

## ALL THE CARDS MARKED.

EVERY PACK OF CARDS IN HAVANA TAMPERED WITH.

The Strange Story of a Spaniard's Gigantic Swindle—How Another Fakir Discovered the Profitable Secret—A Partnership in Crime—Tried but not Convicted.

One of the most immense frauds ever perpetrated in connection with card-sharping, and in which the fewest persons were concerned, was that recorded by Houdin. At the outset it was entirely conceived and executed by one sharp alone, although another took part in it at an later stage, much to the disappointment of the original promoter of the scheme. As this incident is of interest, and exhibits in a striking manner the possibilities of cheating which exist at all times and in all places, the reader shall have the benefit of its perusal. Although the events happened many years ago, the story is not very well known, and is well worthy of retelling.

At the date of the narrative, Havana, according to the historian, was the place most addicted to gambling of any in the world. As he also observed, that was not saying a little. And it was in that haven of delight that the occurrences related took place.

A Spanish sharp, named Bianco, purchased in his own country a tremendous stock of playing-cards; and, in view of the undertaking in which he was about to embark, he opened every one of the packs, marked all the cards, and sealed them up again in their wrappers. This he did so skilfully that there was no evidence of the fact that the packages had ever been tampered with. The stupendous feat involved in a proceeding of this kind being successfully accomplished, the cards were shipped off to Havana, and there disposed of to the card-dealers at a ruinous sacrifice. So good, indeed, were these cards, and so cheap, that in a very little while the dealers could not be induced to purchase those of any other make. Thus after a time there were hardly any cards circulating in the place other than those which had been falsified by Bianco.

The sharp, it may be imagined, was not long in following upon the track of his cards; and being a man of good address, he contrived to obtain introductions into the best society. He played everywhere, of course, and where he played he won. Hardly ever being called upon to use any cards but his own, it is not surprising that he should rapidly acquire wealth among people whose chief recreation appeared to be gambling. To avert suspicion, however, he was careful to complain constantly of the losses he had sustained, and occasionally to lose.

Among the various clubs in Havana was one which was of the most exclusive kind. The committee was so vigilant, and such great precautions were taken to prevent the admission of doubtful characters, that hitherto it had been kept free from the contamination of cheating. Into this club, however, Bianco contrived to effect an entrance, and carried on his operations therein with much success. He was destined, notwithstanding the zeal of the committee, to remain alone in the field out a very short time. Another sharp, a Frenchman this time, contrived also to obtain admission to the club; and he, too, set to work to prospect the country, thinking that he had possessed himself of a gold mine as yet unexploited.

Accordingly, this second adventurer, Lafordade by name, seized a favourable opportunity of appropriating a quantity of the club cards. These he took home with him for the purpose of marking them, intending to return them when marked to the stock from which they had been taken. One may imagine the man's surprise upon opening the packs to find that every card had already been marked.

Evidently, then, somebody had been before him, and Lafordade determined to find out who it could be. He made inquiries as to where the cards were obtained, and, purchasing some at the same place, found that these also were marked. In fact, every pack that he could procure had been tampered with in like manner. Here, then, was a gigantic swindle, and he determined to profit by it. He would let the other man do all the work, but he would share in the profits. If the other man, whosever he might be, would not listen to reason, he would threaten to hand him over to the police.

Having arrived at this decision, he set to work to watch the play of the various members of the club, and, naturally, the inevitable good fortune of Bianco could not fail to attract his attention. Keeping strict watch upon that gentleman's proceedings, Lafordade soon arrived at the conclusion that Bianco, and no other, was the man of whom he was in search. He therefore, took an early opportunity of engaging his brother-swindler in a quiet game of cards, whilst no other members of the club were present.

The game was played, and Bianco won, as a matter of course. Then, as usual, the winner asked his opponent if he was satisfied, or whether he would prefer to have his revenge in another game. Much to his surprise, however, instead of saying simply whether he preferred to play again or not, the loser coolly rested his elbows on the table, and regarding his adversary composedly, gave him to understand that the entire secret of the cheerful little deception which was being practised was in his possession. This, of course, came rather as a bomb-shell into Bianco's camp, and reduced him at once to a condition in which any terms of compromise would be acceptable, in preference to exposure and imprisonment.

Matters having arrived at this point Lafordade proposed terms upon which he was willing to come to an understanding with the Spaniard. These were, briefly, that Bianco should continue his system of plunder, on condition that he handed over to his fellow-cheat one-half of the proceeds. These terms were agreed to, and upon that basis of settlement the agreement was entered into.

For some time after this all went well with the two swindlers. Lafordade established himself in luxury, and gave his days to pleasure. Bianco ran all the risk; the other had nothing to do but sit at home and receive his share of the profits. It is true he could keep no check upon his associate, to see that he divided the spoils equitably; but holding the sword of Da-

mocles over him, he could always threaten him with exposure if the profits were not sufficiently great.

At length, however, Bianco began to tire of the arrangement, which perhaps was only natural. Besides the supply of marked cards were beginning to run short, and could not be depended upon much longer. This being so, the prime mover of the plot, having won as much as he possibly could, promptly vacated the scene of his exploits.

The unfortunate Lafordade thus found himself, as the Americans say, "left." The prospect was not altogether a pleasant one for him. He had acquired expensive tastes which he might no longer be enabled to indulge; he had accustomed himself to luxuries he could no longer hope to enjoy. He had not the skill of the departed Bianco; yet, nevertheless, he was compelled to (metaphorically) roll up his sleeves and work for his living. Things were not so bad as they might have been. There was still a good number of falsified cards in use; so he determined to make the best possible use of his opportunities while they remained. He therefore set to work with ardor, and success largely attended his efforts. At last, however, the crash came. He was detected in cheating, and the whole secret of the marked cards was brought to light.

Even in this unfortunate predicament Lafordade's good fortune, strange to say, did not desert him. He was taken before the Tribunal, tried, and acquitted. Absolutely nothing could be proved against him. It is true the cards were marked, but then, so were nearly all the others in Havana. Lafordade did not mark them, as was proved in the evidence. He did not import them. To all intents and purposes he had nothing to do with them whatever. It could not even be proved that he knew of the cards being marked at all. Thus the case against him broke down utterly, and he got off scot free. It is, nevertheless, presumable that he did not long remain in that part of the world. As to what became of Bianco nothing is known. Possibly his record concluded with the familiar words "lived happily ever after;" but most probably not. The end of such men is seldom a happy one.

## LIVING BAROMETERS.

Some Common Animals Are Excellent Weather Prophets.

The cat sneezes at the approach of rain. The wind will blow from the point the cat faces when she washes her face. It is a sign of rain if the cat washes her head behind the ear. Sailors are not fond of cats, and they say, when the cat is frisky, she has a gale of wind in her tail, and that often a cat goes on board to raise a storm. The dog grows sleepy and dull on the approach of rain. Sometimes dogs chew grass before rain. If the dog digs a deep hole in the ground, or howls when one leaves the house, or refuses meat, it indicates rain.

Swine become very restless before rain and by their snorting and incessant movement predict that rain is close at hand. Pigs often run with straws and sticks in their mouth before cold weather. The old proverb says: "Swine can see the wind."

Ducks foretell rain by quacking without any apparent cause. Cows usually, before cold and stormy weather, tail in giving their milk. In winter, if they bellow in the evening, it will snow before morning; and when a cow shakes her foot there is bad weather behind her. Gnats utter a peculiar cry before rain. Sheep foretell clear weather by ascending the hills and scattering in many directions; but if snow is coming they will bleat and seek a place of shelter. Spiders usually live alone or in pairs, but they have been observed to collect on a wall or bank before a rain-storm. When a swan flies against the wind, rain will follow shortly. Pigeons return to their coots when a storm is advancing.

The frog croaks more loudly and incessantly just before rain than at any other time. Another sign of rain is the toad's leaving his hole in the daytime. Usually the toad remains concealed during the day. The toad is an insect eater, and seems well aware that just before a rain-storm is the best time for him to obtain his prey. The farmers look for a change in the weather when the barnyard fowls roll in the dust.

Camels, in their journeyings across the desert regions of Northern Africa and Arabia, never fail to warn their drivers of the approach of the fatal sand storm. Their restless, uneasy gait and suspicious sniffing proclaim the approaching danger longer before the duller senses of their masters detect anything.

## The Way to Get Them Mended.

"It is strange that I can't get my wife to mend my clothes," remarked Mr. Bridle, in a tone of disgust. "I asked her to sew a button on this vest this morning, and she hasn't touched it."

"You asked her?" said Mr. Norris, with a slight shrug of his shoulders.

"Yes. What else should I do?"

"You haven't been married very long, and perhaps you'll take a tip from me," answered Mr. Norris, with a fatherly air.

"Never ask a woman to mend anything. That's fatal."

"Why, what do you mean?"

"Do as I do. When I want a shirt mended, for instance, I take it in my hand and hunt up my wife. 'Where's that rag-bag, Mrs. Norris?' I demand, in a stern voice."

"What do you want a rag-bag for?" she says, suspiciously.

"I want to throw this shirt away. It's all worn out," I reply.

"Let me see," she demands.

"But I put the garment behind my back. 'No, my dear,' I answer. 'There is no use in your attempting to do anything with it. It needs—'"

"Let me see it," she reiterates.

"But it's all worn out, I tell you."

"Now, John, you give me that shirt!" she says, in her most peremptory tone.

"I hand over the garment."

"Why, John Norris," she cries with womanly triumph, "this is a perfectly good shirt. All it needs is—, and then she mends it."

## Bogus Oil Paintings.

Small oil paintings on wood, or what appear to be oil paintings, are being displayed and sold in many of the New York stationery shops at prices that appear to the inexperienced to be very reasonable. Many of them are by artists of recognized prominence and are admirably executed. Rosa Bonheur, Meissonier, Hamilton and other

painters of the same school and reputation are represented, and the paintings sell for \$13 50 a pair. They are executed on a panel of wood about 4 by 6. As a matter of fact, the pictures are not oil paintings at all. They are made in Paris. A work of some well known master is photographed on the wood, and then a couple of skilful young women dab on some color in oil and use the varnish brush freely afterward. It would require an expert to detect the difference between these alleged oil paintings and the genuine article. The cost of production is not more than fifteen cents, so that the profit, even after an ad valorem duty is paid, is something handsome.

## THE BASILISK.

A Cheerful Sort of Animal Mentioned by Old Writers.

The basilisk was the most famous of the many fabulous monsters of ancient and medieval folklore. According to the popular notion it was hatched by a toad from an egg laid by the rooster of the common barnyard fowl. In the ancient picture books it was usually represented as an eight-limbed serpent or dragon, sometimes with and sometimes without wings.

Its name is derived from basiliscos, meaning a little king, and was applied because the creature was figured with a circle of white spots on its head which much resembled a crown. The cockatrice, a species of basilisk, besides having a crown, possessed a comb which was an exact counterpart of the cock's.

Pliny, that rare old gossip, assures us that the basilisk had a habit of "struck terror to the hearts of men, beasts and serpents," and the Bible classes it with the lion, the serpent and the dragon as one of the formidable creatures.

Old writers say that its bite was mortal in every case; that its breath was suffocating, and that no plant would grow in the vicinity of its lair. Its dead body was often used in bellries to prevent swallows from nesting there.

In the popular novels of the day allusion to the "basilisk glitter" found in some hero heroine's eyes. This "glitter" was the basilisk's main stock in trade. With it he is said to have darted death to every living creature he looked upon. All creatures withered when this monster fixed his eyes upon them, with one single exception: The crowing of a cock would kill every basilisk that heard it.

## WON ON PURE NERVE.

How Bank Clerk Labouchere Got a Bride and a Partnership.

In 1822 Mr. Labouchere, a relative of the present M. P. of that name, was a clerk in the banking house of Hope of Amsterdam. One day he was sent by his patron to Mr. Baring, the celebrated London banker, to negotiate a loan. He displayed in the affair so much ability as to entirely win the esteem and confidence of the English banker.

"Faith," said Labouchere one day to Baring, "your daughter is a charming creature. I wish I could persuade you to give me her hand."

"Young man, you are joking, for seriously you must allow that Miss Baring could never become the wife of a simple clerk."

"But," said Labouchere, "if I were in partnership with Mr. Hope?"

"Oh, that would be quite a different thing; that would entirely make up for all other deficiencies."

Returned to Amsterdam, Labouchere said to his patron:

"You must take me into partnership."

"My young friend, how can you think of such a thing? It is impossible. You are without fortune, and —"

"But if I become the son-in-law of Mr. Baring?"

"In that case the affair would soon be settled, and so you have my word."

Fortified with these two promises Labouchere returned to England and two months after married Miss Baring, because Mr. Hope had promised to take him into partnership, and he became allied to the house of Hope on the strength of that promise of marriage.

## How to Avoid Seasickness.

Persons intending to take an ocean voyage should for several weeks before embarking take daily exercise in the open air to get the general system in good condition. To the same end they should eat only a moderate quantity of plain food, especially avoiding what is heavy or greasy. They should select a stateroom as near the middle of the ship as possible. Some tourists are never seasick as long as they lie on their backs and keep their eyes closed.

The passenger who is seasick should remain in his berth until 9 or 10 o'clock in the morning, and have the steward bring him what little food he takes. He should not go to the table in the cabin until symptoms of seasickness have left him, as the very sight and odor of rich food will surely make him worse. When the patient begins to go to the table he should avoid pastry, fat meats and all rich food; after eating he should lie flat on his back for half an hour, or until digestion is well begun, when he may go on deck and walk or sit in a steamer chair, but he should not lean over the stern or side of the ship.

## Messages of Help for the Week.

"The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing into Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head: they shall obtain gladness and joy; and sorrow and mourning shall flee away." Isaiah 51: 11.

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep and am known of mine." John 10: 14.

"Jesus said unto the twelve, will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." John 6: 67, 68.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you." John 14: 2.

"What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Acts 8: 36.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6: 7.

"Let your requests be made known unto God." Philippians 4: 6.

## Surprised.

Jess—Weren't you surprised when he proposed?

Bess—Indeed I was; my recollection of it was that we were already engaged.

## Rescue the Perishing

## SAVE THE DYING.

Give New Life to Those Burdened With Disease.

PAINE'S CELERY COMPOUND IS THE SUFFERER'S BEST FRIEND.

Another Wonderful Cure in Manitoba.

LIFE WAS ONCE A BURDEN TO MR. FAIRHALL.

Now He is Hearty and Healthy.

Mr. Fred Fairhall, of Fairhall, Selkirk Co., Manitoba, writes for the sole purpose of benefitting thousands in Canada who suffer from the troubles and afflictions that made life a misery to him in the past. Comment on our part is unnecessary, as Mr. Fairhall clearly proves that Paine's Celery Compound was the direct means of saving his life. He writes as follows:—

"Having read of some remarkable cures reported in the Winnipeg Weekly Tribune, permit me to add my testimony in favor of your valuable medicine."

"I had been troubled with indigestion and bilious diarrhoea for six years. These troubles, with hard work, brought upon me in the spring of 1891 nervous prostration. From a state of activity, I was reduced to a condition that I could not work. My memory, which previously had been retentive, failed me; I could not sleep, and I felt a great depression of spirits. I was so distressed at times both in body and mind, that I often wished to die, and I frequently prayed to God, if it was his will, to take me."

"I thank God all this has passed away. Paine's Celery Compound, with God's blessing has been the means of curing me. I have taken ten bottles of the Compound which I purchased from Mr. R. W. Oliver, of Killarney."

"I am now perfectly restored in mind and memory; my appetite is good, and I am improving steadily in health. For all these blessings I am more than thankful, and have strongly recommended Paine's Celery Compound to many of my neighbors."

On Every Lady's Tea Table in England.

Blue Cross Tea

Purest and Best  
-- at --  
Popular Prices.

In ½ lb. and 1 lb. lead packets only.

Head Office, London, England.  
Wholesale Agents, Geo. S. DeForest & Sons.

Few Proprietary Medicines have so proud a record, or are so justly free from the charge of Empiricism as "PUTTNER'S EMULSION, of Cod Liver Oil and Pancreatic, with the Hypophosphites of Lime and Soda."

This famous Health Restorer has stood the test of twenty-five years. It now has many envious imitators and unscrupulous competitors—but it is still—*facile princeps*—the UNEQUALLED REMEDY FOR CONSUMPTION AND ALL WASTING DISEASES.

For sale by all Druggists at 50cts. a bottle.

## THE YOST WRITING MACHINE.

## TESTIMONIALS.

The following are a few of the many testimonials from users in the Maritime Provinces.

ST. JOHN, N. B.

IRA CORNWALL, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—We have been using a "Yost" writing machine in our office daily, for about four years, and it has given us every satisfaction.

Yours truly,

MANCHESTER, ROBERTSON & ALLISON.

CHATHAM, N. B.

IRA CORNWALL, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—It gives us pleasure to testify to the merits of the "Yost." It has been in use in our Academy for the last three (3) years, and has given entire satisfaction.

MOTHER SUPERIORESS

OF THE R. H. OF ST. JOSEPH.

Hotel Dieu of St. Joseph,  
Chatham, May 18, 1894.

ST. JOHN, N. B., June 28th 1894.

IRA CORNWALL, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—We beg to say that we have used the "Yost" Typewriter for two years, and the longer we use it the more we are convinced that it is superior to all other machines.

We consider the pad a great improvement over the ribbon on account of its cleanliness and the great saving of expense. We find the pointer a great convenience for locating position. The type-guide we consider invaluable, as it overcomes the greatest weakness in other typewriters, viz: imperfect alignment.

We would recommend any intending purchasers to investigate the "Yost" before buying a typewriter.

J. & A. McMILLAN.

YARMOUTH, N. S.

IRA CORNWALL, Esq.:

St. John, N. B.

DEAR SIR,—Your machine, the "Yost," has now been in daily use in my office for about 3 years, and after a thorough trial of it, I have very much pleasure in advising you of my appreciation of its merits and advantages over other typewriters in the market. The alignment, which was the greatest advantage pointed out by your agent, has been quite up to my expectations and as perfect as could be desired. The ink pad, allowing direct printing on the paper, is a great improvement over the ribbon, and during the three years we have only used 3 pads, the 3rd being still in use. The operator has been able to reach a speed quite as good if not better than on the machines which he has operated heretofore.

E. K. SPINNEY.

ST. JOHN, N. B., June 28, 1894.

IRA CORNWALL, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—We have much pleasure in stating that during the three months in which we have been using the No. 4 "Yost" writing machine we have found it to work most satisfactorily in every particular.

We might name some of its good points:—

1. The type-guide, which insures perfect alignment; this we consider a most excellent feature.

2. Inking by means of a pad.

3. The pointer, which is very convenient.

And another feature is this, that the degree of speed possible on this machine is only limited by the capacity of the writer.

With regard to the bad points, we do not know of any as yet.

Yours respectfully,

ACAULAY BROS. & CO.

HALIFAX, N. S., May 22nd, 1894.

IRA CORNWALL, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—In response to your inquiry re the "New Yost" Typewriter, I would say, that having used the said machine in our school we found it satisfactory, especially as regards the absence of the ribbon, its perfect alignment, and the very neat and clean appearance of the writing.

Yours very truly,

J. O. P. FRAZEE.

CHATHAM, N. B.

IRA CORNWALL, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—It is now about two years since I purchased a "New Yost," No. 2, and have thus far found it everything that can be desired in the typewriting art.

The machine, during this time, has had a tremendous amount of hard work, such as heavy manifolding, and has been under the strain of several students. All it has cost me for repairs was 50 cents for a marginal stop, and has only required one new ink pad. The "Yost" certainly is all that it is claimed to be. As regards the speed, such is unlimited, and depends wholly upon the ability of the operator.

For perfect alignment, clearness of print, ease and rapidity of manipulation, for elegance and durability of construction, it has no equal. I would gladly recommend the "New Yost" to all those anticipating the purchase of a first class machine.

Very truly yours,

J. FRED BENSON,

Stenographer for Maritime Sulphite Fibre Co.

CHATHAM, N. B.

IRA CORNWALL, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—As you ask me how I like my "New Yost" No. 2, I beg to say it has been in constant use since I got it about six months ago, and has given every satisfaction.

Yours truly,

W. S. LOGGIE,

Per D. T. JOHNSTON.

ST. JOHN, N. B.

IRA CORNWALL, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—I have now been using the "Yost" for about a year, and am satisfied with it in every respect. The device for inking is in every way superior to the ribbon, besides doing away with the annoyance and expense of replacing it.

As a manifolding machine it gives the best results, twelve copies being taken at one writing.

I have tried the Remington and Caligraph, and consider the "Yost" far superior to any of them.

H. G. BURTON,

Manager P. F. COLLIER.

ST. JOHN, N. B.

IRA CORNWALL, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—We have been using the "Yost" Typewriter since 1892, and have been quite satisfied with the work it has turned out. We may say that before purchasing we had several machines in our office on trial, but much prefer the "Yost" to any of them. For manifolding we find it superior to any typewriter we have seen.

J. D. BELVEA,

Of the late firm of BARKER & BELVEA.

ST. JOHN, N. B.

IRA CORNWALL, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—I have much pleasure in stating that we have used our "Yost" machine for about 12 months, and during that time it has given me no trouble whatever.

I find it much more convenient than any writing machine I have previously used. I might specially mention:—

1. The pointer.

2. Inking by means of a pad instead of a dirty and expensive ribbon.

3. The type-guide, which insures against the great weakness of all other typewriters, namely imperfect alignment.

Yours truly,