whoever won the couch, and intended to go on for another advantage, crooked the corner of his card, letting his money lie, without being paid the value by the talliere. 7. The Masse, which was, when those who had won the couch, would venture more money on the SAME card. 8. The Pay, which was when the player had won the couch, and, being doubtful of making the paroli, left off; for by going the pay, if the card turned up wrong, he lost nothing, having won the couch before; but if by this adventure fortune favoured him, he won double the money he had staked. 9. The Alpieu was when the couch was won by turning up, or crooking, the corner of the winning card. 10. The Sept-et-le-va was the first great chance that showed the advantages of the game, namely, if the player had won the couch, and then made a paroli by crooking the corner of his card, and going on to a SECOND chance, if his winning card turned up again it became a sept-et-le-va, which was seven times as much as he had laid upon his card. 11. Quinze-et-le-va, was attending the player's humour, who, perhaps, was resolved to follow his fancy, and still lay his money upon the SAME card, which was done by crooking the third corner of his card: if this card came up by the dealing of the talliere, it made him win fifteen times as much money as he staked. 12. Trent-et-le-va was marked by the lucky player by crooking the end of the fourth corner of his card, which, coming up, made him win thirty-three times as much money as he staked. 13. Soissante-et-le-va was the highest chance that could happen in the game, for it paid sixty-seven times as much money as was staked. It was seldom won except by some player who resolved to push his good fortune to the utmost.

The players sat round a table, the talliere in the midst of them, with the bank of gold before him, and the punters or players each having a book of 13 cards, laying down one, two, three, or more, as they pleased, with money upon them, as stakes; then the talliere took the pack in his hand and turned them up--the bottom card appearing being called the fasse; he then paid half the value of the stakes laid down by the punters upon any card of THAT SORT.

After the fasse was turned up, and the talliere and croupiere had looked round the cards on the table, and taken advantage of the money laid on them, the former proceeded with his deal; and the next card appearing, whether the king, queen, ace, or whatever it might be, won for the player, the latter might receive it, or making paroli, as before said, go on to sept-et-le-va. The card after that won for the talliere, who took money from each player's card of that sort, and brought it into his bank--obviously a prodigious advantage in the talliere over the players.

The talliere, if the winning card was a king, and the next after it was a ten, said (showing the cards all round), 'King wins, ten loses,' paying the money to such cards as are of the winning

sort, and taking the money from those who lost, added it to his bank. This done, he went on with the deal, it might be after this fashion--'Ace wins, five loses; ' 'Knave wins, seven loses;' and so on, every other card alternately winning and losing, till all the pack was dealt but the last card.

The LAST card turned up was, by the rules of the game, for the advantage of the talliere; although a player might have one of the same sort, still it was allowed to him as one of the dues of his office, and he paid nothing on it.

The bold player who was lucky and adventurous, and could push on his couch with a considerable stake to sept-et-le-va, quinze-et-le-va, trente-et-le-va, &c., must in a wonderful manner have multiplied his couch, or first stake; but this was seldom done; and the loss of the players, by the very nature of the game, invariably exceeded that of the bank; in fact, this game was altogether in favour of the bank; and yet it is evident that--in spite of this obvious conviction--the game must have been one of the most tempting and fascinating that was ever invented.

Our English adventurers made this game very different to what it was in France, for there, by royal edict, the public at large were not allowed to play at more than a franc or ten-penny bank,--and the losses or gains could not bring desolation to a family; but in England our punters could do as they liked--staking from one guinea to one hundred guineas and more, upon a card, 'as was often seen at court,' says the old author, my informant. When the couch was alpieued, parolied, to sept-et-le-va, quinze-et-le-va, trente-et-le-va, &c., the punter's gains were prodigious, miraculous; and if fortune befriended him so as to bring his stake to soissante-et-le-va, he was very likely to break the bank, by gaining a sum which no talliere could pay after such tremendous multiplication. But this rarely happened. The general advantage was with the bank--as must be quite evident from the explanation of the game--besides the standing rule that no two cards of the same sort turning up could win for the players; the second always won for the bank. In addition to this there were other 'privileges' which operated vastly in favour of the banker.

However, it was 'of so bewitching a nature,' says our old writer, 'by reason of the several multiplications and advantages which it seemingly offered to the unwary punter, that a great many like it so well that they would play at small game rather than give out; and rather than not play at all would punt at six-penny, three-penny, nay, a twopenny bank,--so much did the hope of winning the quinze-et-le-va and the trente-et-le-va intoxicate them.'

Of course there were frauds practised at Basset by the talliere, or banker, in addition to his prescriptive advantages. The cards might be dealt so as not to allow the punter any winning throughout the pack; and it was in the power of the dealer to let the punter have as many winnings as he thought convenient, and no more!

It is said that Basset was invented by a noble Venetian, who was

punished with exile for the contrivance. The game was prohibited by Louis XIV., in 1691, and soon after fell into oblivion in France, although flourishing in England. It was also called Barbacole and Hocca.

FARO, OR PHARAOH.

Although both Basset and Faro were forbidden in France, on severe penalties, yet these games still continued in great vogue in England during the 18th century, especially Faro; for the alleged reasons that it was easy to learn, that it appeared to be very fair, and, lastly, that it was a very quiet game. It was, however, the most dangerous game for the destruction of families ever invented. The Faro bankers seem to have employed some 'gentlemen' to give a very favourable report of the game to the town, and so every one took it upon trust without further inquiry. Faro was the daughter of Basset--both alike notorious frauds, there being no one, except professed gamblers, who could be said to understand the secrets of these games.

Faro was played with an entire pack of cards, and admitted of an indeterminate number of players, termed 'punters,' and a 'banker.' Each player laid his stake on one of the 52 cards. The banker held a similar pack, from which he drew cards, one for himself, placed on the right, and the other, called the *carte anglaise*, or English card, for the players, placed on the left. The banker won all the money staked on the card on the right, and had to pay double the sums staked on those on the left. Certain advantages were reserved to the banker:--if he drew a doublet, that is, two equal cards, he won half of the stakes upon the card which equalled the doublet; if he drew for the players the last card of the pack, he was exempt from doubling the stakes deposited on that card.

Suppose a person to put down 20s. upon a card when only eight are in hand; the last card was a cipher, so there were four places to lose, and only three to win, the odds against being as 4 to 3. If 10 cards only were in, then it was 5 to 4 against the player; in the former case it was the seventh part of the money, whatever it was, L1 or L100; in the latter case, a ninth. The odds from the beginning of the deal insensibly stole upon the player at every pull, till from the first supposed 4 per cent. it became about 15 per cent.

At the middle of the 18th century the expenses of a Faro bank, in all its items of servants, rent, puffs, and other incidental charges of candles, wine, arrack-punch, suppers, and safeguard money, &c., in Covent Garden, amounted to L1000 per annum. Throughout this century Faro was the favourite game. 'Our life here,' writes Gilly Williams to George Selwyn in 1752, 'would not displease you, for we eat and drink well, and the Earl of Coventry holds a Pharaoh-bank every night to us, which we have plundered considerably.' Charles James Fox preferred Faro to any other game.

HAZARD.

This game was properly so called; for it made a man or undid him

in the twinkling of an eye.

It is played with only two dice; 20 persons may be engaged, or as many as will. The chief things in the game are the Main and the Chance. The chance is the caster's and the main is the setter's.

There can be no main thrown above 9, nor under 5; so that 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 are all the mains which are flung at Hazard. Chances and nicks are from 4 to 10. Thus 4 is a chance to 9, 5 to 8, 6 to 7, 7 to 6, 8 to 5, and 9 and 10 a chance to 5, 6, 7, and 8; in short, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 are chances to any main, if any of these 'nick' it not.

Nicks are either when the chance is the same with the main, as 5 and 5, 6 and 6, 7 and 7, and so on; or 6 and 12, 7 and 11, 8 and 12, where observe, that 12 is out to 9, 7, and 5, and 11 is out to 9, 8, 6, and 5.

The better to illustrate the game we shall give an example. Let 7 be the main named. The caster throws 5, and that is his chance; and so he has 5 to 7. If the caster throws his own chance he wins all the money set to him by the setter; but if he throws 7, which is the main, he must pay as much money as is on the table.

If, again, 7 be the main, and the caster throws 11, that is a nick, and sweeps away all the money on the table; but if he throws a chance he must wait which will come first.

The worst chances in the game are 4 to 10, and 7 is considered the best and easiest main to be thrown. It might be thought that 6 and 8 should admit of no difference in advantage to 7, but it is just the reverse, although 6, 7, and 8 have eight equal chances.

For 6, or sice, we have quatre-duce, cinque-ace, and two treys; for 8, we have sice-duce, cinque-trey, and two quates; but the disadvantage is in the doublets required-- two treys, two quates; therefore sice-duce is easier thrown than two quates, and so, consequently, cinque-ace or quatre-duce sooner than two treys.

'I saw an old rook (gambler),' says the writer before quoted, 'take up a young fellow in a tavern upon this very bet. The bargain was made that the rook should have seven always, and the young gentleman six, and throw continually. To play they went; the rook won the first day L10, and the next day the like sum; and so for six days together, in all L60. Notwithstanding the gentleman, I am confident, had fair dice, and threw them always himself. And further to confirm what I alleged before, not only this gamester, but many more have told me that they desired no greater advantage than this bet of 7 to 6. But it is the opinion of most that at the first throw the caster hath the worst of it.

'Hazard is certainly the most bewitching game that is played with dice; for when a man begins to play, he knows not when to leave off; and having once accustomed himself to it, he hardly ever after minds anything else.'[66]

[66] The Compleat Gamester, by Richard Seymour, Esq. 1739.

As this game is of a somewhat complicated character, another account of it, which appeared in the Pall Mall Gazette for Sept. 3, 1869, may not be unacceptable.

'The players assemble round a circular table, a space being reserved for the "groom-porter," who occupies a somewhat elevated position, and whose duty it is to call the odds and see that the game is played correctly. Whoever takes the box and dice places in the centre of the table as much money as he wishes to risk, which is at once covered with an equal amount either by some individual speculator, or by the contributions of several. The player (technically called the "caster") then proceeds to call a "main." There are five mains on the dice, namely, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9; of these he mentally selects that one which either chance or superstition may suggest, calls it aloud, shakes the box, and delivers the dice. If he throws the exact number he called, he "nicks" it and wins; if he throws any other number (with a few exceptions, which will be mentioned), he neither wins nor loses. The number, however, which he thus throws becomes his "chance," and if he can succeed in repeating it before he throws what was his main, he wins; if not, he loses. In other words, having completely failed to throw his main in the first instance, he should lose, but does not in consequence of the equitable interference of his newly-made acquaintance, which constitutes itself his chance. For example, suppose the caster "sets"--that is, places on the table--a stake of £10, and it is covered by an equal amount, and he then calls 7 as his main and throws 5; the groom-porter at once calls aloud, "5 to 7"--that means, 5 is the number to win and 7 the number to lose, and the player continues throwing until the event is determined by the turning up of either the main or the chance. During this time, however, a most important feature in the game comes into operation--the laying and taking of the odds caused by the relative proportions of the main and the chance. These, as has been said, are calculated with mathematical nicety, are proclaimed by the groom-porter, and are never varied. In the above instance, as the caster stands to win with 5 and to lose with 7, the odds are declared to be 3 to 2 against him, inasmuch as there are three ways of throwing 7, and only two of throwing 5. As soon as the odds are declared, the caster may increase his stake by any sum he wishes, and the other players may cover it by putting down (in this instance) two-thirds of the amount, the masse, or entire sum, to await the turning up of either main or chance. If a player "throws out" three times in succession, the box passes to the next person on his left, who at once takes up the play. He may, however, "throw in" without interruption, and if he can do so some half-dozen times and back his luck, the gains will be enormous.

'The choice of a main is quite optional: many prefer 7 because they may make a coup at once by throwing that number or by throwing 11, which is a "nick" to 7, but to 7 only. Shrewd players, however, prefer some other main, with the view of having a more favourable chance to depend upon of winning both stake and odds. For example, let us reverse what was mentioned above, and

suppose the caster to call 5 and throw 7; he then will have 7 as his chance to win with odds of 3 to 2 IN HIS FAVOUR.

'Such is the game of English Hazard, at which large fortunes have been won and lost. It is exceedingly simple, and at times can become painfully interesting. Cheating is impossible, unless with loaded dice, which have been used and detected by their splitting in two, but never, perhaps, unless at some disreputable silver hell. The mode of remunerating the owner of the rooms was a popular one. The loser never paid, and the winner only when he succeeded in throwing three mains in succession; and even then the "box fee," as it was called, was limited to 5s.--a mere trifle from what he must have gained. In French Hazard a bank is constituted at a board of green cloth, and the proceedings are carried on in a more subdued and regular mode than is the case in the rough-and-ready English game. Every stake that is "set" is covered by the bank, so that the player runs no risk of losing a large amount, when, if successful, he may win but a trifling one; but en revanche, the scale of odds is so altered as to put the double zero of roulette and the "aprez" of Rouge et Noir to the blush, and to operate most prejudicially to the player. In no case is an equal rate of odds between main and chance laid by the French "banquier," as is insisted on by the English groomporter; while again "direct nicks" alone are recognized by the former. Very extraordinary runs of luck have occurred at Hazard, one player sometimes throwing five, seven, and even eleven mains in a single hand. In such cases as these the peculiar feature in the French game becomes valuable, the bank being prepared to pay all winnings, while, generally speaking, a hand of six or seven mains at English Hazard would exhaust all the funds of the players, and leave the caster in the position of "setting the table" and finding the stakes totally unnoticed or only partially covered.

'In addition to the fixed rules of English Hazard, there are several regulations which require to be observed. The round table on which it is played has a deeply bevelled edge, which is intended to prevent the dice from landing on the floor, which would be no throw. Again, if either die after having left the box should strike any object on the table (such as a man's elbow or stick) except MONEY, it would be called no throw. Again, each player has the privilege of "calling dice," even when the dice are in transitu, which, if done, renders the throw void, and causes another set to be handed to the caster by the groomporter. Many a lucky coup has become manque by some captious player exercising this privilege, and many an angry rencontre has ensued between the officious meddler and the disappointed caster, who finds that he has nicked his main to no advantage. Sometimes one die remains in the box after the other has been landed; then the caster may either throw it quickly, or may tantalize those interested in the event by gently coaxing it from the bow. If one die lands on the top of another, it is removed by the groom-porter and declared a throw.

'Some thirty years ago English Hazard was a favourite game in Ireland, and Dublin could boast of three or four hells doing a brisk trade. The most frequented and longest established was called "The Coal Hole," being situated on the coal quay. Here, at any hour after midnight, a motley company might be seen, each

individual, however, well known to the porter, who jealously scanned his features before drawing back the noiseless bolts which secured the door. The professional gambler trying to live by his winnings, the fashionable swell finishing his round of excitement, the struggling tradesman hoping to avert impending bankruptcy, the prize-fighter, and, more conspicuous than any, the keen-eyed usurer with his roll of notes and sheaf of bill stamps, were to be found there. Many strange scenes have occurred in this house, some followed by tragic consequences too painful to relate, others ridiculous and amusing. Here it was that an angry caster, having lost his last sovereign and his temper, also placed his black hat in the centre of the table, swore that it was white, and finding no one disposed to dispute his accuracy, flung himself from the room, and enabled the next player who had won so largely and smiled so good-humouredly to take the box in turn. But fortune deserted him also, and left him penniless, when, glaring savagely round the room, and striking the table violently, he thundered forth the inquiry, "Where was the rascal who said his hat was white?" It was here also (although the venue has been changed by story-mongers) that a well-known frequenter of the house, a sporting M.P., on one occasion dropped on the 'door or in the passage a bank-note without discovering his loss till he had reached home. On the next evening he returned to inquire for it in a forlorn-hope spirit, when the following conversation took place between him and the porter:--

"M.P. I think, Simpson, I dropped a note here last night--did you see it?

"Porter. Shure, then, mony a note was dropped here beside yours.

"M. P. Ah! but I mean out of my pocket. I did not lose it at play. It was for L20, one of Ball's Bank, and very old."

'Hereupon the porter brought the senator into a corner, fumbled the note out of his fob, and, placing it in his hands, whispered, "Shure, I know it's yours, and here it is; but (looking cautiously round) wasn't it lucky that none of the jintlemin found it?"

'Another establishment much patronized in those days was in Nassau Street, where early in the evening unlimited Loo, never under "three and three," sometimes "six and six," might be indulged in, while a little later Roulette formed the attraction of an adjacent room, and still later at night all flocked downstairs to the hot supper and rattling English Hazard. For one or two seasons St Stephen's Green lent one of its lordly mansions, formerly the residence of a cruel and witty Lord Chief Justice, to the votaries of fortune; here everything was done in grand style, with gilded saloons, obsequious waiters, and champagne suppers. All this has long since become matter of the past, and it would now puzzle the keenest detective to find the trace even of a silver hell in the Irish capital. No one will be hardy enough to defend the vice of gambling, but some have argued, and not without truth, that if a man will play it is far better for him to indulge the propensity at Hombourg or Baden, where he cannot lose more money than he has with him, than to do so in the

cozy club-room of a private "salon," where indulgent friends may tempt him to become bankrupt not only in fortune but in reputation.'

Passing over other less important games, called Biribi, and Kraps (played with dice), we come to Passe-Dix, which seems to demand some notice.

PASSE-DIX.

This game, considered the most ancient of all games of chance, is said to have actually been made use of by the executioners at the crucifixion of our Saviour, when they 'parted his garments, casting lots,' Matt. xxvii. 35.

It is played with three dice. There is always a banker, and the number of players is unlimited. Each gamester holds the box by turns, and the other players follow his chance; every time he throws a point UNDER ten he, as well as the other players, loses the entire stakes, which go to the banker. Every time he throws a point ABOVE ten (or PASSES TEN--whence the name of the game), the banker must double the player's stakes and the stakes of all those who have risked their money on the same chance. When the game is played by many together, each gamester is banker in his turn.

PUT.

This was and doubtless still is the special card-game of our London sharpers. Many of these are men who have run through a fortune in the early part of their lives, by associating with gamblers and sharpers, set up for themselves, set honour and conscience at defiance, become blacklegs, and are scouted out of even the gambler's company; and, as a last resource, are obliged to resort to low pot-houses, robbing the poorest and most ignorant of society.

Behind the dupe there stood a confederate sharper, looking over the novice's hand, and telling his opponent, by his fingers, what cards he holds--hence he was said to work the telegraph, of which more in the sequel. Another confederate plied the novice with drink.

'The game of Put is played with an entire pack of cards, generally by two, and sometimes by four persons. At this game the cards rank differently from all others; a trey being the best, then a two, then an ace, then the king, queen, &c. The game consists of five points. The parties cut for deal, as in Whist. The deal is made by giving three cards, one at a time, to each player. The non-dealer then examines his cards, and if he thinks them bad, he is at liberty to PUT them upon the pack, and his adversary scores one point to his game. This, however, should never be done. Either party saying--"I put," that is, I play, cannot retract, but must abide the event of the game, or pay the stakes.

'The THREE being the best card, if the sharper can make certain of having a three every time his opponent deals, he must have

considerably the best of the game; and this is effected as follows:--the sharper places a three underneath an old gentleman (a card somewhat larger and thicker than the rest of the pack), and it does not signify how much his opponent shuffles the pack, it is about five to one that he does not disturb the OLD GENTLEMAN or the three. The sharper then cuts the cards, which he does by feeling for the old gentleman; the three being then the top card, it is dealt to the sharper by his opponent. That is one way of securing a three, and this alone is quite sufficient to make a certainty of winning.'[67]

[67] Doings in London.

CROSS AND PILE.

Cross and Pile, so called because anciently English coins were stamped on one side with a cross, now bears the names, Head and Tail, and is a pastime well known among the lowest and most vulgar classes of the community, and to whom it is now confined; formerly, however, it held a higher rank and was introduced at Court. Edward II. was partial to this and other frivolous diversions, and spent much of his time in the pursuit of them. In one of his wardrobe 'rolls,' or accounts, we find the following entries--'Item, paid to Henry, the king's barber, for money which he lent to the king to play at Cross and Pile, five shillings. Item, paid to Pires Bernard, usher of the king's chamber, money which he lent the king, and which he lost at Cross and Pile; to Monsieur Robert Wartewille, eight- pence.'

A half-penny is now generally used in playing this game; but any other coin with a head impressed will answer the purpose. One person tosses the half-penny up and the other cries at pleasure HEAD or TAIL, and loses according to the result.

Cross and Pile is evidently derived from the Greek pastime called Ostra Kinda, played by the boys of ancient Greece. Having procured a shell, they smeared it over with pitch on one side and left the other side white. A boy tossed up this shell, and his antagonist called white or black,[68] as he thought proper, and his success was determined by the white or black part of the shell being uppermost.

[68] In the Greek, nux kai hmera, that is, 'night and day.'

It is the favourite game of the boys of London and the vicinity, now, however, considerably, if not entirely, discontinued through the vigilance of the police and the severity of the magistrates. Not long ago, however, I witnessed a sad and striking scene of it at Twickenham. It was on a Sunday morning. Several boys surrounded two players, one of the latter being about 14 years of age, well dressed, and the other of about 10 years, all in tatters and shoeless. The younger urchin had a long run of good luck, whereat his antagonist exhibited much annoyance, swearing intemperately. At length, however, his luck changed in turn, and he went on winning until the former refused to play any longer, saying--'There, you've got back all I won from you.' The bigger

boy became enraged at this refusal to continue the play, and seemed inclined to resort to fisticuff, but I interposed and put a stop to the affray. I then questioned the elder boy, and gathered from him that he played as often as he could, sometimes winning or losing from eight to ten shillings. 'And do you generally win?' was my next question. 'No, sir,' he replied, 'I oftener lose.' I shuddered to conjecture what would be the future of this boy. The word of warning I gave him was received with a shrug of the shoulder, and he walked off with the greatest unconcern.

THIMBLE-RIG.

All races, fairs, and other such conglomerations of those whom Heaven had blessed with more money than wit, used to be frequented by minor members of 'The Fancy,' who are technically called flat-catchers, and who picked up a very pretty living by a quick hand, a rattling tongue, a deal board, three thimbles, and a pepper-corn. The game they played with these three curious articles is a sort of Lilliputian game at cups and balls; and the beauty of it lies in dexterously seeming to place the pepper-corn under one particular thimble, getting a green to bet that it was there, and then winning his money by showing that it is not. Every operator at this game was attended by certain of his friends called egggers and bonnetters--the egggers to 'egg' on the green ones to bet, by betting themselves; and the bonnetters to 'bonnet' any green one who might happen to win-- that is to say, to knock his hat over his eyes, whilst the operator and the others bolted with the stakes.

Some years ago a curious case was tried, exemplifying the mode of procedure. A Frenchman, M. Panchaud, was at Ascot Races, and he there saw the defendant and several other 'gentlemen' betting away, and apparently winning 'lots of sovereigns,' at one of these same thimble-rigs. 'Try your luck, gentlemen,' cried the operator; 'I'll bet any gentleman anything, from half-a-crown to five sovereigns, that he doesn't name the thimble as covers the corn!' M. Panchaud betted half-a-crown--won it; betted a sovereign--won it; betted a second sovereign--LOST it. 'Try your luck, gentlemen!' cried the operator again, shifting his thimbles and pepper-corn about the board, here and there and everywhere in a moment; and this done, he offered M. Panchaud a bet of five sovereigns that he could not 'name the thimble what covered the corn.' 'Bet him! Bet him! Why don't you bet him?' said the defendant (a landlord), nudging M. Panchaud on the elbow; and M. Panchaud, convinced in his 'own breast' that he knew the right thimble, said--'I shall betta you five sovereign if you will not touch de timbles again till I name.' 'Done!' cried the operator; and M. Panchaud was DONE-- for, laying down his L10 note, it was caught up by SOMEBODY, the board was upset, the operator and his friends vanished 'like a flash of lightning,' and M. Panchaud was left full of amazement, but with empty pockets, with the defendant standing by his side. 'They are a set of rascals!' said the defendant; 'but don't fret, my fine fellow! I'll take you to somebody that shall soon get your money again; and so saying he led him off in a direction thus described in court by the fleeced Frenchman.--'You tooke me the WRONG way! The thieves ran one way, and you took me the other, you know, ahah! You know

what you are about--you took me the WRONG WAY--ahahh!

CHAPTER XI.

COCK-FIGHTING.

Cock-fighting is a practice of high antiquity, like many other detestable and abominable things that still cling to our social fabric. It was much in vogue in Greece and the adjacent isles. There was an annual festival at Athens called 'The Cock-fighting,' instituted by Themistocles at the end of the Persian war, under the following circumstances. When Themistocles was leading his army against the Persians, he saw some cocks fighting; he halted his troops, looked on, and said:--'These animals fight neither for the gods of their country, nor for the monuments of their ancestors, nor for glory, nor for freedom, nor for their children, but for the sake of victory, and in order that one may not yield to the other;' and from this topic he inspirited the Athenians. After his victorious return, as an act of gratitude for this accidental occasion of inspiring his troops with courage, he instituted the above festival, 'in order that what was an incitement to valour at that time might be perpetuated as an encouragement to the like bravery hereafter.' One cannot help smiling at these naive stories of the ancients to account for their mightiest results. Only think of any modern warrior halting his troops to make use of a cock-fight for the purpose of inspiring them to victory!

On one occasion during the Peninsular war, when an important point was to be carried by assault, the officers were required to say something encouraging to their men, in order to brace them up for the encounter; but whilst the majority of the former recalled the remembrance of previous victories, an Irish captain contented himself with exclaiming--'Now, my lads, you see those fellows up there. Well, if you don't kill THEM, SHURE they'll kill YOU. That's all!' Struck with the comic originality of this address, the men rushed forward with a laugh and a shout, carrying all before them.

Among the ancient Greeks the cock was sacred to Apollo, Mercury, and aesculapius, on account of his vigilance, inferred from his early rising--the natural consequence of his 'early to bed'--and also to Mars, on account of his magnanimous and daring spirit.

It seems, then, that at first cock-fighting was partly a religious, and partly a political, institution at Athens; and was there continued--according to the above legend--for the purpose of cherishing the seeds of valour in the minds of youth; but that it was afterwards abused and perverted, both there and in other parts of Greece, by being made a common pastime, and applied to the purpose of gambling just as it was (and is still secretly) practised in England. An Attic law ran as follows--'Let cocks fight publicly in the theatre one day in the year.'[69]

[69] Pegge, in *Archaeologia*, quoting aelian, Columella, &c.

As to cock-fighting at Rome, Pegge, in the same work, gives his opinion, that it was not customary there till very late; but that quails were more pitted against each other for gambling purposes than cocks. This opinion seems confirmed by the thankfulness expressed by the good Antoninus--'that he had imbibed such dispositions from his preceptor, as had prevented him from breeding quails for the fight.'

'One cannot but regret,' wrote Pegge in 1775, 'that a creature so useful and so noble as the cock should be so enormously abused by us. It is true the massacre of Shrove Tuesday seems in a declining way, and in a few years, it is to be hoped, will be totally disused; but the cock-pit still continues a reproach to the humanity of Englishmen. It is unknown to me when the pitched battle first entered England; but it was probably brought hither by the Romans. The bird was here before Caesar's arrival; but no notice of his fighting has occurred to me earlier than the time of William Fitz-Stephen, who wrote the Life of Archbishop Becket, some time in the reign of Henry II. William describes the cocking as the sport of school-boys on Shrove Tuesday. "Every year, on the day which is called Carnelevaria (Carnival)--to begin with the sports of the London boys,--for we have all been boys--all the boys are wont to carry to their schoolmaster their fighting-cocks, and the whole of the forenoon is made a holiday for the boys to see the fights of their cocks in their schoolrooms." The theatre, it seems, was their school, and the master was the controller and director of the sport. From this time at least the diversion, however absurd, and even impious, was continued among us.'

'Although disapproved of by many, and prohibited by law, cock-fighting continued in vogue, patronized even by royalty, and commonly called "the royal diversion." St James's Park, which, in the time of Henry VIII., belonged to the Abbot of Westminster, was bought by that monarch and converted into a park, a tennis court, and a cockpit, which was situated where Downing Street now is. The park was approached by two noble gates, and until the year 1708 the Cock-pit Gate, which opened into the court where Queen Anne lived, was standing. It was surmounted with lofty towers and battlements, and had a portcullis, and many rich decorations. Westminster Gate, the other entrance, was designed by Hans Holbein, and some foreign architect doubtless erected the Cockpit Gate. The scene of the cruel diversion of cock-fighting was, however, obliterated before Anne's time, and the palace, which was a large range of apartments and offices reaching to the river, extended over that space.'[69]

[69] Wharton, *Queens of Society*.

Cock-fighting was the favourite amusement of James I., in whose reign there were cock-pits in St James's Park, Drury Lane, Tufton Street, Shoe Lane, and Jermyn Street. There was a cock-pit in Whitehall, erected for the more magnificent exhibition of the sport; and the present room in Westminster in which her Majesty's Privy Council hold their sittings, is called the Cock-pit, from its being the site of the veritable arena of old.

Cock-fighting was prohibited by one of Oliver's acts in 1654; but with the return of Charles and his profligacy, the sport again flourished in England. Pepys often alludes to it in his 'Diary.'

Thus, Dec. 21, 1663, he writes:--

'To Shoe Lane, to see a cocke-fighting at a new pit there, a spot I was never at in my life; but, Lord! to see the strange variety of people, from Parliament man, by name Wildes, that was Deputy-Governor of the Tower when Robinson was Lord Mayor, to the poorest 'prentices, bakers, brewers, butchers, draymen, and what not; and all these fellows one with another cursing and betting. I soon had enough of it. It is strange to see how people of this poor rank, that look as if they had not bread to put in their mouths, shall bet three or four pounds at a time, and lose it, and yet bet as much the next battle; so that one of them will lose L10 or L20 at a meeting.'

Again, April 6, 1668:--

'I to the new Cocke-pit by the king's gate, and there saw the manner of it, and the mixed rabble of people that came thither, and saw two battles of cockes, wherein is no great sport; but only to consider how these creatures, without any provocation, do fight and kill one another, and aim only at one another's heads!'

Up to the middle of the 18th century cock-fighting was 'all the rage' in England. 'Cocking,' says a writer of the time, 'is a sport or pastime so full of delight and pleasure, that I know not any game in that respect which is to be preferred before it.'

The training of the pugnacious bird had now become a sort of art, and this is as curious as anything about the old 'royal diversion.' A few extracts from a treatise on the subject may be interesting as leaves from the book of manners and customs of the good old times.

The most minute details are given as to the selection of fighting-cocks, the breeding of game cocks, and 'the dieting and ordering a cock for battle.' Under this last head we read:--'In the morning take him out of the pen, and let him spar a while with another cock. Sparring is after this manner. Cover each of your cock's heels with a pair of hots made of bombasted rolls of leather, so covering the spurs that they cannot bruise or wound one another, and so setting them down on straw in a room, or green grass abroad; let them fight a good while, but by no means suffer them to draw blood of one another. The benefit that accrues hereby is this: it heateth and chafeth their bodies, and it breaketh the fat and glut that is within them. Having sparred as much as is sufficient, which you may know when you see them pant and grow weary, then take them up, and, taking off their hots, give them a diaphoretic or sweating, after this manner. You must put them in deep straw- baskets, made for this purpose, and fill these with straw half way, then put in your cocks severally, and cover them over with straw to the top; then shut down the lids, and let them sweat; but don't forget to give them first some white sugar-candy, chopped rosemary, and butter, mingled and incorporated together. Let the quantity be about the

bigness of a walnut; by so doing you will cleanse him of his grease, increase his strength, and prolong his breath. Towards four or five o'clock in the evening take them out of their stoves, and, having licked their eyes and head with your tongue, and put them into their pens, and having filled their throats with square-cut manchet, **** therein, and let them feed whilst the****is hot; for this will cause their scouring to work, and will wonderfully cleanse both head and body.'

Was ever poor animal subjected to such indignity? The preparation of the other animal, the jockey, is nothing to it. But, to continue:--

'The second day after his sparring, take your cock into a fair green close, and, having a dunghill cock in your arms, show it him, and then run from him, that thereby you may entice him to follow, permitting him to have now and then a blow, and thus chafe him up and down about half an hour; when he begins to pant, being well-heated, take him up and carry him home, and give him this scouring, &c.'

This training continued for six weeks, which was considered a sufficient time for 'ordering a cock for the battle;' and then, after the 'matching,' came the last preparation of the poor biped for the terrible fight in which he would certainly be either killed or kill his antagonist, if both were not doomed to bite the dust. This consisted in the following disfigurement of the beautiful creature:--

'With a pair of fine cock-shears cut all his mane off close into his neck from the head to the setting on of the shoulders: secondly, clip off all the feathers from the tail close to his rump; the redder it appears the better is the cock in condition: thirdly, take his wings and spread them forth by the length of the first rising feather, and clip the rest slope-wise with sharp points, that in his rising he may therewith endanger the eye of his adversary; fourthly, scrape, smooth, and sharpen his spurs with a pen-knife; fifthly, and lastly, see that there be no feathers on the crown of his head for his adversary to take hold of; then, with your spittle moistening his head all over, turn him into the pit TO MOVE TO HIS FORTUNE.'

I should, perhaps, state that, instead of the natural spurs, long artificial ones of well-tempered steel were fixed to the cock's heels in later times, and these were frequently driven into the body of his antagonist with such vigour that the two cocks were spitted together, and had to be separated.

The dreadful fight having come off, the following was the treatment prescribed for the fortunate conqueror.

'The battle being ended, immediately search your cock's wounds, as many as you can find. SUCK the blood out of them; then wash them well with warm ****, and that will keep them from rankling; after this give him a roll of your best SCOURING, and so stove him up as hot as you can for that night; in the morning, if you find his head swelled, you must suck his wounds again, and bathe them with warm ****; then take the powder of herb Robert, and put

it into a fine bag, and pounce his wounds therewith; after this, give him a good handful of bread to eat out of warm ****, and so put him into the stove again, and let him not feel the air till the swelling be fallen.'

A cock sometimes took a long time to recover from his wounds--as, indeed, may be well supposed from the terrible 'punishment' which he necessarily received; and so our professor goes on to say:-- 'If after you have put out your wounded cock to their walks, and visiting them a month or two after, you find about their head any swollen bunches, hard and blackish at one end, you may then conclude that in such bunches there are unsound cores, which must be opened and crushed out with your thumbs; and after this, you must suck out the corruption, and filling the holes full of fresh butter, you need not doubt a cure.'

A poetical description of a cock-fight, by Dr R. Wild, written at the commencement of the last century, will give an idea of the 'diversion.'

'No sooner were the doubtful people set,
The match made up, and all that would had bet,
But straight the skilful judges of the play;
Brought forth their sharp-heel'd warriors, and they
Were both in linnen bags--as if 'twere meet,
Before they died, to have their winding-sheet.
Into the pit they're brought, and being there,
Upon the stage, the Norfolk Chanticleer
Looks stoutly at his ne'er before seen foe,
And like a challenger began to crow,
And clap his wings, as if he would display
His warlike colours, which were black and grey.

'Meantime, the wary Wisbich walks and breathes
His active body, and in fury wreathes
His comely crest, and often with a sound,
He whets his angry beak upon the ground.
This done, they meet, not like that coward breed
Of Aesop; these can better fight than feed:
They scorn the dunghill; 'tis their only prize
TO DIG FOR PEARLS WITHIN EACH OTHER'S EYES.

'They fought so nimbly that 'twas hard to know,
E'en to the skill'd, whether they fought or no;
If that the blood which dyed the fatal floor
Had not borne witness of 't. Yet fought they more;
As if each wound were but a spur to prick
Their fury forward. Lightning's not more quick,
Or red, than were their eyes: 'twas hard to know
Whether 'twas blood or anger made them so.
I'm sure they had been out had they not stood
More safe by being fenced in with blood.

Thus they vied blows; but yet (alas!) at length,
Altho' their courage was full tried, their strength
And blood began to ebb.

Their wings, which lately at each blow they clapp'd

(As if they did applaud themselves), now flapp'd.
And having lost th' advantage of the heel,
Drunk with each other's blood, they only reel.
From either eyes such drops of blood did fall
As if they wept them for their funeral.
And yet they fain would fight; they came so near,
Methought they meant into each other's ear
TO WHISPER WOUNDS; and when they could not rise,
They lay and look'd blows into each other's eyes.

But now the tragic part! After this fit,
When Norfolk cock had got the best of it,
And Wisbich lay a dying, so that none,
Tho' sober, but might venture Seven to One;
Contracting, like a dying taper, all
His strength, intending with the blow to fall,
He struggles up, and having taken wind,
Ventures a blow, and strikes the other blind!

'And now poor Norfolk, having lost his eyes,
Fights only guided by antipathies:
With him, alas! the proverb holds not true--
The blows his eyes ne'er saw his heart most rue.
At length, by chance, he stumbled on his foe,
Not having any power to strike a blow.
He falls upon him with his wounded head,
And makes his conqueror's wings his feather-bed;
Where lying sick, his friends were very chary
Of him, and fetch'd in haste a Potheary;
But all in vain! His body did so blister
That 'twas incapable of any glyster;
Wherefore, at length, opening his fainting bill,
He call'd a scriv'ner and thus made his Will.

'IMPRIMIS--Let it never be forgot,
My body freely I bequeath to th' pot,
Decently to be boil'd.

ITEM: Executors I will have none
But he that on my side laid Seven to One;
And, like a gentleman that he may live,
To him, and to his heirs, my COMB I give,
Together with my brains, that all may know
That oftentimes his brains did use to crow.

To him that 's dull I do my SPURS impart,
And to the coward I bequeath my HEART.
To ladies that are light, it is my will
My FEATHERS shall be given; and for my BILL
I'd give 't a tailor, but it is so short,
That I'm afraid he'll rather curse me for 't:

Lastly, because I feel my life decay,
I yield and give to Wisbich COCK THE DAY!'[70]

[70] The passages left out in the Will, as marked by asterisks,
though witty, are rather too gross for modern eyes.

To quote from Pegge once more:--What aggravates the reproach and disgrace upon us Englishmen, are those species of fighting which are called--"the battle royal and the Welsh main"--known nowhere in the world, as I think, but here; neither in China, nor in Persia, nor in Malacca, nor among the savage tribes of America. These are scenes so bloody as almost to be too shocking to relate; and yet as many may not be acquainted with the horrible nature of them, it may be proper, for the excitement of our aversion and detestation, to describe them in a few words.

'In the battle royal, an unlimited number of fowls are pitted; and after they have slaughtered one another, for the diversion (*dii boni!*) of the otherwise generous and humane Englishman, the single surviving bird is to be esteemed the victor, and carries away the prize. The Welsh main consists, we will suppose, of sixteen pairs of cocks; of these the sixteen conquerors are pitted a second time; and, lastly, the two conquerors of these are pitted a fifth time; so that (incredible barbarity!) thirty-one cocks are sure to be most inhumanly murdered for the sport and pleasure, the noise and nonsense, nay, I may say the profane cursing and swearing, of those who have the effrontery to call themselves, with all these bloody doings, and with all this impiety about them--Christians!' Moreover, this ungenerous diversion was the bane and destruction of thousands, who thus dissipated their patrimonial fortunes. That its attractions were irresistible is evident from the difficulty experienced in suppressing the practice. Down to a very recent date cock-fighting was carried on in secret,--the police now and then breaking into the secret pits, dispersing and chasing a motley crew of noblemen, gentlemen, and 'the scum of rascaldom.'

The practice is very far from having died out; mains are still fought in various parts of the country; but of course the greatest precautions are taken to insure secrecy and to prevent the interference of the police.

In connection with cock-fighting I remember a horrible incident that occurred in the West Indies. A gentleman who was passionately fond of the sport, and prided himself on the victories of his cocks, had the misfortune to see one of his birds so terribly wounded in the first onset that, although not killed, it was impossible for it to continue the fight. His rage at the mishap knew no bounds, and he vented it madly on the poor creature. He roasted it alive--standing by and hearing its piteous cries. In the midst of the horrible torture the wretched man became so excited that a fit of apoplexy supervened, and he positively expired before the poor bird at the fire!

CHAPTER XII.

THE TURF, HISTORICAL, SOCIAL, MORAL.

It appears that horse-races were customary at public festivals even as early as the times of the patriarchs. They originated among the eastern nations, who were the first to discover the physical aptitudes of the noble animal and the spirited emulation

of which he is capable. The Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, in succession, all indulged in the excitement; and it is a curious fact that the Romans, like the English jockeys of the present day, rode in different colours.

Horse-racing began very early in England. Fitz-Stephen, who wrote in the time of Henry VIII., mentions the delight taken by the citizens of London in the diversion. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth it appears to have greatly flourished, and to have been carried to such an excess as to have ruined many of the nobility.

The celebrated George, Earl of Cumberland, is said to have wasted more of his estates than any of his ancestors, and principally by his love of the turf and the tilt-yard. In the reign of James I., Croydon in the South, and Garterly in the North, were celebrated courses. Camden also states that in 1607 there were meetings near York, and the prize was a small golden bell; hence the origin of the saying 'bearing off the bell.'

Lord Herbert of Cherbury denounced the practice. 'The exercise,' says this gallant philosopher, 'I do not approve of is running of horses--there being much CHEATING in that kind,--neither do I see why a brave man should delight in a creature whose chief use is to help him to run away.' As far as the cheating is concerned, the philosopher may be right, but most assuredly his views of the horse do no credit to his Lordship's understanding.

It appears that the turf-men of those days went on breeding for shape and speed alone, without considering 'bottom,' until the reign of Queen Anne; when a public-spirited nobleman left thirteen plates or purses to be run for, at such places as the Crown should appoint, upon condition that every horse should carry twelve stone for the best of three heats--four miles. By this means a stronger horse was raised, who, if he was not good enough upon the race-course, made a hunter.

The Merry Monarch, Charles II., had given cups or bowls, estimated at one hundred guineas value, and upon which the names of the winning horses, the winner, and jockey were usually engraved. William III. added to the plates, as did Queen Anne; but in 1720 George I. discontinued this royal encouragement to the sport, apparently through sheer meanness. Since that period 'King's Plates' and 'Queen's Plates' have been paid in specie.

In the reign of Charles I. races were performed in Hyde Park; and until a very recent period 'the Ring' in the Park was the rendezvous of gentlemen's servants, for the purpose of betting or making up their betting books.

Newmarket races were established by Charles II., in 1667. Epsom, by Mr Parkhurst, in 1711. Ascot, by the Duke of Cumberland, uncle to George III. Doncaster, by Colonel St Leger, in 1778. Goodwood, by the Duke of Richmond, who died in 1806.

The Jockey Club began in the time of George II. Its latest rules, by which races are regulated, were enacted in 1828.

Tattersall's, the 'High Change of Horse-flesh,' was established

by Richard Tattersall, near Hyde Park Corner--hence termed 'The Corner'--in 1766, for the sale of horses. The lease of the ground having expired, the new premises at Brompton were erected, and opened for business, in 1803.

On the accession of Queen Victoria the Royal stud was sold for L16,476, in Oct., 1837.[71]

[71] Haydon, Book of Dates.

Among the distinguished men who have supported the turf in this country may be mentioned George IV.[72] and William IV.; the late Duke of York; the Dukes of Richmond, Cleveland, Grafton, Bedford, and Beaufort; Marquises of Exeter and Westminster; Earls of Glasgow, Stradbroke, Wilton, Chesterfield, Eglintoun, Verulam, and Lonsdale; Lords George Bentinck, Foley, Kinnaird, &c.; and last, though not least, the Right Honourable Charles James Fox. As to the turf, Fox used always to animadvert on his losses, and repeatedly observed--that 'his horses had as much bottom as other people's, but that they were such slow, good ones that they never went fast enough to tire themselves.' He had, however, the gratification of experiencing some few exceptions to this imaginary rule. In April, 1772, he was so lucky at Newmarket as to win nearly L16,000--the greater part of which he got by betting against the celebrated Pincher, who lost the match by only half a neck. The odds at STARTING were two to one on the losing horse. At the spring meeting at Newmarket, in 1789, Fox is said to have won not less than L50,000; and at the October meeting, at the same place, the following year, he sold two of his horses--Seagull and Chanticleer--for 4400 guineas. In the course of 1788 Fox and the Duke of Bedford won 8000 guineas between them at the Newmarket spring meeting, and during these races Fox and Lord Barrymore had a heavy match, which was given as a dead heat, and the bets were off.

[72] For some period previous to 1790, George IV. had patronized horse-racing and pugilism; but in that year, having attended a prize fight in which one of the boxers was killed, he ceased to support the ring, declaring that he would never be present at such a scene of murder again; and in 1791 he disposed of his stud, on account of some apparently groundless suspicion being attached to his conduct with regard to a race, in the event of which he had little or no real interest.

On coming into office with Lord North, in 1783, Mr Fox sold his horses, and erased his name from several of the clubs of which he was a member. It was not long, however, before he again purchased a stud, and in October he attended the Newmarket meeting. The king's messenger was obliged to appear on the course, to seek one of the ministers of England among the sportsmen on the heath, in order to deliver despatches upon which perhaps the fate of the country might have depended. The messenger on these occasions had his badge of office, the greyhound, not liking that the world should know that the king's adviser was amusing himself at Newmarket, when he should have been serving him in the metropolis. But Charles Fox preferred

the betting rooms to Downing Street.

Again, in the year 1790, his horse Seagull won the Oatlands stakes at Ascot, of 100 guineas (19 subscribers), beating the Prince of Wales's Escape, Serpent, and several of the very best horses of that year--to the great mortification of His Royal Highness, who immediately matched Magpie against him, to run four days afterwards, two miles, for 500 guineas. This match, on which immense sums were depending, was won with ease by Seagull. At this period Lord Foley and Mr Fox were confederates. In those days the plates averaged from L50 to L100.

Lord Foley, who died in 1793, entered upon the turf with a clear estate of L1800 a year, and L100,000 ready money, which was considerably diminished by his losses at Newmarket, Ascot, and Epsom.

The race-horse of this country excels those of the whole world, not only for speed, but bottom. There is a great difference, however, between the present race and that of fifty or sixty years ago; for in those days four-mile heats were the fashion. The sporting records at the end of the last century give the following exploits of horses of that and previous periods.

Childers, known by the name of Flying Childers, the property of the Duke of Devonshire, was looked upon as the fleetest horse that ever was bred. He was never beaten; the sire of this celebrated horse was an Arabian.

Dorimont, belonging to Lord Ossory, won prizes to the amount of L13,360.

Eclipse was allowed to be the fastest horse that ever ran in England since the time of Childers. After winning largely for his owner, he covered, by subscription, forty mares at 30 guineas each, or 1200 guineas.

Highflyer, by King Herod, was the best horse of his day; was never beaten, nor paid forfeit but once. His winnings amounted to above L9000, although he only ran as a three, four, and five years old.

Matchem stood high both as a racer and as the sire of many of our most favourite horses. As a stallion he realized for his master more than L12,000. He died in 1781, at the advanced age of thirty-three.

Shark won a cup value 120 guineas, eleven hogsheads of claret, and above L16,000 in plates, matches, and forfeits.[73]

[73] Lord William Lennox, Merrie England.

Among recent celebrities must be mentioned Lord Stamford, who is said to have engaged Jemmy Grimshaw, a light-weighted jockey, at a salary of L1000 a year.

The most astounding 'event' of late years was that of 1867, when

the horse Hermit--previously represented as being in an unfit condition even to run, won the race--to the unspeakable ruin of very many, and inflicting on the late Marquis of Hastings the enormous loss of about L100,000, which, however, in spite of unseemly rumours and, it is said, hopes of that nobleman's ruin, was honourably paid, to the day and hour.

But if ruin did not immediately come upon the young marquis, still the wound was deadly, inflicted as though with the ferocity of a demon. In his broken health and rapid decay sympathy was not withheld from him; and when a premature death put an end to his sufferings, and was speedily followed by the breaking up of his establishment and the dispersion of his ancestral effects, most men felt that he had, perhaps, atoned for his errors and indiscretions, whilst all united in considering him another unfortunate victim added to the long list of those who have sacrificed their fortune, health, and honour to the Gambling Moloch presiding over the Turf of England.[74]

[74] The 'Odds' or probabilities of horse racing are explained in chapter VIII., in which the entire 'Doctrine of Chances' is discussed.

Such are the leading facts of horse-racing in England. One cannot help observing that the sturdy strength and muscular exertions of an Olympic charioteer of old exhibit a striking contrast to the spider-like form and emaciated figure of a Newmarket jockey.

Qui studet optatam cursu contingere metam,
Multa tulit, fecitque puer, SUDAVAT et alsit.

'Who in a race would reach the long'd-for goal,
Must suffer much, do much, in youth, indeed,
Must SWEAT and fag.'

This is literally true respecting the English jockey, whose attenuated form is accounted for in the following dialogue in an old work entitled 'Newmarket, or an Essay on the Turf,' 1771.

'Stop, stop, OLD GENTLEMAN! I desire to speak a word to you; pray which is the way to----.'

'I beg, sir, you will not interrupt me. I am a Newmarket jockey--am to ride in a few days a match, upon which there is a great deal depending, and I am now PREPARING.'

'Oh, I see now, you are a YOUNG man, instead of that old one for whom I mistook you by your wrappings; but pray, explain.'

'Why, your Honour must know that we jockeys, in order to bring ourselves down to the weight required for the horses we are to ride, sweat under a load of flannel wrapped about us beneath coats and great coats, and walk two or three miles in the heat of summer, till we are ready to faint under our burden.'

'Indeed! Why, you go through a deal!'

'Ah, sir, a great deal indeed! Why, we sometimes lie hours and hours between two feather-beds--to melt away our extraordinary weight.'

'But will you give me leave to examine your present dress? Hum! Two flannel waistcoats, a thick cloth coat, a Bath surtout! It is a vast weight to carry this warm weather. I only hope you won't sink under it.'

'Never fear, sir, I do not doubt but I shall do very well.'

The rewards of victory were as plain and simple in the Grecian games as they were distinguishing and honourable. A garland of palm, or laurel, or parsley, or pine leaves, served to adorn the brow of the fortunate victor, whilst his name stood a chance of being transmitted to posterity in the strains of some lofty Pindar. The rewards of modern days are indeed more substantial and solid, being paid in weighty gold or its equivalent, no matter whether obtained by the ruin of others, while the fleet coursers and their exulting proprietors stand conspicuous in the list of the Racing Calendar. The ingenious and ironical author of 'Newmarket, or an Essay on the Turf,' in the year 1771, bestowed the following titles and honours on the most famous horse of the day--Kelly's Eclipse:--'Duke of Newmarket, Marquis of Barnet, Earl of Epsom and York, Viscount Canterbury, Baron Eclipse of Mellay; Lord of Lewes, Salisbury, Ipswich, and Northampton; Comptroller-General of the race-grounds, and Premier Racer of All England.' To bear coat of arms--'A Pegasus argent on a field verd;--the supporters--two Englishmen in ermined robes and ducal coronets;--the crest--a purse, Or;--the motto--"Volat ocior Euro." '[75]

[75] 'He flies swifter than the east wind.'

Again, in the exhibition of those useful and honourable Olympic pastimes of old, the cause of morality was not overlooked:--there was in them a happy union of utility, pleasure, and virtue. A spotless life and unblameable manners, a purity of descent by being born in wedlock through several generations, and a series of creditable relations, were indispensable qualifications of a candidate on the Olympic turf. It is true, there is at least as much attention paid to purity and faultlessness on the plains of Newmarket; but the application is to the blood and pedigree of the horse, not of his rider.

Nay, it was, and is, notorious that the word 'jockey' has acquired the meaning of 'to trick,' 'to cheat,' as appears in all our dictionaries and in common parlance. What is the inference from this but that the winning of races is no absolute proof of the superiority of the horse--for whose improvement racing is said to be encouraged; but rather the result of a secret combination of expedients or arrangements--in a word, jockeying, that is, cheating, tricking. The only 'moral' character required in the jockey is the determination to do whatsoever may be agreed upon or determined by those who are willing and able to give 'a consideration' for the convenient accommodation.

But it is, or was, the associations, the inevitable concomitants, of the turf and racing that stamp it, not only as something questionable, but as a bane and infamy to the nation; and if there is one spot more eminently distinguished for a general rendezvous of fraud and gambling, that place is Newmarket.

The diversions of these plains have proved a decoy to many a noble and ingenuous mind, caught in the snares laid to entrap youth and inexperience. Newmarket was a wily labyrinth of loss and gain, a fruitful field for the display of gambling abilities, the school of the sharpening crew, the academy of the Greeks, the unfathomable gulf that absorbed princely fortunes.

The amusements of the turf were in all other places intermixed with a variety of social diversions, which were calculated to promote innocent mirth and gaiety. The breakfastings, the concerts, the plays, the assemblies, attracted the circle of female beauty, enlivened the scene, engaged the attention of gentlemen, and thus prevented much of the evil contagion and destruction of midnight play. But encouragement to the GAMBLER of high and low degree was the very charter of Newmarket. Every object that met the eye was encompassed with gambling--from the aristocratic Rouge et Noir, Roulette, and Hazard, down to Thimble-rig, Tossing, and Tommy Dodd. Every hour of the day and night was beset with gambling diversified; in short, gambling must occupy the whole man, or he was lost to the sport and spirit of the place. The inhumanity of the cock-pit, the iniquitous vortex of the Hazard table, employed each leisure moment from the race, and either swallowed up the emoluments of the victorious field, or sank the jockey still deeper in the gulf of ruin.

The common people of England have been stigmatized (and perhaps too justly) for their love of bloody sports and cruel diversions; cock-fighting, bull-baiting, boxing, and the crowded attendance on executions, are but too many proofs of this sanguinary turn. But why the imputation should lie at the door of the vulgar alone may well be questioned; for while the star of nobility and dignified distinction was seen to glitter at a cock-match or on a boxing-stage, or near the 'Ring'--where its proprietor was liable to be elbowed by their highnesses of grease and soot, and to be hemmed in by knights of the post and candidates for Tyburn tree--when this motley group alike were fixed in eager attention, alike betted on and enjoyed each blood-drawing stroke of the artificial spur, or blow of the fist well laid in--what distinction was to be made between peer and plebeian, except in derogation of the former?

The race-course at Newmarket always presented a rare assemblage of grooms, gamblers, and greatness.

'See, side by side, the jockey and Sir John
Discuss the important point of six to one;
For, O my Muse! the deep-felt bliss how dear--
How great the pride to gain a jockey's ear!'[76]

[76] Wharton's Newmarket.

Newmarket fame was an object of ambition sought by the most distinguished personages.

'Go on, brave youths, till in some future age
Whips shall become the senatorial badge;
Till England see her thronging senators
Meet all at Westminster in boots and spurs;
See the whole House with mutual phrensy mad,
Her patriots all in leathern breeches clad;
Of bets for taxes learnedly debate, And guide with equal reins
a steed or state.'[77]

[77] Ibid.

And then at the winning-post what motley confusion.

-----'A thousand tongues
Jabber harsh jargon from a thousand lungs.

Dire was the din--as when in caverns pent,
Hoarse Boreas storms and Eurus works for vent,
The aeolian brethren heave the labouring earth,
And roar with elemental strife for birth.'[78]

[78] 'The Gamblers.' Horace had said long before--Tanto cum
streptu ludi spectantur, 'So great a noise attends the games!

The frauds and stratagems of wily craft which once passed current
at Newmarket, surpassed everything that can be imagined at the
present day. The intruding light of the morning was execrated by
the nightly gamblers. 'Grant us but to perish in the light,' was
the prayer of the warlike Ajax:--'Grant us black night for ever,'
exclaimed the gambler; and his wishes were consistent with the
place and the foul deeds perpetrated therein.[79]

[79] The principal gambling-room at Newmarket was called the
'Little Hell.'

Sit mihi fas audita loqui--sit numine vestro,
Pandere res alta terra et caligine mersas.

The turf-events of every succeeding year verify the lament of the
late Lord Derby:--

'The secession from the turf of men who have station and
character, and the accession of men who have neither, are signs
visible to the dullest apprehension. The once national sport of
horse-racing is being degraded to a trade in which it is
difficult to perceive anything either sportive or national. The
old pretence about the improvement of the breed of horses has
become a delusion, too stale for jesting.'

Nothing is more incontestable than the fact that the breed of
English horses has not been really improved, certainly not by

racing and its requirements. It has been truly observed that 'what is called the turf is merely a name for the worst kind of gambling. The men who engage in it are as far as possible from any ideal of sporting men. It is a grim joke, in fact, to speak of "sport" at all in their connection. The turf to them is but a wider and more vicious sort of tapis vert--the racing but the rolling of the balls--the horses but animated dice. It is difficult to name a single honest or manly instinct which is propagated by the turf as it is, or which does not become debased and vitiated by the association. From a public recreation the thing has got to be a public scandal. Every year witnesses a holocaust of great names sacrificed to the insatiable demon of horse-racing--ancient families ruined, old historic memories defiled at the shrine of this vulgarest and most vicious of popular passions.'

Among those who have sought to reform the turf is Sir Joseph Hawley, who last year succeeded in procuring the abolition of two-year-old races before the 1st of May. He is now endeavouring, to go much further, and has given notice of a motion for the appointment of a committee of the Jockey Club to consider the question of the whole condition of the turf.

There can be no doubt, that, if Sir Joseph Hawley's propositions, as announced, be adopted, even in a modified form, they would go to the very root of the evil, and purify the turf of the worst of the present scandals.

It would require a volume, or perhaps many volumes, to treat of the subject of the present chapter--the Turf, Historical, Social, Moral; but I must now leave this topic, of such terrible national interest, to some other conscientious writer capable of 'doing justice' to the theme, in all its requirements.

CHAPTER XIII.

FORTUNE-TELLING BY CARDS (FOR LADIES).

It must be admitted that this practice--however absurd in its object and application--does great credit to human ingenuity. Once admitting the possibility of such conjuring, it is impossible to deny the propriety of the reasonings deduced from the turning up, the collocation, or the juxta-position of the various cards, when the formalities of the peculiar shuffle and cut required have been duly complied with by the consulter.

The cards are first shuffled *ad libitum*, then cut three different times, and laid on a table, face upwards, one by one, in the form of a circle, or more frequently nine in a row. If the conjurer is a man he chooses one of the kings as his representative; if a woman, she selects one of the queens. This is on the supposition that persons are consulting for themselves; otherwise it is the fortune-teller who selects the representative card. Then the queen of the chosen king, or the king of the chosen queen, stands for a husband or wife, mistress or lover, of the party whose fortune is to be told. The knave of the suit represents the most intimate person of their family.

The ninth card every way, that is, counted from the representative, is of the greatest consequence, and that interval comprises the 'circle' of the inquirer, for good or for evil.

Now, all the cards have had assigned to them arbitrary, but plausible, characteristics. Thus, the ace of clubs (that suit representing originally the 'fortunate husbandmen') promises great wealth, much prosperity in life, and tranquillity of mind--if it turns up within your circle, as before mentioned. King of clubs announces a man of dark complexion who is humane, upright, &c., in fact, just the man for a husband. Queen of clubs is equally propitious as the emblem of a dark lady who would prove a paragon wife. Knave of clubs, a jolly good friend in every way. Ten of clubs always flurries the heart of the inquirer--especially if 'hard up'--for it denotes riches speedily forthcoming from an unexpected quarter--which is usually the case in such circumstances; but then it also threatens the loss of some dear friend--which, however, cannot signify much if you get 'the money.' Seven of clubs promises the most brilliant fortune, and the most exquisite bliss this world can afford; but then you are ungallantly warned that you must 'beware of the opposite sex'--which seems a contradiction in terms--for how call 'the most exquisite bliss this world can afford' be secured without the aid of 'the opposite sex'? Five of clubs is the main point of maid-servants, young girls from the country, governesses, in short, of all the floating womanhood of the land--for 'it declares that you will shortly be married to a person who will--MEND your CIRCUMSTANCES.' The trey of clubs is scarcely less exhilarating, for it promises that you will be married three times, and each time to a wealthy person. On the whole the suit of clubs is very lucky, but, very appropriately, the deuce thereof portends some 'unfortunate opposition to your favourite inclination, which will disturb you.' [80]

[80] According to other authorities, the ace of clubs means a letter; the nine, danger caused by drunkenness; the eight, danger from covetousness; the seven, a prison, and danger from the opposite sex; the six, competence by hard-working industry; the five, a happy but NOT wealthy marriage; the four, danger of misfortunes caused by inconstancy or capricious temper; the trey, quarrels.

The suit of diamonds is by no means so satisfactory as the gem of a name would seem to indicate; but perhaps we must remember that this suit represented originally the COMMERCIAL CLASSES, and that probably this divination by cards was invented by some proud ARISTOCRAT in those times when tradesmen did not stand so high as they now do in morality, uprightness, &c. The ace of diamonds puts you on the qui vive for the postman; it means a LETTER. It is only to be hoped that it is not one of those nasty things, yellow outside and blue within--a dun from some importunate butcher, baker, grocer, or--tailor. The king of diamonds shows a revengeful, fiery, obstinate fellow of very fair complexion in your circle; the queen of diamonds is nothing but a gay coquette, of the same complexion as the king, and not 'over- virtuous'--a very odd phrase in use for the absence of virtue altogether; the

knave of diamonds is a selfish, impracticable fellow; ten of diamonds is one of the few exceptions to the evil omens of this suit, it promises a country husband or a wife with great wealth and many children--the number of the latter being indicated by the next card to it; it also signifies a purse of gold--but where? Oh, where? Nine of diamonds indicates simply a vagabond, full of vexation and disappointment; eight of diamonds shows an enemy to marriage, who may, however, 'marry late,' and find himself in a terrible 'fix;' seven of diamonds is worse still, portending all the horrors of the divorce court and the bankruptcy court--conjugal profligacy and extravagance; six of diamonds means early marriage and premature widowhood, and a second marriage, which will probably be worse; five of diamonds is the next exception to the misery of this suit, it promises 'good children, who will KEEP YOU FROM GRIEF'--at best, however, only a makeshift; four of diamonds is as bad as seven of diamonds--portending the same results; the trey of diamonds threatens all manner of strife, law-suits, &c., promises a vixen for a wife, to your great domestic misery; the deuce of diamonds concludes the catalogue of wretchedness with the assurance that you will fall in love early, that your parents will not approve of your choice, and if you marry, notwithstanding, that they will hardly ever forgive you.[81]

[81] Otherwise the ace of diamonds means a wedding ring, the king, a fiery but a placable person, of very fair complexion; the ten, money, success in honourable business; the eight, a happy prudent marriage, though late in life; the five, unexpected and most likely good news; the four, a faithless friend, a betrayed secret.

The suit of hearts, as previously explained, represented originally the ecclesiastical order, the jolly monks, churchmen of all degrees; how far the indications tally must be left to the ingenious reader to determine. The ace of hearts means feasting and pleasure; but if attended by spades, it foretells quarrelling; if by hearts it shows affection and friendship; if by diamonds, you will hear of some absent friend; if by clubs, of merry-making: the king of hearts denotes a not VERY fair man, good-natured, but hot and hasty individual, and very amorous; the queen of hearts promises a lady of golden locks (not necessarily 'carrots'), faithful and affectionate; the knave of hearts is a particular friend, and great attention must be paid to the card that stands next to him, as from it alone you can judge whether the person it represents will favour your inclination or not, because he is always the dearest friend or nearest relation of the consulting party; the ten of hearts shows good nature and many children, and is a corrective of the bad tidings of the cards that stand next to it; and if its neighbouring cards are of good import, it ascertains and confirms their value: nine of hearts promises wealth, grandeur, and high esteem; if cards that are unfavourable stand near it, you may expect disappointments; and the reverse, if favourable cards follow; if these last be at a small distance, expect to retrieve your losses, whether of peace or goods: eight of hearts signifies drinking and feasting; seven of hearts shows a fickle and unfaithful person, vicious, spiteful, malicious; six of hearts promises a generous, open,

credulous disposition, often a dupe; if this card comes before your king or queen (as the case may be) YOU will be the dupe; if after, you will get the upper hand: five of hearts portends a wavering, unsteady, unreliable individual of either sex: four of hearts indicates late marriage from 'delicacy in making a choice:' trey of hearts is rather a 'poser;' 'it shows that your own impudence will greatly contribute to your experiencing the ill-will of others:' deuce of hearts promises extraordinary success and good fortune, though, perhaps, you may have to wait long for 'the good time coming.' [82]

[82] Or,--the ace of hearts denotes the house of the consulter; the queen, a lady not VERY fair; seven, many good friends; six, honourable courtship; five, a present; four, domestic troubles caused by jealousy.

The suit of spades originally represented the NOBILITY, and the following are its significances in fortune-telling. The ace of spades wholly relates to love-affairs, without specifying whether lawful or unlawful--a pretty general occupation of the 'nobility,' of course; it also denotes death when the card is upside down: the king of spades shows a man ambitious and successful at court, or with some great man who will have it in his power to advance him--but, let him beware of the reverse! the queen of spades shows that a person will be corrupted by the rich of both sexes; if she is handsome great attempts will be made on her virtue: the knave of spades shows a fellow that requires much rousing, although 'quite willing to serve you' with his influence and patronage--like many a member in the case of his importunate constituents: the ten of spades is a card of caution, counteracting the good effect of the card near you: the nine of spades is positively the worst card in the whole pack; it portends dangerous sickness, total loss of fortune, cruel calamities, endless dissension in your family, and death at last--I hope you may never see it near you: the eight of spades indicates much opposition from your FRIENDS, or those you imagine to be such; if this card comes near you, leave your plan and adopt another: seven of spades shows the loss of a most valuable, influential friend, whose death will plunge you in very great distress and poverty: the six of spades announces a mediocrity of fortune, and great uncertainty in your undertakings: the five of spades is rather doubtful as to success or a rise in life; but it promises luck in the choice of your companion for life, although it shows that your own temper is rather sullen--and so to get a 'fond creature' to take care of you, with such a temper, is a mighty great blessing, and more than you deserve: the four of spades shows sickness speedily, and injury of fortune by friends: the trey of spades shows that you will be fortunate in marriage, but that your inconstant temper will make you unhappy: the deuce of spades is the UNDERTAKER, at last; it positively shows a COFFIN, but who it is for must depend entirely on the cards that are near it. [83]

[83] Or,--the ace of spades denotes death, malice, a duel, a general misfortune; the king, a man of very dark complexion, ambitious, and unscrupulous; the queen, a very dark- complexioned woman of malicious disposition, or a widow; the knave, a lawyer,

a person to be shunned; the ten, disgrace, crime, imprisonment, death on the scaffold; the eight, great danger from imprudence; the six, a child, to the unmarried a card of caution; the five, great danger from giving way to bad temper; the trey, a journey by land,--tears; the deuce, a removal.

'The nine of hearts is termed the wish card. After the general fortune has been told, a separate and different manipulation is performed, to learn if the pryer into futurity will obtain a particular wish; and from the position of the wish card in the pack the required answer is deduced.

'The foregoing is merely the alphabet of the art; the letters, as it were, of the sentences formed by the various combinations of the cards. A general idea only can be given here of the manner in which those prophetic sentences are formed. As before stated, if a married woman consults the cards, the king of her own suit, or complexion, represents her husband; but with single women, the lover, either in esse or posse, is represented by his own colour; and all cards, when representing persons, lose their own normal significations. There are exceptions, however, to these general rules. A man, no matter what his complexion, if he wear uniform, even if he be the negro cymbal-player in a regimental band, can be represented by the king of diamonds:-- note, the dress of policemen and volunteers is not considered as uniform. On the other hand, a widow, even if she be an albiness, can be represented only by the queen of spades.

'The ace of hearts always denoting the house of the person consulting the decrees of fate, some general rules are applicable to it. Thus the ace of clubs signifying a letter, its position, either before or after the ace of hearts, shows whether the letter is to be sent to or from the house. The ace of diamonds when close to the ace of hearts foretells a wedding in the house; but the ace of spades betokens sickness and death.

'The knaves represent the thoughts of their respective kings and queens, and consequently the thoughts of the persons whom those kings and queens represent, in accordance with their complexions.

For instance, a young lady of a rather but not decidedly dark complexion, represented by the queen of clubs, when consulting the cards, may be shocked to find her fair lover (the king of diamonds) flirting with a wealthy widow (the queen of spades, attended by the ten of diamonds), but she will be reassured by finding his thoughts (the knave of diamonds) in combination with a letter (ace of clubs), a wedding ring (ace of diamonds), and her house (the ace of hearts); clearly signifying that, though he is actually flirting with the rich widow, he is, nevertheless, thinking of sending a letter, with an offer of marriage, to the young lady herself. And look, where are her own thoughts, represented by the knave of clubs; they are far away with the old lover, that dark man (king of spades) who, as is plainly shown by his being attended by the nine of diamonds, is prospering at the Australian diggings or elsewhere. Let us shuffle the cards once more, and see if the dark man, at the distant diggings, ever thinks of his old flame, the club-

complexioned young lady in England. No! he does not. Here are his thoughts (the knave of spades), directed to this fair, but rather gay and coquettish, woman (the queen of diamonds); they are separated but by a few hearts, one of them, the sixth (honourable courtship), showing the excellent understanding that exists between them. Count, now, from the six of hearts to the ninth card from it, and lo! it is a wedding ring (the ace of diamonds); they will be married before the expiration of a twelvemonth.'

Such is the scheme of fortune-telling by cards, as propounded in the learned disquisitions of the adepts, and Betty, or Martha, or her mistress can consult them by themselves according to the established method--without exposing themselves to the extortionate cunning of the wandering gipsies or the permanent crone of the city or village. They may just as well believe what comes out according to their own manipulation as by that of the heartless cheats in question. Your ordinary fortune-tellers are not over-particular, being only anxious to tell you exactly what you want to know. So if a black court card gets in juxtaposition with and looking towards a red court card, the fair consulter's representative, then it is evident that some 'dark gentleman' is 'after her;' and vice versa; and if a wife, suspecting her husband's fidelity, consults the cards, the probability is that her SUSPICIONS will receive 'confirmation strong' from the fact that 'some dark woman,' that is, a black queen, 'is after her husband;' or vice versa, if a husband consults the card-woman respecting the suspicions he may have reason to entertain with regard to his 'weaker rib' or his 'intended.'

It need scarcely be observed that fortune-tellers in any place are 'posted up' in all information or gossip in the neighbourhood; and therefore they readily turn their knowledge to account in the answers they give to anxious inquirers.

Apart from this, however, the interpretations are so elaborately comprehensive that 'something' MUST come true in the revelations; and we all know that in such matters that something coming to pass will far outweigh the non-fulfilment of other fatal ordinations. Of course no professional fortune-teller would inform an old man that some dark or fair man was 'after' his old woman; but nothing is more probable than the converse, and much family distraction has frequently resulted from such perverse revelation of 'the cards.' In like manner your clever fortune-teller will never promise half-a-dozen children to 'an old lady,' but she will very probably hold forth that pleasant prospect--if such it be--to a buxom lass of seventeen or eighteen--especially in those counties of England where the ladies are remarkable for such profuse bounty to their husbands.

As a general proposition, it matters very little what may be the means of vaticination or prediction--whether cards, the tea-grounds in the cup, &c.,--all POSSIBLE events have a degree of probability of coming to pass, which may vary from 20 to 1 down to a perfect equality of chance; and the clever fortune-teller, who may be mindful of her reputation, will take care to regulate her promises or predictions according to that proposition.

Many educated ladies give their attention to the cards, and some have acquired great proficiency in the art. On board a steamer sailing for New York, on one occasion a French lady among the saloon-passengers undertook to amuse the party by telling their fortunes. A Scotch young gentleman, who was going out to try and get a commission in the Federal army, had his fortune told. Among the announcements, as interpreted by the lady, was the rather unpleasant prospect that two constables would be 'after' him! We all laughed heartily at the odd things that came out for everybody, and then the thing was forgotten; the steamer reached her destination; and all the companions of the pleasant voyage separated and went their different ways.

Some months after, I met the young gentleman above alluded to, and among the various adventures which he had had, he mentioned the following. He said that shortly after his arrival in New York he presented a ten-dollar note which he had received, at a drinking-house, that it was declared a forged note, and that he was given into custody; but that the magistrate, on being conclusively convinced of his respectability, dismissed the charge without even taking the trouble to establish the alleged fact that the note was a forgery. So far so good; but on the following morning, whilst at breakfast at his hotel, another police-officer pounced upon him, and led him once more on the same charge to another magistrate, who, however, dismissed the case like the other.[84]

[84] It appears that this is allowable in New York. The explanation of the perverse prosecution was, that the young gentleman did not 'fee' the worthy policemen, according to custom in such cases.

Thereupon I said--'Why, the French lady's card-prediction on board came to pass! Don't you remember what she said about two constables being "after you"?''

'Now I remember it,' he said; 'but I had positively forgotten all about it. Well, she was right there--but I am sorry to say that nothing else she PROMISED has come to pass.'

Doubtless all other consulters of the cards and of astrologers can say the same, although all would not wisely conclude that a system must be erroneous which misleads human hope in the great majority of cases. In fact, like the predictions in our weather-almanacks, the fortune-teller's announcements are only right BY CHANCE, and wrong ON PRINCIPLE.

FORTUNE-TELLING FORTY YEARS AGO, OR, THE STORY OF MARTHA CARNABY.

A certain Martha Carnaby, a tidy but rather 'unsettled' servant girl, some forty years ago went to an old fortune-teller, to have her fortune told, and the doings on both sides came out as follows, before the magistrate at the Bow Street police-court. The fortune-teller was 'had up,' as usual, 'for obtaining money and other valuables' from the former.

Miss Martha Carnaby said that this celebrated old fortune-teller had first gained her acquaintance by attending at her master's house, before the family had risen, and urging her to have her fortune told. At length, after much persuasion, she consented; but the fortune-teller told her that before the secrets of her future destiny were revealed, she must deposit in her hands some little token, TO BIND THE CHARM, which the old lady said she would invoke the same evening--'if I would call at her lodgings, and also cast my nativity by her cards, and tell me every particular of the future progress of my life. I accordingly gave her what money I had; but that, she told me, was not enough to buy the ingredients with which she was to compose the charm. I at length gave her four silver teaspoons and two tablespoons, which she put carefully in her pocket; and then asked me to let her look at my hand, which I showed her. She told me there were many lines in it which clearly indicated great wealth and happiness; and, after telling her my name was Martha Carnaby, she took her departure, and I agreed to meet her at her lodgings the same evening. Agreeably to her directions, I dressed myself in as fashionable a manner as I could, because I WAS TO SEE MY SWEETHEART THROUGH A MIRROR, AND HE WAS TO SEE ME.'

The poor deluded creature then stated that she attended punctually at the hour appointed, at the old lady's sanctum, and seating herself upon an old chair, beheld with astonishment quite as much as she bargained for. 'I felt myself,' said poor Martha, 'on entering the room, all of a twitter. The old woman was seated in her chair of state, and, reaching down from the mantel-piece a pack of cards, began, after muttering a few words in a language I could not understand, to lay them very carefully in her lap; she then foretold that I should get married, but not to the person in our house, as I expected, but to another young man, whom, if I could afford a trifle, she would show me through her MATRIMONIAL MIRROR. To this I consented, and she desired me to shut my eyes and keep my face covered while she made the necessary preparations; and there she kept me, with my face hid in her lap, until I was nearly smothered; when suddenly she told me to turn round, and look through the mirror, which was seen through a hole in a curtain, and I saw a young man pass quickly before me, staring me in the face, at which I was much surprised, she assuring me that he would be my husband. It was then agreed that she was to call on me the next morning, and return the silver spoons; but, your Worship,' said the poor girl, 'she never came; and as I was afraid my mistress would soon want them, I asked the advice of a woman in our neighbourhood, as to what I had better do, and to whom I related all the circumstances I have told your Worship; when the woman asked me how I could have been such a fool as to be duped by that old cheat at the bar,--that she was a notorious old woman, that she had in her employ some young man, who was always hid in the room, to overhear the conversation, and to run from out of the hiding-place before the mirror; and that I ought to be thankful I came away as well as I did, as many young girls had been ruined through going to this old creature; that, from her acquaintance with so many servant girls, she always contrived to get from them such intelligence as enabled her to answer those questions that might be put to her, as to the business, name, place of abode, country, and other circumstances of the party applying, the answering of which

always convinced the credulous creatures who went to her, of her great skill in the art of astrology; and when she was right in her guessing, she always took care to have it well published.'

Of course, and again, as usual, the magistrate 'hoped it would be a lesson to Martha, and to all other foolish girls, never to hearken to those infernal, wicked old wretches, the fortune-tellers--many a girl having lost her character and virtue by listening to their nonsense;' but there have been hundreds and thousands of such Marthas since then, and no doubt there will be very many more in future--in spite of the ridiculous exposure of such dupes ever and anon, in courts of justice and in the columns of the daily papers.

'The art of cartomancy, or divination by playing-cards, dates from an early period of their obscure history. In the museum of Nantes there is a painting, said to be by Van Eyck, representing Philippe le Bon, Archduke of Austria, and subsequently King of Spain, consulting a fortune-teller by cards. This picture cannot be of a later date than the fifteenth century. Then the art was introduced into England is unknown; probably, however, the earliest printed notice of it in this country is the following curious story, extracted from Rowland's Judicial Astrology Condemned:--"Cuffe, an excellent Grecian, and secretary to the Earl of Essex, was told, twenty years before his death, that he should come to an untimely end, at which Cuffe laughed, and in a scornful manner entreated the soothsayer to show him in what manner he should come to his end, who condescended to him, and calling for cards, entreated Cuffe to draw out of the pack any three which pleased him. He did so, and drew three knaves, and laid them on the table by the wizard's direction, who then told him, if he desired to see the sum of his bad fortune, to take up those cards. Cuffe, as he was prescribed, took up the first card, and looking on it, he saw the portraiture of himself cap-a-pie, having men encompassing him with bills and halberds. Then he took up the second, and there he saw the judge that sat upon him; and taking up the last card, he saw Tyburn, the place of his execution, and the hangman, at which he laughed heartily. But many years after, being condemned, he remembered and declared this prediction."

'The earliest work on cartomancy was written or compiled by one Francesco Marcolini, and printed at Venice in 1540.'^[85]

^[85] The Book of Days, Feb. 21. In this work there is a somewhat different account of cartomancy to that which I have expounded 'on the best authorities' and from practical experience with the adepts in the art; but, in a matter of such immense importance to ladies of all degrees, I have thought proper to give, in foot-notes, the differing interpretations of the writer in the Book of Days, who professes to speak with some authority, not however, I think, superior to mine, for I have investigated the subject to the utmost.

CHAPTER XIV.

AMUSING CARD TRICKS.^[86]

[86] These tricks appeared originally in Beeton's Christmas Annual, and are here reproduced with permission.

Although my work is a history of gambling, in all its horrors, and with all its terrible moral warnings, I gladly conclude it 'happily,' after the manner of the most pleasing novels and romances,--namely, by a method of contriving innocent and interesting amusement with cards, without the 'chance' of encountering the risks, calamities, and disgrace of gambling.

I was led to the investigation of this branch of my subject by the following incident. Being present at a party when a gentleman performed one of the tricks described, No. 7, the rest of the company and myself were all much surprised at the result, and urgently requested him to explain the method of his performance, which, however, he stoutly refused to do, averring that he would not take L1000 for it. This was so ridiculously provoking that I offered to bet him L5 that I would discover the method within 24 hours. To my astonishment he declined the bet, not, however, without a sort of compliment, admitting that I MIGHT do so. He was right; for, as Edgar Poe averred, no man can invent a puzzle which some other man cannot unravel. In effect, I called upon him the following day, and performed the trick not only according to his method, but also by another, equally successful. I have reason to believe that most of the tricks of my selection had not previously appeared in print; at any rate, I have given to all of them an exposition which may entitle them to some claim of originality.

PRELIMINARY HINTS.

I. Shuffling, in the simple and inoffensive sense of the expression, is an important point in all tricks with cards. For the most part, it is only a pretence or dexterous management--keeping a card or cards in your command whilst seeming to shuffle them into the pack.

Every performer has his method of such shuffling. Some hold the pack perpendicularly with the left hand, then with the right take a portion of the pack--about one half--and make a show of shuffling the two parts together edgeways, but, in reality, replace them as they were. With rapidity of execution every eye is thus deceived.

If a single card is to be held in command, place it at the bottom of the pack, which you hold in your left, and then, with your right thumb and middle finger, raise and throw successively portions of the pack, leaving the bottom card in contact with the fingers of the left hand.

With dexterity, any portion of the pack may be shuffled, leaving the remainder just as it was, by separating it during the process by inserting one or more fingers of the left hand between it and the portions shuffled.

II. Cutting--not in the sense of bolting at the sight of 'blue,'

though that is of consequence to card-sharpers--is of importance in all card tricks. In many tricks cutting the cards is only a pretence, as it is necessary for the success of the trick to replace them as they were; in technical terms, we must 'blow up the cut.' [87]

[87] This is the sauter la coupe referred to in the chapter on the Gaming Clubs, in the account of the trial of Lord de Ros. See 'Graham's Club.'

There are several ways of performing this sleight-of-hand. The cards being cut, and forming two lots on the table, smartly snatch up the lot which should be placed on the other, with the left hand.

This lot being taken up and the hand being in the position shown in the figure, snatch up in like manner the other lot, and, by a movement of the palm of the hand and the tips of the fingers, pass the second lot under the first.

The deception of the trick depends upon its dexterity, and this can only be acquired by practice. But really it may be dispensed with; for it is a curious fact that, in every case when the cards are cut, you may actually replace them just as they were without being observed by the spectators--for the simple reason that the ruse is not suspected, especially if their attention is otherwise engaged with your pointed observations.

The 'gift of the gab' is in this case, as in many others, a very great resource. A striking remark or bon mot will easily mystify the spectators, and attract their attention from what you are DOING. Hence all prestidigitators are always well stocked with anecdotes and funny observations; indeed, they talk incessantly: they speak well, too, and they take care to time the word accurately with the moment when their fingers act most energetically.

III. To slip a card.--To slip a card is to pretend to take the bottom card of the pack, and in reality to take the card which precedes it. To perform this feat without detection is a very simple affair, but it requires practice.

The pack of cards being held in the right hand, advance the left hand--palm upwards--just as if you were seizing the last card with the middle finger; but, having slightly moistened this finger with the lips, push back this card, and make it slip under the palm of the right hand, whilst you seize the preceding card with the thumb and forefinger.

In this manner you may successively draw out several cards besides the last, and only draw the last as the sixth, seventh, &c., which will serve to effect several interesting tricks to be explained in the sequel.

IV. To file the card.--To file the card is, when a card has been taken from the pack to pretend to place it about the middle of the pack, whilst, in reality, you place it at the bottom.

The pack must be held in the left hand, between the thumb and forefinger, so that the three other fingers be free. One of the middle cards should project a little. Then take the card to be filed between the forefinger and the middle finger of the right hand; advance the right hand from the left, and whilst the three disengaged fingers of the left hand seize and place the card under the pack, the thumb and forefinger of the right seize the projecting card before mentioned, so that it seems to be that card which you have slipped into the middle of the pack. These movements are very easy, and, when rapidly performed, the illusion is complete.

TRICKS.

1. To tell a card thought of by a party after three deals.

Take twenty-one cards of a pack, and deal them out one by one in three lots, requesting the party to think of a card, and remember in which lot it is.

Having dealt out the cards, ask the party in which lot the card is.

Take up the lots successively, and place the lot containing the card in the MIDDLE.

Deal out the cards again, and ask the party to state in which lot the card is; and proceed as before, placing the lot containing the card in the middle.

Deal out the cards in like manner a third time, proceeding as before.

Then deal them out as usual, and the eleventh card will be the one thought of, infallibly. This is the usual way of showing the card thought of; but, as the trick may be partly discovered by the counting, it is better to hold the cards in your hand, and take out the eleventh card, counting to yourself, of course, from the left hand, but pretending to be considering the guess.

This is apparently a most mysterious trick, although a necessary consequence of the position of the lot containing the card in the three deals.

2. The four inseparable kings.

Take four kings. Beneath the last place any two cards, which you take care to conceal. Then show the four kings and replace the six cards under the pack.

Then take a king and place it in the top of the pack, place one of the TWO OTHER CARDS in the middle, and the other about the same place, and then, turning up the pack, show that one king is still at the bottom. Then let the cards be cut, and as three kings were left below, all must necessarily get together somewhere about the middle of the pack. Of course in placing the two other cards you pretend to be placing two kings.

3. The barmaid and the three victimizers.

For this amusing trick you arrange the cards thus: Holding the pack in your hands, find all the knaves, place one of them next to your left hand, and the other three on the table. Then find a queen, which also place on the table. Then say:--

'Three scamps went into a tavern, and ordered drink. Here they are--the three knaves. "Who's to pay? I can't," said the first.

"I won't," said the second. "I wish she may get it," said the third. "I'll manage it," said the first, the greatest rogue of the three. "I say, my pretty girl, haven't you some very old wine in your cellar?" Here's the barmaid thus addressed by the rogue in question (showing the queen), and she replied:--"Oh yes, sir, prime old wine." "Let's have a bottle." [Off went the barmaid. Put the queen in your pocket.] "Now for it, my lads," said the knave in question; " 'mizzle' is the word. Let's be off in opposite directions, and meet to- night; you know where." Hereupon they decamped, taking opposite directions, which I will indicate by placing one on the top of the pack, one at the bottom, and the other in the middle.

'When the poor barmaid returned [taking out the queen from your pocket] with the wine, great was her astonishment to find the room empty. "Lor!" she exclaimed, "why, I do declare--did you ever!--Oh! but I'm not agoing to be sarved so. I'll catch the rogues, all of them--that I will." And off she went after them, as shown by placing her ON, or at any rate, AFTER the first.

'Now, to catch the three seemed impossible; but the ladies have always smiled at impossibilities, and wonders never cease; for, if you have the goodness to cut these cards, you will find that she HAS caught the three rogues.'

When the cards are cut, proceed in the USUAL WAY after cutting--NOT as required in the last trick; and taking up the cards, you will find the queen and three knaves together, which you take out and exhibit to the astonished audience.

Of course, one of these knaves is not one of the three first exhibited, but the one which you slipped on your left hand at first. There is no chance of detection, however; simply for the reason before given--nobody suspects the trick.

4. How to name every card in a pack successively turned up by a second party, and win every trick at a hand of Whist.

This is, perhaps, the most astonishing of all tricks with cards. Although it may be true that whatever puzzle one man invents, some other man may unravel, as before observed, I am decidedly of opinion that this trick defies detection. At the first blush it seems very difficult to learn; but it is simplicity itself in explanation.

Begin by laying out the cards in four rows according to the suits, all of a suit in a row side by side.

The cards must now be arranged for the trick. Take up the six in the top or bottom row, then the two in the next row, the ten in the third, and the nine in the fourth, placing them one upon the other in the left hand. Then begin again with the row from which you took the six, and take up the three. From the next row take the king. These numbers will be easily remembered with a little practice, amounting altogether to 30, made up thus--6 and 2 are 8, 8 and 10 are 18, 18 and 9 are 27, 27 and 3 are 30--KING.

By repeating this addition a few times, it will be fixed in the memory.

Proceed by next beginning with the row next to the one from which you took the last card or the king, and take the eight; from the next row take the four; from the next the ace; from the next the knave. These cards make up 13. Therefore say, 8 and 4 are 12 and 1 are 13--knave.

From the next row to that whence you took the knave, take the seven; from the next row take the five; from the next the queen. These cards make up 12. Thus, 7 and 5 are 12--queen.

It thus appears that you have taken up thirteen cards consisting of the four suits, successively taken and being arranged as follows--6, 2, 10, 9, 3, king; 8, 4, 1, knave; 7, 5, queen.

Proceed in like manner with the remainder of the cards, beginning with the row next to that from which you took the queen, and take the six, then from the next row the two, and so on as before, making up another batch of 13 cards.

Repeat the process for a third batch, and finish with the remainder for the fourth--always remembering to take the card from the next row in succession continually; in other words, only one card must be taken from each row at a time.

When the cards are thus arranged, request a party to cut them. This is only pretence; for you must take care dexterously to replace the cut just as it was before. Let them be cut again, and replace them as before. Your ruse will not be detected, simply because nobody suspects the possibility of the thing.

Now take up the pack, and from the BOTTOM take the first four cards; handing the remainder to a party, sitting before you, saying--'I shall now call every card in succession from the top of the pack in your hand.'

To do this, two things must be remembered; and there is no difficulty in it. First, the numbers 6, 2, 10, 9, 3, king, &c., before given; and next the SUIT of those cards.

Now you know the NUMBERS by heart, and the SUIT is shown by the four cards which you hold in your hand, fan-like, in the usual way. If the first of the four cards be a club, the first card you call will be the six of clubs; if the next be a heart, the next card called will be the two of hearts, and so on throughout the thirteen made up from every row, as before given, and the

suits of each card will be indicated successively by the suit of each of your four indicator cards, thus, as the case may be, clubs, hearts, diamonds, spades; clubs, hearts, diamonds, spades, and so on.

After a little private practice, you will readily and rapidly call, as the case may be, from the four cards in your hand:--the six of clubs, two of hearts, ten of diamonds, nine of spades, three of clubs, king of hearts, eight of diamonds, four of spades, ace of clubs, knave of hearts, seven of diamonds, five of spades, queen of clubs--and so on to the last card in the pack.

In the midst of the astonishment produced by this seemingly prodigious display of memory, say--'Now, if you like, we will have a hand at Whist, and I undertake to win every trick if I be allowed to deal.'

Let the Whist party be formed, and get the cards cut as usual--only taking care to REPLACE them, as before enjoined, precisely as they were. Deal the cards, and the result will be that your thirteen cards will be ALL TRUMPS. Let the game proceed until your opponents 'give it up' in utter bewilderment.

This splendid trick seems difficult in description, but it is one of the easiest; and even were it ten times more difficult than it is, the reader will perhaps admit that it is worth mastering. Once committed to memory the figures are never forgotten, and a few repetitions, with the cards before you, will suffice to enable you to retain them.

5. Two persons having each drawn a card and replaced them in the pack, to guess these cards.

Make a set of all the clubs and spades, and another set of hearts and diamonds. Shuffle well each set, and even let them be shuffled by the spectators. Then request a person to draw a card from one of the sets, and another person to draw one from the second set.

You now take a set in each hand, presenting them to the two persons, requesting them to replace the drawn cards. You must pretend to present to each person the set from which he drew his card, but in reality you present the red set to the person who drew the black card, and the black set to the person who drew the red card.

Each person having replaced his card, you get each set shuffled. Then you take them in hand, and by running them over you easily find the red card amongst the black, and the black card amongst the red.

Of course you will have prepared the sets beforehand, and take care to alter the arrangement as soon as possible after the trick. But you can prepare the pack in the presence of others without their detecting it. Distribute the cards by dealing according to the two colours; take them up, and having placed the red set a little projecting over the black, set them down, and, pretending to cut them, separate the sets.

6. Twenty cards being arranged upon a table, a person thinks of two, and you undertake to guess them.

Lay out twenty cards of any kind, two by two,

```
-----  
| c | i | c | o | s |  
-----  
| d | e | d | i | t |  
-----  
| t | u | m | u | s |  
-----  
| n | e | m | o | n |  
-----
```

and request a party to think of two in a line; that is, one of the ten sets formed by the twenty cards. This done you take up the sets in the order in which they lie, and place them in rows according to the letters of the words. You may use a diagram like the preceding, but as the words are easily retained it had better be dispensed with, distributing the cards on the table just as though upon the diagram, which will make the trick more puzzling and extraordinary. Proceed as follows:-- Place the cards two by two on similar letters: thus, place the two cards of the first set on the two d's in ded it; the two cards of the second set on the two i's of cicos and ded it; the two of the third set on the two c's, and so on with the ten sets.

All the letters of the words being thus covered, ask the party who has thought of the cards to tell you in which lines these cards are. If both are in the first line (cicos), they must be those on the two c's; if they are both in the second line, they cover the d's in ded it; both in the third line, they cover the u's in tumus; both in the fourth, they cover the n's in nemon.

If one be in the first line and the other in the second, they cover the i's in cicos and ded it, and thus of the rest-- the two cards thought of NECESSARILY covering two SIMILAR LETTERS, whilst each of the letters occurs only TWICE in the diagram.

7. To tell a card thought of without even looking at the cards.

Take any number of cards,--say twenty. Pretend to shuffle them with the faces towards you, and REMEMBER THE FIRST CARD as you close the pack--suppose the ten of diamonds. Tell the party that the only condition you require is to be told the ORDER in which the card is dealt out by you; in other words, he must tell you whether in dealing it comes out first, second, third, &c.

Remembering your first card, you may then turn your back to him, and deal out the cards one by one, and one upon the top of the other, requesting him to think of a card and its order as before said.

Then take up the cards, and shuffle them repeatedly, by throwing a portion of them from the bottom to the top, taking care not to

mix the cards or let any drop, and then let the party cut them as often as he pleases. Then, take the cards in hand. Pretend to examine them mysteriously, but in reality only look for YOUR card--the first dealt out--the ten of diamonds for instance. Now, suppose he tells you that the card he thought of came out FIFTH. Then, for a certainty, it is the fourth card on the RIGHT of the ten of diamonds, in spite of all YOUR shuffling, and all regular cutting, for such shuffling and regular cutting cannot alter the order or sequence of the cards. Always remember to count from your own card inclusive to the number of the card thought of towards your right hand. But should your card happen to be so near the right hand or the top as not to allow sufficient counting, then count as far as it admits to the RIGHT and then continue at the LEFT. Thus, suppose there are only two cards above the ten of diamonds, then count two more on the left, making the fifth. If the card you remember, or your first card, is first, then count the requisite number on the left, always beginning with YOUR card, however.

The REASON of this trick is simply that by merely cutting the cards, and shuffling them in the way indicated, you do not alter the SEQUENCE of the cards. With regard to this sort of SHUFFLING, I may say that it is simply CUTTING the cards-- always preserving their sequence--a most important fact for card-players, since it may lead to a pretty accurate conjecture of all the hands after a deal, from the study of the one in hand, with reference to the tricks turned down after the previous deal, as already suggested. Hence, in shuffling for whist or other games, the cards should not be shuffled in this way, but more thoroughly mixed by the edgewise shuffling of certain players.

This is the trick I alluded to at the commencement of the chapter, the mode of performing which I succeeded in discovering.

Of course ANY NUMBER of persons may think of cards, remembering their order, and the operator will tell them, in like manner.

8. A person having thought of one of fifteen cards presented to him, to guess the card thought of.

Form three ranks of five cards each, and request a party to think of one of these cards, and tell you in which rank it is. Take up the cards of the three ranks, taking care to place the cards of the ranks in which is the card thought of between those of the two other ranks.

Make three more ranks as before. Ask the party again in which rank the card is, and take them up, placing the rank in which the card is between the two others. Operate in like manner a third time, and the card thought of will infallibly be the THIRD of the rank named by the party.

Observe, however, you must not form each rank with five consecutive cards; but you must place the cards one by one, placing one successively in each rank; thus, one at the top on the left of the first rank, one below that first for the second rank, one below the second for the third rank, then one in the first, one in the second, one in the third, and so on.

This trick, which is very easy, always produces a great effect. It only requires a little attention, and it can never fail unless you make a mistake in arranging the cards, which, however, is too simple to admit of error.

9. Two persons having each drawn a card from a pack, and having replaced them, to tell these cards after the pack has been shuffled and cut by the spectators as often as they like.

The cards may be easily divided into two numerical parts, even and odd: by taking a king for four points, a queen for three, a knave for two, and the other cards for their especial points, we may make up two sets of sixteen cards each, the even composing one, and the odd the other. These two sets being before the performer, he takes one, shuffles it well, and lets a party take a card. He then takes the other, shuffles it, and lets another party take a card. Then, whilst each party is looking at his card, which HE IS REQUESTED TO DO, the performer dexterously changes the place of the two sets, and he requests the parties to replace the cards in the set whence they took them. It follows that the party who took a card from the EVEN set places it in the ODD set, and he who took it from the ODD set places it in the even set. Consequently, all the shuffling and cutting in the world will be useless, for the performer has only to spread out the cards of each set to point out the cards drawn.

10. Singular arrangement of sixteen cards.

Take the four kings, the four queens, the four knaves, and the four tens of a pack, and ask if there be any one in the company who can form a square with them in such a manner that, taken in any direction, from right to left, from the top to the bottom, by the diagonal--anyhow, in fact--there will always be in each line a king, queen, knave, and a ten. Everybody will think the thing easy, but it is certain that no one will succeed in doing it. When they 'give it up,' take the sixteen cards and arrange them as shown, when the king, queen, knave, and ten will stand as required.

11. The seven trick.

Make up the four sevens of a pack, and take seven other cards, no matter which, for another lot, and, presenting both lots, you say:--Here are two lots totally dissimilar; nevertheless, there is one of seven, and I declare it will be the first touched by any party present. Of course, when touched, you at once prove your words by exhibiting either the sevens or the seven cards--taking care to mix the cards into the pack immediately to prevent detection.

12. Infallible method for guessing any number that a party has thought of.

Take the first ten cards of a pack of 52 cards. Set out these ten cards as shown below, so that the point A should correspond to the ace, and to 1--the point F to the card representing the 6--and E to the 10.

```

      2 3 4
      B C D
1 A-----E 5
10 K-----F 6
   I H G
   9 8 7

```

Thus prepared, you request a party to think of a card, and then you tell him to touch any number he pleases, requesting him to name it aloud. Then, adding the whole number of the cards to the number touched, you tell him to count backwards to himself, beginning with the card touched, and giving to that card the number of the one thought of. By counting in this way, the party will at length count the entire number on the card thought of, which you will thus be able to designate with certainty.

Example:--Suppose the card thought of is G, marking 7; again, supposing the one touched to be D, equal to 4; you add to this number the entire number of cards, which is, in this case, 10, which will make 14. Then, making the party count this sum, from the number touched, D to C, B, A, and so on, backwards, so that in commencing to count the number thought of, 7 on D, the party will continue, saying, 8 on C, 9 on B, 10 on A, 11 on K, 12 on I, 13 on H, and end with counting 14 on G; and you will thus discover that the number thought of is 7, which corresponds to G.

Of course the party counts TO himself, and only speaks to designate the point on which he stops, namely, G in this example.

This trick may be performed with any number of cards-- as few as six, or as many as fifteen. Then you must always add to the number the total of the cards used. The trick will be much more interesting and striking if you turn the cards face downwards, only trusting to your memory to retain the order of the numbers.

Of course, the letters are only used to facilitate the explanation. The cards really form a sort of circle, beginning at 1 or the ace on the left, and then continuing with the 2, the 3, the 4, the 5, and so on, to the 10 below the ace; and, by necessity, the party must end his counting with the very card he thought of, beginning from the one he happens to point out.

13. The card that cannot be found.

Take any number of cards and spread them out fan-like in your hand, faces fronting the spectators.

Ask one of them to select a card. You tell him to take it, and then to place it at the bottom of the pack. You hold up the pack, so that the spectators may see that the card is really at the bottom. Suppose this card is the king of hearts.

Then, pretending to take that card, you take the card preceding it, and place it at a point corresponding to A in the following figure.

A C

B D

You then take the card drawn, namely, the king of hearts, and place it at the point corresponding to B in the above figure. Finally, you take any two other cards, and place them at C and D.

Of course, the cards are placed face downwards.

After this location of the cards, you tell the party who has chosen the card that you will change the position of the cards, by pushing alternately that at the point A to B, and that at D to C, and vice versa; and you defy him to follow you in these gyrations of the card, and to find it.

Of course, seeing no difficulty in the thing, and believing with everybody that his card is placed at the point A, he will undertake to follow and find his card. Then performing what you undertake to do, you rapidly change the places of the cards, and yet slowly enough to enable the party to keep in view the card which he thinks his own, and so that you may not lose sight of the one you placed at B.

Having thus arranged the cards for a few moments, you ask the party to perform his promise by pointing out his card. Feeling sure that he never lost sight of it, he instantly turns one of the cards and is astonished to find that it is not his own. Then you say:--'I told you you would not be able to follow your card in its ramble. But I have done what you couldn't do: here is your card!'

The astonishment of the spectators is increased when you actually show the card; for, having made them observe in the first instance, that you did not even look at the drawn card, they are utterly at a loss to discover the means you employed to find out and produce the card in question.

14. Cards being drawn from a pack, to get them guessed by a person blindfolded.

At all these performances there are always amongst the spectators persons in league with the prestidigitator. In the present case a woman is the assistant, with whom he has entered into an arrangement by which each card is represented by a letter of the alphabet; and the following are the cards selected for the trick with their representative letters.

The performer takes a handkerchief and blindfolds the lady in question, and places her in the centre of the circle of spectators. Then spreading out the cards, he requests each of the spectators to draw a card.

He requests the first to give him the card he has drawn; he looks at it, and placing it on the table face downwards, he asks the lady to name the card, which she does instantly and without hesitation.

Of course this appears wonderful to the spectators, and their astonishment goes on increasing whilst the lady names every card

in succession to the last.

It is, however, a very simple affair. Each card represents a letter of the alphabet, as we see by the figure, and all the performer has to do is to begin every question with the letter corresponding to the card.

Suppose the party has drawn the king of hearts. Its letter is A.

The performer exclaims--'Ah! I'm sure you know this!' The A at once suggests the card in question. Suppose it is the ace of clubs. He says--'Jump at conclusions if you like, but be sure in hitting this card on the nail.' J begins the phrase, and represents the card in question. Suppose it is the ten of spades, he cries out--'Zounds! if you mistake this you are not so clever a medium as I took you for.' The ace of diamonds--'Quite easy, my dear sir,' or 'my dear ma'am,' as the case may be. Q represents the ace of diamonds. The queen of diamonds--'Oh, the beauty!' The ace of hearts--'Dear me! what is this?' The ace of spades--'You are always right, name it.' The nine of diamonds--'So! so! well, I'm sure she knows it.'

Doubtless these specimens will suffice to suggest phrases for every other card. Such phrases may be written out and got by heart--only twenty-three being required; but this seems useless, for it does not require much tact at improvisation to hit upon a phrase commencing with any letter. However, it will be better to take every precaution rather than run the risk of stopping in the performance, whose success mainly depends upon the apparently inspired rapidity of the answers. The performer might conceal in the hollow of his hand a small table exactly like the figure, to facilitate his questions. As for the medium, he, or she, must rely entirely on memory. Of course the spectators may be allowed to see that the medium is completely blindfolded. This modern trick has always puzzled the keenest spectators

15. The mystery of double sight.

All the cards of a pack, or indeed any common object touched by a spectator, may be named by an assistant in the following way--whilst in another apartment, or blindfolded.

Take 32 cards and arrange them in four lines, one under the other. You arrange with your assistant to name the first line after the days of the week; the second will represent the weeks, the third the months, the fourth the years. The assistant is enjoined to count the days aloud, and the first card by the left.

The following is the entire scheme:--

Days	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8*
Weeks	1 2 3	4 5 6 7	8
Months	1 2 3**	4 5 6 7	8
Years	1 2 3	4 5 6 7***	8

The cards being thus arranged, the party who has to guess them retires from the room. When he is recalled, whether blindfolded or not, he pretends to count to himself for a considerable time,

so as to allow his associate time to say to him, without affectation or exciting suspicion of collusion--'I give you,' or 'I give him SO MUCH TIME to guess what is required; 'for it is in this phrase that the whole secret of the trick is contained, as I shall proceed to demonstrate.

Suppose the card touched be one of those marked with the asterisks * ** ***; if it be the first, the associate says,; I give him eight days to guess it.' Then the medium, beginning with the upper line, that of the days, will at once be able to say that the card touched is the eighth of the first horizontal line, or the first of the eighth vertical line.

If it be the card holding the place of the number marked with two asterisks ** the associate says 'three months,' and 'seven years' for the one marked with three asterisks ***.

Thus, whatever card is touched, it will be easy to indicate it, by beginning with the line of days at the top, counting one from the left of the associate and medium.

Such is the simple process; and the following is the conventional catechism adopted by all the operators in double sight, with a few variations adapted to circumstances.

With this collection of words and phrases, every existing object can be guessed, provided care be taken to classify them according to the following indications.

To operate, two persons must establish a perfect understanding between them. One undertakes the questions, the other the answers, the latter having his eyes perfectly blindfolded. Both of them must thoroughly know the following numbers with their correspondences:--

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Now. | 9. Quick. |
| 2. Answer or reply. | 10. Say. |
| 3. Name. | 20. Tell me. |
| 4. What is the object, or thing. | 30. I request you. |
| 5. Try. | 40. Will you. |
| 6. Again. | 50. Will you (to) me. |
| 7. Instantly. | 60. Will you (to) us. |
| 8. Which? | |

Example:--Add the question of the simple number to the question of the decade or ten. Thus, in pronouncing the words 'Say now,' 11--for say is 10, and now is 1, total 11. This, therefore, forms question 11.

Again--'Tell me which number,' 28--for 'tell me' is 20, and 'which' is 8, total 28.

Thirdly:--'I request you instantly,' 37; for 'I request you' is 30, and 'instantly' is 7, total 37.

All the expressions or words that follow are totally independent of the answer, and are only adapted to embellish or mystify the

question as far as the audience is concerned. For instance:

Question 7. Instantly, what I have in my hand? Answer, A watch.

Question 9. Quick, the hour? Answer, nine o'clock.

Question 30, I request you (2) reply--the minutes. Answer, 32 minutes, that is 30 and 2, equal to 32.

It would be useless to give the entire correspondence invented for this apparently mysterious revelation, as a few specimens will suffice to show the principle.

Say what I hold? A handkerchief.
Say now what I hold? A snuff-box.
Say, reply, what I hold? A pair of spectacles.
Say and name what I hold? A box.
Say and try to say what I hold? A hat.
Say quickly what I hold? An umbrella.

Tell me, reply, what I hold? A knife.
Tell me what I hold? A purse.
Tell me now what I hold? A pipe.
Tell me and try to say what I hold? A needle.
Tell me quickly what I hold? A cane.

I request you to say what I hold? A portfolio.
I request you to say now what I hold? Paper.
I request you to say, reply, what I hold? A book.
I request you to say quickly what I hold? A coin.

Will you say, reply, what I hold?--A cigar.
Will you say, name what I hold?--A cane.
Will you say, again, what I hold?--A newspaper.

Now, what I hold?--A bottle.
Reply, what I hold?--A jug.
Name what I hold?--A glass.
Again, what contains this vessel?--Wine.
Instantly, what this vessel contains?--Beer.
Now the form?--Triangular.
Reply, the form?--Round.
Name the form?--Square.
The form?--Oval.
Try to indicate the form?--Pointed.
Again, indicate the form?--Flat.

Now, the colour?--White.
Reply, the colour?--Blue.
Name the colour?--Red.
The colour of this object?--Black.
Try to tell the colour?--Green.
Again, the colour?--Yellow.

Now, the metal?--Gold.
Reply, the metal?--Silver.
The metal of the thing?--Copper.
Again, the metal?--Iron.

Instantly, the metal?--Lead.

Ah! the figure or hour?--1.

Well?--2. 'Tis good?--3.

'Tis well?--4.

Good?--5.

But?--6.

Let's see?--7.

That's it?--8.

&c.

Now name the suit of this card?--Clubs.

Reply, the suit of this card?--Hearts.

Name the suit of this card?--Spades.

The suit of this card?--Diamonds.

It is obvious, from the preceding specimen, that a conventional catechism involving every object can be contrived by two persons, and adapted to every circumstance. The striking performances of the most notorious mesmeric 'patients' in this line prove the possibility of the achievement. The 'agent' who receives the questions in writing or in a whisper thus communicates the answer to the patient, who is laboriously trained in the entire encyclopaedia of 'common things' and things generally known; but it MAY happen that the question proposed by the spectator has been omitted in the scheme.

On one occasion, when the famous Prudence was the 'patient,' and was telling the taste of all manner of liquids from a glass of water, I proposed 'Blood' to the 'agent.' He shook his head, said he would try; but it was useless. She said she 'couldn't do it,' and the agent frankly admitted that it was a failure.

Now, if the mesmeric consciousness were really, as pretended, the result of mental intercommunication between the agent and patient, it is obvious that the well-known taste of blood could be communicated as well as any other taste. This experiment suffices to prove that the revelations are communicated in the matter-of-fact way which I have sufficiently described.

Should it happen that a spectator has discovered the method, the performers easily turn the tables against him. They have always ready a conventional list of common things; and the agent undertakes that his mesmeric patient will indicate them without hearing a word from him, even in another apartment. The agent then merely touches the object, and the patient begins with the first name in his list. The patient takes care to give the agent sufficient time, lest he should name the object next to be touched before the agent applies his finger, and thus, as it were, call for it rather than name it when touched, as required by the case.

1. Guessing.

Five persons having each thought of a different card, to guess five cards.

Take twenty-five cards, show five of them to a party, requesting

him to think of one, then place them one upon the other. Proceed in like manner with five more to a second party, and so on, five parties in all, placing the fives on the top of each other. Then, beginning with the top cards, make five lots, placing one card successively in each lot; and ask the five parties, one after the other, in which lot their card is. As the first five cards are the first of each lot, it is evident that the card thought of by the first party is the first of the lot he points to; that of the second, is the second of the lot he points to; that of the third, the third of the third lot; that of the fourth, the fourth of the fourth lot; that of the fifth, the fifth of the fifth lot.

Of course five persons are not necessary. If there be but one person, the card must be the first of the lot he points to.

It would be more artistic, perhaps, if you dispense with seeing the cards, making the lots up with your eyes turned away from the table. Then request the parties to observe in which lot their respective card is, and, taking the lots successively in hand, present to each the card thought of without looking at it yourself.

17. The Arithmetical Puzzle.

This card trick, to which I have alluded in a previous page, cannot fail to produce astonishment; and it is one of the most difficult to unravel.

Hand a pack of cards to a party, requesting him to make up parcels of cards, in the following manner. He is to count the number of pips on the first card that turns up, say a five, and then add as many cards as are required to make up the number 12; in the case here supposed, having a five before him, he will place seven cards upon it, turning down the parcel. All the court cards count as 10 pips; consequently, only two cards will be placed on such to make up 12. The ace counts as only one pip.

He will then turn up another, count the pips upon it, adding cards as before to make up the number 12; and so on, until no more such parcels can be made, the remainder, if any, to be set aside, all being turned down.

During this operation, the performer of the trick may be out of the room, at any rate, at such a distance that it will be impossible for him to see the first cards of the parcels which have been turned down; and yet he is able to announce the number of pips made up by all the first cards laid down, provided he is only informed of the number of parcels made up and the number of the remainder, if any.

The secret is very simple. It consists merely in multiplying the number of parcels over four by 13 (or rather vice versa), and adding the remaining cards, if any, to the product.

Thus, there have just been made up seven packets, with five cards over. Deducting 4 from 7, 3 remain; and I say to myself 13 times 3 (or rather 3 times 13) are 39, and adding to this the five

cards over, I at once declare the number of pips made up by the first cards turned down to be 44.

There is another way of performing this striking trick. Direct six parcels of cards to be made up in the manner aforesaid, and then, on being informed of the number of cards remaining over, add that number to 26, and the sum will be the number of pips made up by the first cards of the six parcels.

Such are the methods prescribed for performing this trick; but I have discovered another, which although, perhaps, a little more complicated, has the desirable advantage of explaining the seeming mystery.

Find the number of cards in the parcels, by subtracting the remainder, if any, from 52. Subtract the number of pip cards therefrom, deduct this last from the number made up of the number of parcels multiplied by 12, and the remainder will be the number of pips on the first cards.

To demonstrate this take the case just given. There are seven parcels and five cards over. First, this proves that there are 47 cards in the seven parcels made up of pips and cards. Secondly, subtract the number of pip cards--seven from the number of cards in the parcels; then, 7 from 47, 40 remain (cards). Thirdly, now, as the seven parcels are made up both of the pip cards and cards, it is evident that we have only to find the number of cards got at as above, to get the number of pips required. Thus, there being seven packets, 7 times 12 make 84; take 40, as above found (the number of cards), and the remainder is 44, the number of pips as found by the first method explained,--the process being as follows:--

$$52 - 5 = 47 - 7 = 40.$$

$$\text{Then, } 7 \times 12 = 84 - 40 = 44.$$

In general, however, the first method, being the easiest of performance, should be adopted. The second is in many respects very objectionable.

18. To get a card into a pack firmly held by a party.

This trick strikingly shows how easily we may all be deceived by appearances.

Select the five or seven of any suit, say the seven of hearts, and handing the remainder of the pack to a party, show him the card, with your thumb on the seventh pip, so as to conceal it, saying:--'Now, hold the pack as firmly as you can, and keep your eye upon it to see that there is no trickery, and yet I undertake to get into it this six of hearts.' This injunction rivets his attention, and doubtless, like other wise people destined to be deceived, he feels quite sure that nobody can 'take him in.' In this satisfactory condition for the operation on both sides, you flourish the card so as just to reach the level of the top of your hat (if you wear an Alpine scolloped, so much the better), and then, bringing down the card, rapidly strike it on the pack

twice, uttering the words one, two, at each stroke; but, on the third raising of the card, leave it on the top of your hat, striking the pack with your hand--with the word three. Then request the party to look for the six of hearts in the pack, and he will surely find it, to his amazement.

This trick may be performed in a drawing-room, if the operator be seated, dropping the card behind his back, especially in an easy-chair.

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