HOW TO PLAY THE HORSES.

SOME CURIOUS INTRICACIES OF THE RACETRACK GAME.

Points Wherein It Resembles and yet Differs Widely From Other Games of Chance—Immutable Laws That Seem to Underlie It—Interesting Deductions Based on the Running at Nearby Tracks.

While the so-called "Maturity of Chances" is apparently predominant in every game of chance, it is curious to find it also to a certain extent in games of skill. Thus the billiard expert will have an "off" game, the ball player is a trifle stale, the athlete is overtrained and even the jumpers there is the widest difference between what a man can do one day and another. All this is generalized upon and passed over with various platitudinous explanations, but, if looked closely into, it will be found that the elements of success and failure run pretty evenly in everything, although in some instances the climax at either end of the pendulum swing is apparently longer in coming than in others. It also follows that the greater the amount of detail surrounding any series of operations, the more involved becomes the working out of the "maturity," and the less definitely marked its profile. This is easily seen when the card or wheel player and his individual operations and calculations are contrasted with those of the "Sport of Kings," as the race track has not been inaptly called. As before stated, the blocks of winners and their opposites at the wheel run very definitely placed, and a glance at the records shows the sequences as clearly as possible, with the few intervening "accidentals," or occasional solitary wins of the red or the black.

When one turns to the racetrack there is a widely different story. It is one thing to sit pricking a card, left for black and right for red wins, and calculate chances maturing from the pinholes, and it is another thing to estimate the chances of ten different horses, yet it is only a closer and more delicate operation of the same description, as THE SUN system articles has repeatedly shown. Has anyone ever figured out what is meant by a close racing finish? Two horses, equally consistent performers, meet in a six furlong race, and the average punter, only looking at the past records, makes up his mind—in a blind guess—that one or the other is the one to win. The betting is 9-5 and 8-5 and they finish heads apart. Say they run the six furlongs in 1:16, they have averaged a matter of 17½ yards to the second and the time between their finish is 1¼ seconds. Thus a step outward or inward one yard from the direct line run during the race would have turned the scales and this is what is called "judgment."

The "maturity of chances" would have given a very good idea as to what the result was to be, totally irrespective of distance, weight or time. Veteran racing men will smile at this possibly, but past events have proved it correct, and the predictions of "soft days" and possible percentages made in these columns have probably never been duplicated by any other system of calculation, expert handicapping notwithstanding. With all this to contend with, this fineness of calculation as compared with the cards of the wheel with the probable wins reduced about 16 per cent., still the punter who plays by system can make a larger winning at a smaller risk than the player at the wheel. Take a flat proposition. The racing man only asks for 53 per cent. to break even and all above that he will win playing first favorites because of the 7-5 average price and because of the grouping of the wins after successive losses, which grouping is the "maturing of chances." He scales his bets by the integral or other plan, and starting at a $5 bet he loses in then $10, $15, $20, $25, $30, $35, $40; these bets being calculated by doubling the first $5 and then adding the first and the last bets together until a win is scored; then the previous bets, whose totals added have thus formed the amount of the bet just won, are cancelled, and the next of those left used to calculate the following bet. Thus when $40 is bet and lost, the next bet is $45, but it wins $63 and then follow wins of $63, $63, $63 (at 7-5 against), this being 33 per cent.; and cancelling all figures the total being $254 won, as against $180 lost, winning a net $72 or 53 per cent. on total risk.

Now, take the same proposition on a wheel, playing red or black at evens, and instead of making a winning at 53 per cent. the player simply quits even, although the bets were scaled just the same. If he had played numbers, straddles or splits he would probably be further ahead, but with every variation his number of probable wins would have decreased to the ratio of the individual odds against each chance. In other words, a man can fairly safely lay 10 to 1 against the outsider in nine out of ten races, but he cannot lay 7 to 5 against ten favorites with the same immunity. In cards, the wheel, &c., there is only the maturity of chances to consider, and it is a wonder more men do not win, as they would do if it were not for the "kitty," "splits," "zero" and the like, and the fact that few either care to invest the capital necessary to come out ahead, or would be satisfied with the comparatively small winnings (as compared with capital required), for every player at games of track appears to want at least 10 per cent. daily on his capital. Why not look for another Franklin Syndicate and be done with it?

There is only the dull, listless maturing of chances about games of chance; no element of physical capacity or fitness. A horse may have run the distance of six furlongs in 1:16 three days before and the punter knows all about it, but how many years is it since the ace of hearts last came out between the deuce and the trey of spades, and how much longer since the number 17 split those of 2 and 20? In the average race there are eight horses, the possible winner's variety being just eight, but the possible placing in sequence, many thousands, as at cards there are fifty-two changes, with millions of this sort of variation possible, but these are not permitted to "sequence," but at the end of the deal are all shuffled up again. Consequently it is impossible to predict anything but the curious sequence of results, as when the chances mature round an individual to such an extent that it is said he "cannot lose." This reminds the story of the mining camp where the trouble, not sitting down to play whist, had a grizzled frontiersman for partner. It was the tenderfoot's deal and he held every trump, turning up the trey. The lead was queen of spades, the frontiersman placed the ace on it, the third player threw away, and the deal, of course, trumped it, which so enraged the old man that he threw him out of the window for "trumping the ace the first time round" and broke his neck.

In the old game of "bank" with its many variations, the banker quickly divides the pack to the number of players, letting each make a bet and then covering it, taking the division left bare for himself, this he turns up, and pays all above, losing all below and all tied. This is supposed to be the fairest game going, because the players decide which pack the banker must stand by, but experience demonstrates that this is the easiest of all games to beat by calculation, because the sequence is seen and less will run to the individual packs even more strongly than it will to colors in the wheel, and a thousand times more marked than to favorites at the track. This is also the case in "twenty one," where the sequence runs to breaks of over or under the fated "twenty one." Some years ago a man corralled a lightning calculator in England, one of those few men who take a ledger and with three fingers run up the pounds, shillings and pence columns at once, and write the total at the bottom. He came back to Monte Carlo, and had him calculate the amount of solid cash on the red and the black as it lay on the table, and then the punter played the larger amount to lose; thus if there was more money on the red than on the black, they plunged on scaled bets on the black. The tables may be all right, notwithstanding what we know and have seen of them, and the game may be square as the base of Pharaoh's pyramid, but just the same when the punty won heavily the usual quarrel to winners arose, and they were asked out in the good old way. Here was a new method of the maturity of chances, just knowing that the table always wins in the long run, and following the lower line, resting on the fact that the color winning most recently was the one the bulk of the money was going on, and therefore the turn of the tide was in sight. In doing this they did not realize they only followed the table.

When all calculations are made there is nothing in it but the run of the wheel, or the cards or the dice, the element of chance is practically all on the sequence and the "accidentals," but with the horse it is widely different. There come possible packets, a fall, the fall of others throwing a horse out of stride or blocking it, the wet strips, the mud or dust flying in the face of the rival competitors, a bad start, a poor boy, lack of judgment under suddenly eccentric conditions, chief of which is how far to be behind and just when to make a run—to win by a 1-34 of a second, perhaps. With the average "game of chance" it is an eternal procedure, day and night bring no change of surroundings, no jolt to the coming sequence. When play closes for the session, it just stops and is resumed exactly where it left off, whether in an hour, a day, a week or a thousand years, if not disturbed, the wheel or pack takes up the waiting thread of sequence and works out. It is curious to remember just here that when Barrack made his win a few weeks ago it was not what might be called a continuous run, but was broken between night and morning, between one table and another. Sequences were due or in operation at both, and his "luck" was in striking them and in knowing it. In racing there are, say, seventy to eighty races to a meeting, over the same courses, with the same surroundings; then all is changed, the courses are longer in the elliptic or shorter, the turns are more or less pronounced, the stretch is shorter or longer, the track closer in texture or looser, more sandy perhaps, and over all this are the wet and dry spells, all affecting results and still through it all the individual sequence of the individual track goes on just the same, as shown in the tables going with each article of this series. The changes are caused mainly by the percentages governing the preceding records made at earlier tracks of the season.

It is important to notice that at Sheepshead spring meeting the consecutive wins of favorites are rare, and correspondingly light. Thus the record for 1896 shows one run of six consecutive wins, three runs of three wins, and five of two wins, total, 37 wins; 1897 shows consecutive runs of one of four, one of three, and nine of two, total wins being 33. 1898 shows runs of one of four wins, one of three wins, and three of two wins—the zero record total wins being 25; 1899 shows a slight reaction, there being but one run of five wins, one of four wins, one of three wins, and three of two wins, with a total of 27 wins. Thus the totals stand by years, 1896 with 37 wins, 1897 with 33 wins, 1898 with 25 wins, 1899 with 37 wins, thus considering the normal average for the year at the preceding track it was fair to look for a corresponding rise in percentage at the coming Brighton Beach track meeting to swing the percentage up to meet the apparently inevitable low average of the regular Sheepshead fall meeting, which balances with Saratoga. Some day an "accidental" will come in here, the percentage of Brighton will drop away down, and that of Sheepshead go sky high, and this will probably be shown in unusually high and low averages in preceding years shown by the following figures. In 1896 it was a colorless average track record, recovering still from the old slump of 13 consecutive favorites to lose), and in 1897 the first half of the year evenly to 50 per cent. to 47 per cent. closing at 46 per cent.; in 1898 it struck 60 per cent. on the fifth day to fall to 45 per cent., and in 1899 it opened at 16 per cent. and steadily rose to 42 per cent., the closing quotation. Now examine the following table of the first half of this long meeting. The favorites are marked "1" when winning, the second or unplaced horses indicated by "0," as usual:

FIRST DAY.						SEVENTH DAY.					
1896	1	0	0	0	0	1	1896	0	1	0	0	0	0
1897	0	0	0	1	1	0	1897	0	1	1	1	1	0
1898	0	1	1	1	1	0	1898	0	0	1	0	0	0
1899	0	1	0	0	0	0	1899	1	1	1	1	1	0
SECOND DAY.							EIGHTH DAY.						
1896	0	0	0	1	0	0	1896	1	1	0	1	0	1
1897	0	0	0	1	1	0	1897	0	0	0	0	0	1
1898	0	0	1	0	0	0	1898	1	1	1	0	0	0
1899	0	0	0	1	1	0	1899	0	1	0	0	1	1
THIRD DAY.							NINTH DAY.						
1896	1	0	1	1	0	1	1896	1	0	0	0	0	1
1897	1	1	1	1	0	0	1897	0	1	1	0	1	0
1898	0	1	0	1	0	0	1898	1	1	1	0	0	0
1899	1	1	0	1	0	0	1899	0	1	0	1	0	1
FOURTH DAY.							TENTH DAY.						
1896	0	0	1	1	0	0	1896	0	1	0	1	1	1
1897	0	0	0	1	0	0	1897	0	0	1	0	0	1
1898	1	1	0	1	1	1	1898	0	0	1	0	0	1
1899	0	0	1	0	1	1	1899	0	1	0	1	0	1
FIFTH DAY.							ELEVENTH DAY.						
1896	1	1	0	0	0	0	1896	1	0	0	1	1	1
1897	1	0	0	1	1	1	1897	0	1	1	0	0	1
1898	1	1	1	0	1	1	1898	0	1	1	0	0	1
1899	0	1	0	0	0	0	1899	1	1	1	1	0	0
SIXTH DAY.							TWELFTH DAY.						
1896	0	0	0	1	0	0	1896	0	1	1	0	0	1
1897	0	0	1	1	0	1	1897	0	1	1	1	1	1
1898	0	0	1	1	0	1	1898	0	0	1	0	1	1
1899	0	0	1	0	0	1	1899	0	1	1	0	1	1

Taking into consideration the remarks immediately preceding the above tables it is interesting to analyse the record of runs. In 1896 (the banner of the four years at Sheepshead) it struck one run of four wins, one of three wins, and five of two consecutive wins, or a total of 31 wins at the meeting; in 1897 (where Sheepshead struck the down grade) it recorded one run of five, one of four, two of three, and five of two, total 34 wins; in 1898 (when Sheepshead struck its zero) there was one run of six, one of five, and seven of two wins, total 37; in 1899 (when Sheepshead slowly recovered) it dropped to one of five wins, one of four, one of three, and five of two wins, total 33. The lesson here italicised should be plain to the merest tyro in speculative racing. Only the first half of this meeting is here dealt with, because of its length. Taking the first six days at a glance shows that it may be calculated to be at the beginning, as evidenced by the wins of two favorites on the first days of 1896-7-8 and only one in 1899; this grade being maintained each year for the second day, to rise on the third to 66 per cent. for the day, this being maintained throughout the fourth and fifth days, but on the sixth the early thread of weakness shown in the records of 1896 and 1899 again appeared running in alternates, as for the sixth day 1896 had one win, 1897 three, 1898 three, and 1899 one win, this order being reversed on the seventh day to the twelfth, when 1896, vacillating awhile as shown by one win, one win, one win, seven day, four on the eight, one on the ninth, concluded that its average percentage must be made up, and struck four wins on the tenth and eleventh, and three on the twelfth, or an average of 61 per cent. for the last three days. Eighteen hundred and ninety seven had run alternate from the start, the daily wins being 2, 2, 2, 1, 4, 3, 1, 3, 4, 2, 3, 3, the 60 per cent. of the fifth day falling to normal by well balanced alternates; 1898 ran fairly consistent from a bad opening to a middle-day maximum, and a gentle grade to close, this being the banner year of the four, coming to balance Sheepshead's slump, and the daily wins ran 2, 3, 2, 3, 5, 3, 1, 3, 4, 2, 3, the runs of one five and one six having forced the pace on the fourth and fifth days, on the returning swing of the Sheepshead pendulum. Now with Sheepshead rising in 1899 it is interesting to find the daily average at Brighton at once responding to it, and total daily wins of 1, 2, 4, 3, 1, 1, 3, 3, 3, 3, 4, 3, showing a lower opening, a reaction, a drop to strike the mean average, and then the run of curious "accidentals," there being only one duplicate and one quartette in the thirteen wins totaled in the latter five days.

This is what drives the uncalculating player of favorites crazy, that it has no record of previous running and after the seventh day with five favorites he says: "Time to play second choices" and does so, becoming more disgusted every day, eventually, as a rule, coming to the conclusion that a favorite harvest has arrived, and so strikes in just as the inevitable reaction sets in. This "being on the touring the same run (in the second half) when one favorite won in eleven consecutive races, as will be shown in next week's tables and analysis. It is also good to note that in a long meeting like this, double the length of the regular dates at other tracks, the quarterly subdivisions will turn out in exactly the same ratio as the half divisions (one-quarter being one number of days each as the quarters) and that in each case the record of the six racing days (seven days, mystic number in all) appears to be the pivoting point, the conglomerate whole of the double length meeting dovetailing in with the total preceding record, and pointing the average for the coming meeting.

THE ENTANGLED GREYHOUND.

Fate of a Remarkable Dog That Tried to Go Three Ways at Once.

"The most mixed up dog I ever saw," said Mr. Goslington, "was one I met yesterday on the block in which I live. This dog was a greyhound. Standing still, the greyhound seems very tall and very long; running, he stretches out amazingly; the greyhound at play becomes one of the most extraordinary objects the eye ever saw.

"The greyhound I saw was playing with another dog; a smaller dog. It was a bright, frosty day, and the dogs skipped about in the most lively fashion. The smaller dog was a swift runner, and he would start off with the greyhound following. It was wonderful to see the greyhound run; but far more wonderful to see him turn while running, which he sometimes did. The smaller dog would now and then turn at a sharp angle and run in the other direction. The greyhound never failed to follow, and when he turned he presented a wonderful sight, indeed, being bent then like a long-armed letter V laid horizontally; his long front legs and his head and the forward part of his body going one way while the rear part, with the hind legs, was still going in the other direction, up to the angle or elbow where he was turning; something astonishing to see. But this greyhound, presently, did something more remarkable still; he tried to go in three directions at once, thus forming himself in a sort of figure 4. It was in this effort that he came to grief; but it all came about in the simplest way in the world.

"The smaller dog had doubled once, and then almost instantly changed his course again, crossing his first course, thus forming a triangle; and the greyhound tried to follow. He made the first turn all right, and then, before the rest of his body, and his hind legs had got up to and around the bend, he changed course again and tried, with his fore legs and head, to pass under them.

"Even now I can't tell exactly how it happened, because it was all done so suddenly; but the first thing I knew the greyhound lay there on the ground in a kind of bunch, with legs and tails and heads and necks sticking out all over him; he was all mixed up in trying to pass under him self in this way while going at full speed, his long, flying legs had got, in some way, most curiously interlocked, and, when with the bendings and turns of his slender head and long neck and body and tail he looked as though he was tied up in about fourteen double bow knots, with ends sticking out everywhere.

"The smaller dog, when he realized that he was there following, came back and stood beside the greyhound, and wagged his tail in sympathy; and I went over to see if I could untangle him. As I came up near him the greyhound lifted his slender head and looked at me with a queer sort of a look, as much as to say:

"'I did make a fool jump that time, didn't I?'

"And I said to him, out loud: 'Well, you certainly did manage to tie yourself up pretty well, anyway.'

"And then I set about untying him; I pulled out one leg, and then another, and so on, and soon had him all right again; and he stood it all with perfect docility, glad enough to have my help. When I had got him all straightened out he got up himself; and he was all right. He turned his head around to me and looked his thanks; and then he turned and trotted slowly away, with head and tail rather down. But, a moment later, the skippy little dog had ranged alongside of him and made one or two jumps at him, and then turned and ran; and got the next instant the lean greyhound was after him again, humping and extending himself with movements faster than the eye could fully follow, going like a skeleton steplader, worked by machinery. So soon, like men, do dogs forget."

TIP STRAIGHT AND ODDS BIG

THE COMBINATION THAT UPSET A POOLROOM FOR A TIME.

It Was Played By a Colored Sportsman and He Never Had Any Doubt of Winning—His Ticket Called for $2,000 to $2—An Episode of the Races at New Orleans.

There was a period of prolonged, nerve racking excitement one afternoon last week in a demure and retiring uptown poolroom that doesn't draw any color line. A colored sport was threatening to tear the place loose from its foundations and to fire a volley over the ruins—in a purely figurative sense, that is to say. Literally he didn't commit any breach of the peace at all. But he had a combination ticket in his clothes for a couple of hours that practically made all the rest of the people in the place forget what they were there for. He was as black as that overworked one-spot of spades. He was known to his envied intimates only as Mose, and the very large checked suit of plaid that he wore had a certain cake-walk suggestiveness, as did his huge red necktie, his patent leathers with blue polka-dotted uppers, and his three large yellow diamonds, two of them on his fingers and the other screwed in the middle of his shirt bosom which showed horizontal green bars. He was a sport all right.

He entered the poolroom alone, looked up at the board, and then dug a bit of paper, obviously a telegram, out of his Oxford cloth Newmarket overcoat. A man who was rude enough to look over his shoulders saw that the telegram was a night message and that it bore the New Orleans date. It contained the names of five horses, with the initials of the sender.

"He's a po'tuh on uh Pullman," vouchsafed the sport to the privileged character who had looked over his shoulder at the despatch. "An' he's uh babe, yo' heah me' He knows 'em lak he knows uh blackin' brush. Ah's uh gwine tuh mek uh combinashun on de hull five. De ticket 'll win in uh walk."

After sizing up the house betting on the New Orleans races for a few minutes, he walked up to the counter where the combination tickets exuded from the lightning calculator. Just at that moment there was nothing doing at the combination counter. The sport produced his telegram, cleared his throat, and began.

"Ah's got de hull five babies," he said with a grin to the ticket writer. "An' ah's uh gwine tuh tek 'em all tuh win. Doan' want none o 'em fo' place or show. Dey's all got tuh come in all alone."

"Shoot 'em out," said the ticket writer.

The sport named the five horses that he knew were going to win the New Orleans races. They were, in the order of the races, Mint Sauce, Russell R., Deyo, Benneville and Donna Rita.

The ticket writer executed his bit of lightning head work, with frequent glances at the board to get the prices on the runners, and then he looked up at the sport with a grin.

"Huntin' for a hog killin', ain't you?" he asked.

"Gein' to put us out o' business? It figures a thousand to one. How much do you want on it?"

"Two dollahs," replied the sport and he passed up the money. The ticket writer pencilled the names of the horses down on the ticket, placed the figures "$2,000 to $2" at the bottom of it, and handed the bit of pasteboard to the sport with the remark:

"You're a good thing. Come again."

"Yes, ah kin do yo' hollerin' when de hosses run," was the sport's good-natured reply, and then he went to the extreme outer row of seats in the pool room and sat down to wait for $2,000 to accrue to him on an investment of $2.

Along toward 3 o'clock the betting came in on the first race at New Orleans. The horse Mint Sauce in the sport had in his combination ticket was the odds-on favorite, although he had been at a good price in the house betting. The queer crowd of players surged up to the counters to put their money down on things they liked, that figured all right in the dope books, but the sport kept his seat. His speculation for the day was over. He was simply waiting for his $2 to grow to $2,002.

Then they were off at New Orleans, as the telegraher announced with a hoarse air, electrifying the crowd into silence. It was a six furlong race, and there was nothing in it but Mint Sauce all the way. At the three quarters, when the telegrapher announced that Mint Sauce was third and just galloping, the sport leaned back in his seat with an it's all over expression, snapped his fingers a couple of times for luck, and said:

"It's uh cake-walk fo' dat baby. Ah'm on right so far."

"Mint Sauce wins by two lengths," announced the operator, and the announcement was received with silence. Poolroom crowds don't play favorites as a rule.

"Mais no! is this heah Russell R.," said the sport, gazing at his ticket again, "an' Russell R. he's dun got tuh win. Ah feels uh leetle squeechy uhbout he all, but Russell R. he'll buck jumpin."

The betting came in on the race a few moments later, and Russell R. was at a long price. Several thousand dollars on the horse were bet, however. The sport didn't look worried a little bit over this.

"Russell R. he's dun got tuh win," he said, and that was all there was about it.

"Off at New Orleans," announced the weary looking operator again, and then he began to call off the way the race was being run. In the second half) when one favorite won in eleven consecutive races, as will be shown in next week's tables and analysis. It is also good to note that in a long meeting like this, double the length of the regular dates at other tracks, the quarterly subdivisions will turn out in exactly the same ratio as the half divisions (one-quarter being one number of days each as the quarters) and that in each case the record of the six racing days (seven days, mystic number in all) appears to be the pivoting point, the conglomerate whole of the double length meeting dovetailing in with the total preceding record, and pointing the average for the coming meeting.

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the sport, enthroned like any monarch of Dahomey, with the crowd surging around him. One of the white sports, waving a roll as big as his fist, elbowed his way through the crowd surrounding the colored sportland flatly offered him $500 for his ticket, after looking at it and seeing that Donna Rita was much the best horse in the next race, had her name inscribed there. It was a temptation, but the sport was game, and stood pat.

"Dis heah ticket ain't fo' sale," he said. "De two thousan's good enough fo' this coon."

Another man offered him $800 for his $2 ticket. The offer was declined. There wasn't a man in the crowd that wasn't rooting for the sport's ticket to wind up all right, and to make their rooting more effective they played Donna Rita to win the last race almost to a man. The less important sports were keeping close to their brother in hue. They wanted to be in at the finish, perhaps to help the sport to celebrate. At post time there was hardly a man at the betting counters. They were all hovering near the sport for luck.

"Off at New Orleans!" shouted the telegrapher, who knew about the sport's ticket by this time, and there was a note of unusual excitement in his voice as he called off the race. "Donna Rita its leader.

"Oh, yo' babe, Donna!" shouted all the sports in unison, and "stay right theah, yo' niggah!" shouted the one particular sport.

"Donna Rita at the quarter by five lengths!" called out the telegrapher, and the poolroom might have been taken for an emancipation day festival. "Donna Rita at the half by five lengths!"

"Ef yo' lubs yo' man, come uhlong!" moaned the sport in ecstacy.

"Donna Rita at the three-quarters by three lengths, Kisme second, Virgie O. third," droned the operator. "Donna Rita in the stretch by a length!"

The sport rocked to and fro and groaned.

"Virgie O. wins by a nose!" announced the telegrapher.

That settled the combination. The sport's followers fell away from him like autumn leaves from wind tortured trees.

"Ter ain't nothin' in this horse racin' game is they?" the frequenters of the poolroom said to one another as they slouched out, and the grating tones of the cashiers counting bills soon echoed through the deserted room.

LEFT BEHIND IN CAR SEATS.

The Things That Go to the Lost Department, and Others Restored on the Spot.

The lost package department of the elevated road is an institution by itself, with a storekeeper and clerks to look after and keep track of the things that come into their charge. Duly tagged and ticketed, there are hundreds of umbrellas, scores of handbags, no end of bundles and packages of all descriptions. But while it takes a regularly organized bureau, with considerable storage room, to look after the things left in the cars, it would take a good deal more of a bureau and a good deal more room for this purpose if passengers succeeded in leaving in the cars all the things they start to leave. The things that go to the lost department are the things that people leave behind, unthought of by themselves, and unobserved by others; but every day people get up and start off, leaving behind bundles that are restored to them on the spot, they are called back by somebody, sitting next, or opposite, or roundabout somewhere, who sees the bundle and calls out to the departing owner as, for instance

There entered a Sixth avenue uptound car a man who was carrying under his arm a flat square bundle that looked as though it might be a box, very likely a Christmas present for somebody. He sat down in a cross seat, next to the window and with his back to the front, placing the bundle on edge beside him and between himself and the side of the car. And then he began to read his newspaper, which he continued to do until the train had come to his street, uptown. There, as the train slowed down, he folded the newspaper up and put it in his pocket, and got up and stepped out into the aisle and started forward toward the door. When he had taken about two steps he heard somebody say:

"Hey!"

As he took the next step forward he heard somebody saying:

"Hi!"

Then, as he was taking another step toward the door, he heard somebody behind him crying:

"Ho!"

Still heading his way toward the door, he heard as he took the next step a man behind him shouting, "Hay, there!"

By this time it seemed to him as though everybody in that end of the car was deeply interested in something and all shouting at once, and he turned to see what it was about. Even as he began to turn he seemed to have a realization of what it all meant; it was about his bundle, which, he had not got tucked safely under his arm, but which, in complete forgetfulness, he had left behind in his seat; when he had finally got faced around he was seen to have a smile on his face, with which he met the smiles of all the people in that end of the car, who, at last, after all their chorus of shoutings, saw him now returning.

He didn't have to come quite back; the man in the crossseat opposite stepped across the aisle as he came, and picked up the bundle from where he had left it, and met him with it, and handed it to him, when he was within a step of the back of his seat. The man took it with thanks, and, smiling still himself, retraced his steps through the avenue of smiles, to reach the door at last, just as the train stopped at the station.

RACE OF A PARIS GENDARME.

Pierre Deloire Learns an Odd Custom of Some American Horsemen.

The growing custom among American horsemen of riding bareheaded is not generally known among Europeans, and in some cases has caused rather amusing misunderstandings. A recent arrival from Paris relates the following experience of a French mounted policeman.

One evening Pierre Deloire, mounted gendarme, was riding slowly in the Bois de Boulogne, bemoaning the unkind fate which gave him no opportunity for showing his skill and bravery.

"Why couldn't I have been among those sent to disperse the rioters in the Rue Chabrol?" he thought.

And the week before, why couldn't that horse have waited until I was on duty before running away with the rich American lady? Why?

But here his thoughts were suddenly interrupted by a quick clattering of hoofs behind him. He drew rein, and as he turned his head, a horse with hatless rider dashed by him like a flash.

"A chance at last!" thought Pierre as he drove his spurs savagely into the little mare's sides and started in mad pursuit up the Bois.

"Runaway! runaway! runaway!" sounded the fugitive's hoofs upon the turf.

"After you! after you! after you!" pattered the little French mare as she gradually lessened the distance between them.

On they tore. Once, under an arc light, the man ahead turned halfway in his saddle and looked back over his shoulder for an instant. The vision of the pursuer that Pierre received by his efforts, and the little French mare responded nobly. "After you, after you, after you!" she pattered, and soon only a length separated the two. Three hundred yards more and they would be on even terms. Now on the right, some two hundred yards up the road, the lights of the Cafe Madrid came into view.

"Sapristi, the cafe!" shouted Pierre, hoping that the hatless rider might still have enough control to guide his horse from the tables and windows that meant his certain destruction.

"Yes, the cafe!" answered back the other in a voice that evidently showed he realized his danger.

But the mad horse seemed attracted by the lights and did not change his course. Pierre was desperate now, the little mare was even with the rider's saddle girths, but there were those tables only fifty yards away. Now they were neck and neck. Both horses, with nostrils dilated and blood shot eyes, were straining every muscle. As they went tearing through the gateway, the little mare forged her nose slightly to the fore, and Pierre was just reaching over to grasp the rein, when, as if by magic, the runaway stopped.

"You have won, M'sieur," drawled its rider with a slight American accent. "What will you have to drink?"

But Pierre Deloire had already turned his horse toward the Bois, and was once more cursing at unkind fate in general with a special clause added pertaining to Americans.

ODD THINGS IN CUBA.

The Way Natives Plant Fences and American Soldiers Planted Tables.

Some odd things happen in Cuba. When a man wishes a fence around his yard or field, he doesn't build it, he plants it and it grows, too. First he cuts a great bundle of pinon twigs, then he scratches a little trench where he wants his fence to run and finally he sticks in the twigs in a row a few inches apart. The soil of Cuba is so rich and the weather so warm and moist that directly the twigs take root, throw out branches and leaves and presently there is a dense hedge of pinon trees inclosing the field. And there are no nails to drop out here nor boards to fall down and let in the cattle and the fence is good for a hundred years.

Nor is that the most curious thing that one may see in Cuba. What would you think of a camp table that grew? While the American soldiers were camped back at Santiago they made great numbers of little tables by driving forked sticks in the ground for legs and using a top of boards. Of course the legs took root and some of these tables are now nicely shaded by leafy branches, and in two or three years four nice trees will be growing there, and no one will ever dream that they were once table legs. Another curious thing. At Guantanamo an old tin can was fastened around the branch of a big Cuban laurel tree some four or five feet from its leafy end. It was packed full of earth, and Americans wondered what could the idea be, anyhow.

"That's simple enough," said the Cuban householder. "In a few weeks roots will grow in the earth inside the tin can. Then we can cut off the limb just back of the can, stick it in the ground, take away the can and it will grow into a tree."

Plant a cauliflower plant in Cuba and instead of spreading out in the usual way it will grow up and it spindles up for all the world like a sunflower, three or four feet high, with big rank leaves and a little flower at the top that you never could recognize as a cauliflower.

SHOOTING SQUEALER DUCK.

A SPORT THAT CALLS FOR RARE SKILL IN GUNNING.

This Variety of Duck Found in Great Numbers in the "Deadening" of Arkansas—Flies With Marvelous Speed in Woods—Its Great Dives—Its Breeding Habits.

FROSTVILLE, Ark., Dec. 16.—"MASE," as the crop of acorns is called here, has been unusually heavy this fall and, in consequence, the incoming of wild fowl has been large. All varieties of American ducks are fond of acorns, diving for them in the shallow ponds of the woods, but they are especially a diet for mallards and the small, swift-flying fowl, known in the South as the "squealer." The mallards, for the most part, frequent the larger lakes, such as Bodeau and Bistineau, but the "squealer" is essentially a woods duck and prefers the forest to any open body of water or land. This duck is in reality a variety of widgeon, though in habits it resembles the wood duck. It will even light in trees occasionally, though it does not nest in them. It gets its name from the peculiar whistling sound made by its wings when it is in rapid flight. This whistle at times becomes a positive squeal.

The duck is about the size of the teal, with a pronounced topknot of black feathers. It is of a darker brown with less brilliant coloration of the wings. It is also plumper of body and will weigh more. In flight it is much like the teal, having the same rapid beat of the wings and it gets through the air almost as fast. It is more difficult shooting, because it is rarely found on open water. Deep buried in the woods, it spends the winter exploring the pond bottoms. It darts between trees and through branches at lightning speed and no man not a high-class snap-shot can hope to make a respectable bag though the "squealers" be flying past at the rate of one every five minutes in the day. It derives its remarkable steering power from its tail, which is large and strong and may be elevated or depressed several degrees at the will of its owner.

A "squealer" in full flight, suddenly perceiving some danger ahead, will dart almost at right angles to its course. In turning it does not describe a wide curve, as do all other ducks. The depression of its tail and the depression of one wing and elevation of the other spin it half round almost as if it were a top. In another second it is out of sight, buzzing amid the great branches as if it were a dragon fly.

Having this remarkable power of altering its course almost instantaneously, the "squealer" gets out of many tight places that would mean sure death to one of its cousins. Its agility and speed make of it an attractive target for any one who enjoys sport in proportion to its difficulties. Many a man who has made tremendous scores shooting from "blinds" on one of the big lakes has had the conceit taken out of him utterly when given a stand near a pond in southwestern Arkansas and told to exercise his skill on anything that happened along. The only comers were "squealers" and the crack found himself boring holes in the air oftener than was comfortable. People hereabouts who kill "squealers" all of the winter through have a gun intended especially for this form of wing shooting. It is 12 gauged, cylinder bored in each barrel and makes a "pattern" that covers the side of a barn. Owing to the thickness of the trees which grow down to the water's edge along the bayous there is any quantity of cover and the duck is always within easy range when shot at. Penetration is not so much to be desired as a widely distributed load and some of these guns will kill with reasonable certainty if the aim be anywhere within six feet of the victim.

This gun is known generally as the "brush gun," and its being is designed primarily to assist the snap shot in the destruction of woodcock or quail when flushed in thickets or dense growths of saplings. Northern manufacturers are coming to make more and more of these weapons, both because there is a