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ORIGIN OF "COLD FEET."

The Poker Expression Was First Heard in a Game in an Indiana Town.

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"Too much credit cannot be given to the able and energetic men who have control of the sanitation of the city of Havana. Not only do they have the island of Cuba profit, but Cuba has ceased to be a source of menace to the entire southern coast of the United States, and it behooves us as Americans, and, as we fondly believe, the most advanced Americans, rather to copy that which they have of good, and learn improved methods from them, than to remain fatuously indifferent to all methods not inaugurated by ourselves."

"The mountains are constantly moving," was the remark of an officer of the Denver & Rio Grande road recently in speaking of the great landslides in the canyon above Glenwood Springs, Col. "We find from actual experience in maintaining tunnels, bridges and tracks in the mountains that the mountains are moving. It costs a railway passing through the mountains a great deal of money in the course of ten years to keep the tracks in line, and maintenance of tunnels is even more expensive. Drive a stake on the side of a mountain, take the location with the greatest care and return after a few months. The stake is not in the same location. The whole side of the mountain has moved. This experiment has often been tried, and in all cases the result proves that the mountains are gradually seeking the level of the sea."—Chicago Chronicle.

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FISH WITH THEIR HANDS.

One of the Several Methods Employed by the Hawaiian Natives in Taking Big Fish.

A preliminary report on an investigation of the fisheries of the Hawaiian Islands made by David Starr Jordan, president of Leland Stanford Junior University, and Dr. Barton W. Evermann, ichthyologist of the United States commission of fish and fisheries, which is now made public in the form of a departmental bulletin, contains much interesting information concerning the customs and methods of fishing of the natives of the island, says the New York Times.

"Probably the most interesting of the native fisheries revealed in the report is that which relates to fishing with hook and line and with the hands. The bonito is the fish most generally caught with hook and line, and as the hook used is of mother-of-pearl, made from the shell of a mollusk now quite rare which glistens with an iridescence similar to the shimmer from the scales of the smaller kinds of fish on which the bonito lives, no bait is needed. The barb of these hooks is of bone, and two tufts of hog-bristles attached at right angles to the barbed end kept the inner side up, so that the hook lies flat on the surface of the sea. When a likely fishing ground has been reached the fishermen, standing up in the canoe, cast out his line violently so that the hook falls with a slap on the water and attracts the attention of the fish. The line and hook are then drawn rapidly toward the boat, as though it were a spoon, and the bonito, taking the hook to be a small fish, rises to it immediately. It is fortunate for the fisherman that he has to waste no time in baiting his hook for this method of catching frightens the school and the fish disappear within ten or 15 minutes. An ingenious plan by which very large fish are caught is by planting a long pole on the shore in such a position as to cause it to lean decidedly toward the water. On the top of this a bell is arranged to the pole close to the top, and a long line, with baited hook at the end, is run through the block and allowed to float out to sea, the land end being tied in a slipknot to the bottom of the pole. As soon as a fish is hooked its struggles cause the bell to ring, whereupon the fisherman runs to the pole, loosens the slipknot, and plays the fish until he has drowned it, when it is hauled ashore."

"In fishing for octopus," says the report, "the native dives to the bottom, and with a stick pokes around in the small holes in which the octopus lives. When he touches one it seizes the stick and allows him to draw it out of the hole. When he reaches the surface the native grabs it with his hands and bites into the head, thus killing the animal."

DISEASE IN HAVANA.

Elaborate Precautions Taken by the Medical Experts to Prevent Its Spread.

"Isolation as is isolation" is the method of the Havana sanitary authorities for the treatment of infectious disease, reports the Philadelphia Medical Record. Indeed, they are so proud of their system that they do not hesitate to recite cases of yellow fever into the city itself. When a ship, say from Vera Cruz, arrives with two or three cases of yellow fever on board, it is not anchored at some distance from the city, and the miserable passengers and crews compelled to take all the risks of becoming victims of the disease and gradually dying one by one. On the contrary, the board of health sends its stretchers to the ship, the patients are removed under mosquito nettings to the observation or yellow fever hospital, the ship is fumigated, the passengers observed for a game, and finally discharged. So satisfactory has this method been that one of the sanitary officers declares that yellow fever has been practically stamped out in Cuba, because it is not endemic of the island, and Havana formerly the chief point of reception and distribution.

"If a case of relapsing fever is discovered—and one was found recently in a sailors' boarding house in Havana—the patient is removed to the contagious hospital and isolated, while at the same time the most energetic war of extermination is waged against the miserable bed bugs in that particular boarding house—until every one is destroyed, and thus, to the misfortune of the scientific investigation of relapsing fever, but to the great good of the community, the case of the disease remains unique."

"Chinese Emperor's Sacrifices. In his capacity as high priest the Chinese emperor has to offer at least 46 sacrifices to different gods in the course of a year. As to each sacrifice is dedicated one or more holidays, which must be passed by him in complete solitude, his time is pretty well taken up."—London Mail.

"The Rattlesnake's Venom. A rattlesnake that is five or six feet in length will yield a tablespoonful of venom two or three times a month. It takes its poison sacs at least a week to fill again after they have been emptied."—Nature.

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CLAIMS AN ISLAND.

Squatter on the Missouri River Takes Possession of Made Land.

Break of the Current of the River Provides a Puzzling Question for the Lawyers and Courts to Fight Over.

The shifting Missouri river has played a trick that puzzles the lawyers. An island of sand has been formed by the eddies and current of the river opposite St. Joseph, Mo. It measures 400 by 100 feet and is surrounded by water on all sides. The land is owned by the Government and is supposed to be public domain. A squatter has taken possession of the island and is now holding it against the Government. The Government claims the island because it is within the main current of the river. The squatter claims it because it is an island of sand. The matter is now before the courts.

But the island is there now, a level stretch of sand and mud, densely overgrown by willows, with here and there a cottonwood tree rearing its branches toward the sky. The trees have sent their roots down into the soil toward the bedrock of the stream, and these may hold the island in place. The river may shift away from it and may never make another effort to tear down that which it has built up.

The county judges had the island surveyed, but found that Buchanan county had no right to give a title to it when a sale was about to be made. The first price offered was \$125 an acre, but the land soon rose to a higher price, and ten dollars an acre was offered. Later the price went up to \$25 an acre, but it is not likely that a sale will be made for some time. The prospective purchasers went to Doniphan county, Kan., and made efforts to buy the land there. Lawyers were called into the case, and said that as the island was in the Missouri river, it is neither in Missouri nor Kansas. If the current ever shifts to the Kansas side, the island will be in Missouri, but if it shifts to the Missouri side, the island will be part of Kansas.

In addition to these legal difficulties in the way of a clear title, the island has a claimant. Jack Ring has built a house on it and lives there alone. When the county judges were about to sell the island, Ring appeared and gave warning that he would contest the claims of any other person.

Jack Ring is the son of an early settler who laid claim many years ago to a strip of sand on the south of the city, very much like that island that Ring is claiming now. In time the river joined that island to the Mississippi shore, and it afterward became a part of the city. It is still known as "Ring's island," and is covered with small houses. Ring obtained a title to it, but no part of it is now vested in his son and heir.

Ring claims the new island now by the right of possession. He says he will hold it against the world, and if the title cannot be made clear by the United States, he will fight for his rights.

"I'll make a kingdom of it, and I'll be the king," said Ring. "Ring's New Island" began to form eight or ten years ago, and was at first a small bar of sand, visible only when the stream was at a very low stage. The river deposited soil on the sandbar year after year. Every year the sandbar crept farther and farther up the stream, and now it threatens to cut the current off entirely from the Missouri side.

SHAKESPEAREAN RELICS FALL.

Houses Near the Poet's Birthplace to Be Supplanted by Carnegie Library.

The London Daily Chronicle laments the fall of the two little ancient houses adjoining Shakespeare's birthplace. They will not fall, the Chronicle says, by the action of time or weather, but by the crowbar of culture, to make room for a Carnegie library, which is to be erected on their little site. It is such a little site, and the houses are so evidently Shakespearean, and associated with the poet, who must have seen them day by day, that their destruction ought to be impossible, yet the mayor of Stratford-on-Avon has approved of this. The result of Shakespeare study at Stratford-on-Avon is to destroy a relic of Shakespeare for the sake of a library which, no doubt, is to be filled with books about the bard.

KING HAS FORTUNE IN PLATE.

Over Five Million Dollars' Worth Left to Edward by the Late Queen Victoria.

The fall in the price of silver still leaves King Edward VII. the possessor of an enormous fortune in plate, which he inherited from his mother, both at Buckingham and Windsor. No valuation has been made on the probable duty, as the king does not pay the king's taxes. Not long ago, however, an inventory was made of the plate at Windsor, with the result that the plate, most of it of silver, some of gold, and some set with gems, was appraised at a sum far in excess of \$5,000,000.

Vivisection Interest Kaiser. Emperor William has begun to evince great interest in the crusade against vivisection. His attention having been called to Dr. Lutz's play, in which there is a representation of torture by vivisection, he has expressed a wish to see it. So arrangements are being made to produce it in the opera house before the emperor, the empress and the court.

German Postal Stations. The multiplication of railways has not diminished the number of postal stages in Germany. On the contrary, the number of stage drivers rose from 5,176 in 1896 to 5,314 in 1900.

FOREIGN GOSSIP.

Wales has practically doubled its population in the last 50 years. Quails are now said to be extinct in Ireland, where they were formerly to be found in great numbers. A German tourist reports that on the upper Amazon river it is customary to keep large harmless snakes about the houses for the purpose of killing rats and other vermin. The Kobe Chronicle, speaking of the Imperial iron foundry in Japan, says that it has proved a failure because of the limited supply of ore in that country, and that the government hopes to secure the privilege of working the rich Hangang iron mine in China. There are 806 trees to every square mile of territory in Germany, in the following proportions: Plum, 332; apple, 251; pear, 149; and cherry, 104. There are about three trees to every inhabitant. Many of the trees are owned by the townships, being planted along the highways, and the fruit yields a considerable revenue, thus reducing taxes. The shortage of doctors in Russia is the subject of an article in a St. Petersburg journal, which publishes statistics of the proportion of doctors in other European countries per 100,000 inhabitants. Great Britain has 52, Germany 30, and Russia 8. In order to bring the percentage to the same level as Great Britain, Russia will have to have 130,000 doctors. At present there are only about 17,000. A highly colored sample of red tape is sent over from England in the news of the failure of Second Lieut. Burke, of the Fourth East Surrey regiment of militia, to pass the medical examination for appointment to the regular British army. Mr. Burke served in South Africa, and stood high on the list of successful candidates at a recent examination. In Africa he distinguished himself and proved the power of his eyes by discovering that an approaching body of men was composed of Boers and not of British. Yet when the learned doctors came to examine his eyes they reported them as bad because he could not read by electric light, in a London fog, the regulation "three lines of letters;" and so his earned commission is not to be given to him.

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SPILLED 2,000,000 BALLS.

Women Are Kept Busy All Winter Long Making Baseballs for the Summer's Supply.

More than 2,000,000 baseballs were used in this country during last season, and 1,000 or more women will be kept busy all winter making 2,000,000 more for next season. A member of one of the largest sporting goods firms in this country said the other day:

"I should put 2,000,000 as a conservative number. They include all grades. Fully one half were of the cheapest kind—the retail 5-cent ball. There is not much money in that, as you can see, when these balls have to be sold 2 1/2 cents apiece. From that low price there is a gradually ascending scale in price and quality, running through the 10, 15, 25, 50 and 75 cent lines up to \$1 and \$1.25, the latter being the price for the official league ball."

"This is the standard ball for use in all National and American league games and a number of minor leagues, including the intercollegiate. It, therefore, has an extensive sale. I should say that 230,000 of the more expensive balls are sold. That will convey some idea of the number of league and association games that are played all over the country. The demand for baseballs is always a steady one, and does not fluctuate to any appreciable extent."

The manufacture of baseballs does not give employment to so large a number of persons as might be supposed, says the New York Times. About 1,000 persons, mostly in New York, make the entire supply. Women take hundreds of these balls to their homes and sew them, particularly the cheaper varieties. The sewing of the more expensive league balls is a more scientific matter, and is done only by veteran baseball stitchers. New York, Philadelphia and Massachusetts are the chief places of baseball manufacture.

Private Mailing Cards.

"The newest thing in private mailing cards in this country is a card with pieces in it made translucent, to represent say, windows. Openings are stamped out of the body of the card which is then backed with a thin, orange-tinted paper that will let light through when the card is held up to it, but which is of such a character that it can be written over without blotting. Here, for example, is a card with a picture of the New York post office, as seen from the south. The light spaces in this are the window openings and a crescent moon shows above. There are light spaces also in these buildings seen to the left up Broadway, none of these translucent spots being observable as such when the card is being handled in the ordinary manner. But, hold the card up to the light and you have a picture of the New York post office by night."—N. Y. Journal.

Town Pigeons.

The increase in bird life in the metropolis is not one of the least striking of the many changes which have come about of late years within the sound of Westminster bells. Scarcely less noticeable than the trruption of wild species, though as yet little commented on, is the enormous increase in the numbers of the tame pigeons haunting our London streets.—London Field.

LETTERS BY WIRE.

Italian Who Would Revolutionize Method of Transmission of Mail.

Announces to Inaugurate His System in England, Promising to Wonderfully Expedite the Carrying of Mail Matter.

One of the dreams of the future is the electric post, which by an aerial system is to flash letters and parcels from post office to post office, and from city to city at something not far removed from lightning speed. Naturally enough, Count Piscicelli, the inventor, has a fine faith in its practicability; so much so, indeed, that he is now in London busily endeavoring to place it on a commercial footing.

His plan is to build a number of small electric railways, made of steel wires supported on poles, on which light vehicles capable of carrying a hundredweight would be electrically propelled from point to point. The wire rails acting as conductors of the electric current would, in contact with the wheels of the vehicle, charge the motor attached to it.

It is proposed to construct "main lines" between all the great towns, with switches and "sidetracks" for the less important districts. The system, it is claimed, is based on an automatic principle. When one of the carriers set to stop at a certain city leaves a dispatch station it chooses its proper switch at every junction as it flies along and pulls up of its own accord when it reaches its destination.

Speed is, of course, the alluring feature of the invention. Count Piscicelli asserts that it will be possible to maintain a continuous service throughout the 24 hours, and that the distance between London and Manchester will, roughly speaking, be covered in about an hour.

PREMIUM ON STORK'S VISIT.

Boston Mothers Advocate a System of Prizes for the Family with the Most Babies.

Boston's newest women's club is the Mothers' Birthday Club of America, organized to encourage the coming of the stork and placing a premium upon births of children. It has been incorporated and the only members are married people who by means of voluntary contributions establish a fund to be known as the associate members' birthday gift fund, to provide premiums of sums up to \$500 to members who become mothers.

Mrs. Adelaide F. Chase, president of the Waltham Women's club, is corresponding secretary. She is also editor of the Club Calendar, the official calendar of Massachusetts women's clubs. The officers and members of the advisory board are prominent members of mothers' clubs, including Mrs. Estelle N. H. Merrill, co-president of the Cambridge club. Correspondence has been started with the National League of Mothers' Clubs and 800 letters have already been received approving the project.

NEW PROCESS IN CHEMISTRY.

Professor in University of California Makes Cyanide of Potassium from Air.

Prof. Edmond O'Neill, of the chemistry department of the University of California, has discovered a new process for making cyanide of potassium from the nitrogen in the atmosphere, a discovery that will allow of the production of the precious compound at a rate far cheaper than it has ever been possible to manufacture it. So great an advantage can be obtained by the new method that it is hoped to secure a great reduction in the cost of extracting gold by the cyanide process and in other similar metallurgical operations. Prof. O'Neill's process is analogous to the method of making nitric acid from the nitrogen of the air, a process which has been worked out and successfully demonstrated at Niagara Falls.

Ancient Mills in Alaska.

That wheat was grown in Alaska by the Russians a century ago is proven by the discovery of two old flour mills built by the subjects of the czar. One of these has been discovered on Wood Island, in southeastern Alaska, and the other in the interior. The former mill has just been investigated by R. B. Taylor, of the Smithsonian Institution. He says the old flour mill was built by the Russians early in the last century.

Still Consumption Prevails.

Montreal physicians have discovered that electricity will cure consumption. This makes the fifty-seventh consumption cure that has been discovered during the past six months. Why, asks the Chicago Record-Herald, will people still insist on dying of consumption?

Oil-Fattened Mosquitoes.

Mosquitoes are still buzzing around in New Jersey. It is thought, says the Chicago Record-Herald, that the oil with which the scientists attempted to kill the insects off last summer has made them so fat and hearty that they will be able to keep up and around all winter.

Woman's Right to Talk.

A New Jersey justice of the peace has decided that there is no law to keep a woman from talking in her own home. Now, says the Chicago Record-Herald, will the man of the house ever be able to get another word in edgewise?

L'ABEILLE DE LA NOUVELLE-ORLEANS